

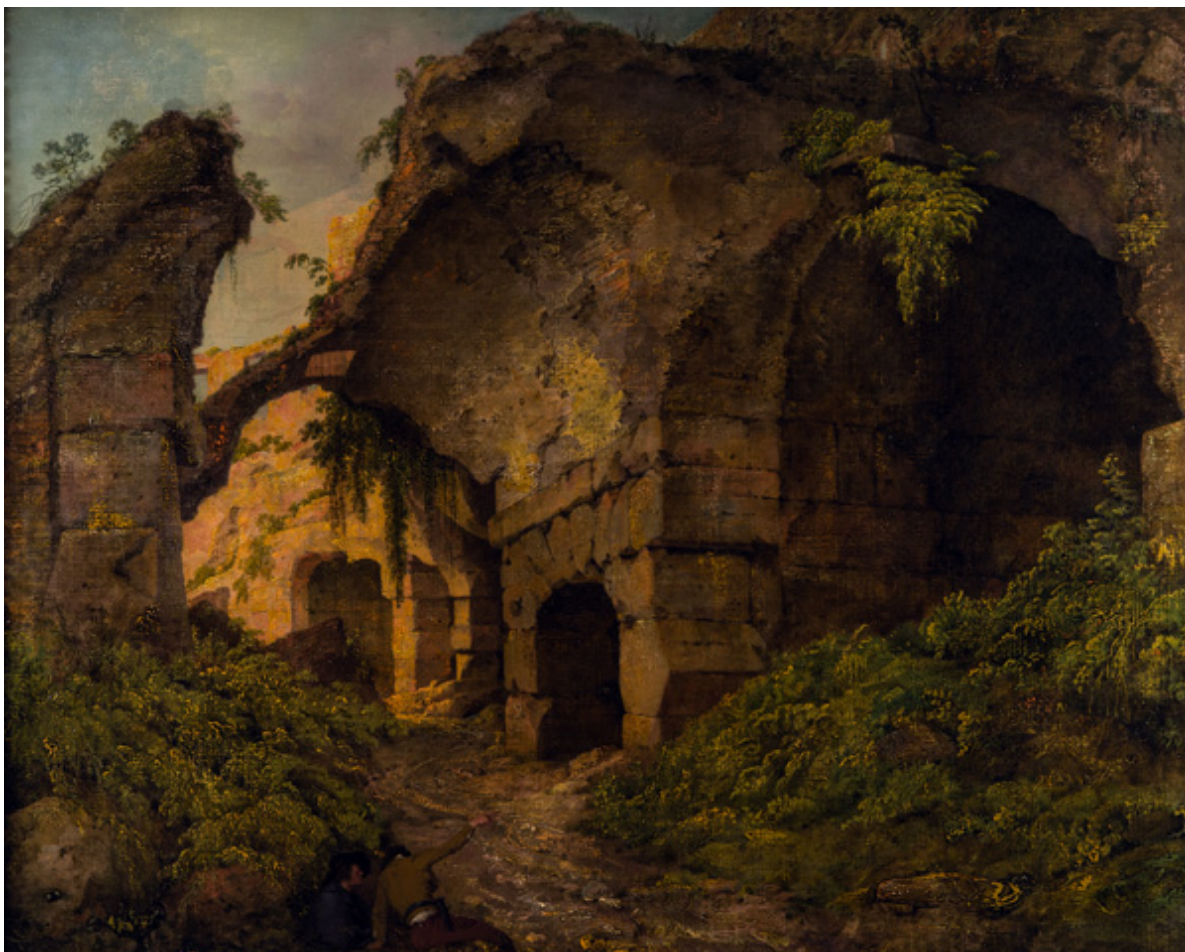
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NMDC news



Two works by Joseph Wright of Derby; the Colosseum by Daylight and the Colosseum by Moonlight, were severely over painted in the 1960s. To restore them back to their original glory, conservators have been working to reveal the original works underneath. They will be displayed as part of the Grand Tour Season 2 exhibition, Joseph Wright and the Lure of Italy. Images courtesy of Deby Museums Trust.

Come and meet us at the Museums + Heritage Show

The Museums + Heritage Show is a free event which will take place at Olympia London on 18th and 19th May, with 40+ talks, advice and information from experts and over 150 suppliers exhibiting. NMDC will be there for both days, covering partnerships, collections management and advocacy.

If you are interested in museum partnerships, then there will be the opportunity to meet Partnership Managers from some national museums in the Ask the Expert area over the two days. Lucy Shaw from University of Oxford Museums and Nial Adams from East Riding Museums (part of the Humber Museums Partnership) will discuss how they adapted to the current funding climate by delivering core museum functions in partnership as part of the Funding, Retail + Enterprise talks on Thursday 19th at 10.45am.

If you are curious about how to manage hazards (such as asbestos, firearms and radioactive material) in your collection, three collections managers from NMDC member museums will be discussing this and answering questions as part of the Collections talks on Thursday 19th at 12.35pm. They will also retire to the Ask the Expert area afterwards to answer any specific questions.

NMDC's own staff team will be in the Ask the Expert area over the two days to talk about influencing and developing good relationships with politicians, officials and funding bodies. Please pop in and say hello, pick our brains about your museum's own advocacy challenges and opportunities, see if any of our cheap or free influencing ideas might help, and take a copy of [Museums Matter](#). Keep an eye on our Twitter feed (@nmdcnews) as we will provide updates throughout the Show.

[Museums+Heritage Show](#)

Also: if you are in the East of England, NMDC will be at SHARE Museum's East SHARED Enterprise Funding Fair on 9th May at The Athenaeum in Bury St Edmonds. We'll be talking about influencing and advocacy, and how that can help encourage public and private investment. [SHARE East](#)

Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry submission

NMDC has made a submission to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry, *Countries of Culture*. Our submission outlines how museums are loved and trusted public institutions which preserve, protect and promote the nation's collective memory, knowledge and history. Museums have never been so vibrant or popular, and therefore they deliver eight public policy priorities and are able to do so because of their collections, buildings and the expertise of staff. These mean that museums have long-term fixed costs and therefore it is challenging to manage swift and significant changes in levels of public investment. NMDC is sympathetic to the predicament many local authorities are in, and highlights examples of where local authorities have thought creatively about how they can support museums as they continue to become more enterprising and community facing. NMDC also supports the approaches taken by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to invest in the long term sustainability of the museum sector, highlights the potential of partnerships with universities, and outlines mutually beneficial partnerships with national museums. NMDC urges the sector to work with funding and development organisations, Government, local authorities and MPs to maintain strategic public investment in the museum sector and create the conditions for museums to flourish. This could be achieved by:

- Ensuring there are no unnecessary barriers to enterprise;
- Celebrate the contribution museums make to public policy priorities and fully integrate museums into regional policy and economic planning, and community development;
- Investing in transition to help museums continue their successful evolution to an appropriate financially sustainable operating model (and in doing so protect previous investment); and
- Think creatively and ambitiously about how museums can work together for mutual benefit and to ensure most effective and efficient use of resources across the whole sector.

The whole document, which includes more detailed recommendations - such as closer working with Local Enterprise Partnerships, changes to business rates, transition funding and seed funding for digital innovations - is available on our website. [NMDC](#)

Sir Peter Bazalgette and Darren Henley (Chair and Chief Executive of Arts Council England) gave oral evidence to the Committee on 3rd May and you can watch this on Parliament TV. Carole Souter and Sir Peter Luff (former Chief Executive and current Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund) will give evidence on 11th May. [Parliament TV](#)

Also: The Museums Association also submitted evidence to the *Countries of Culture* inquiry. Like NMDC's document it drew on the joint museum sector submission to the Culture White Paper (led by NMDC) and makes a series of recommendations. It also sets out the impact of the decline in public investment from local authorities in museums and the role of museums in supporting their local communities. [Museums Association](#)

MuseumNext 2016

MuseumNext 2016 took place in Dublin in April. The three-day international conference looked at the future of museums, focusing on, amongst many things, audiences, finances and innovation. Videos of the conference sessions are being made available on the MuseumNext vimeo channel, with early uploads including the keynote presentation from the Director of National Museums Liverpool, David Fleming, and a presentation from the Indianapolis Museum of Art about their experience of introducing admission charges.

NMDC's Katie Childs took to the stage on the last day to discuss the future of museums with Shannon Darrugh from MoMA, Fiona Ross from Epic Ireland and Ngaire Blankenberg from Lord Cultural Resources. Katie stressed that museums had to become indispensable to their communities (local, national and global), noted that museums enjoy high levels of public trust - something hard won but easily lost - and cautioned of the risk of under-valuing knowledge and skilled staff. The discussion covered how museums could integrate digital technologies in each part of their operation, the changing museum landscape including the success of private museums, and whether physical objects will still hold the same attraction for audiences in the future.

[MuseumNextvimeo](#)

Members' news

National Media Museum visits up 11%

The National Media Museum's refocused programme has begun to pay off, with an 11% rise to 460,000 in visitors during 2015 - 16. Highlight events included a collaboration with Horrible Science which bought 30,000 visitors to the museum in just nine days. The wider Science Museum Group has also seen visitor increases averaging 4%. The National Railway Museum saw a 3% increase, driven by its Flying Scotsman season and collaborations with York Theatre Royal. Science Museum Group Director Ian Blatchford said, *"at the National Media Museum, the sharpened focus on STEM has triggered a record-breaking 11% rise in visitors, and in York the growth is a real success given the impact of recent flooding on the city and region."* [Museums Journal](#), [Science Museum](#)

£12.4 million for Manchester Museum Courtyard project

HLF has awarded Manchester Museum £12.4m for a new courtyard regeneration scheme. Plans include a new Temporary Exhibitions Gallery giving three times the space from non-permanent displays. It will allow the museum to become a leading Northern venue for international quality exhibitions. A new street facing entrance will make the museum more welcoming, and a permanent South Asia Gallery will be created in partnership with the British Museum. Alongside the physical changes the museum intends to place health well-being and social inclusion at the forefront of its mission. Work will be carried out 2018 - 2020. [M+H](#), [Manchester Evening News](#)

Clone inflatable museum stalks Manchester

Meanwhile, whilst the courtyard regeneration plans are taking shape, Manchester Museum has created an inflatable clone of its existing Victorian building to tour schools across the city. Funded by the The Zochonis Charitable Trust, it is part of a wider project to connect with pupils from some of the most disadvantaged areas. The museum inflates in just 30 minutes, will house a full class, has exploratory spaces and high end audio and video equipment. Emma Martin of Stanley Grove Primary School is enthusiastic: *"some of our families are put off going to museums or galleries. This can be because of transport costs, not knowing what there is to see, but also feeling intimidated by grand old buildings. By bringing the inflatable out to us, it will stimulate curiosity and build a bridge between our community and Manchester Museum. What a fantastic idea!"*. Manchester Museum aims to expand its programme to every school in Greater Manchester using the inflatable. [Manchester Museum](#), [Manchester Evening News](#) (short film – see inside the museum)

Digital design and current affairs: V&A at the Olympic Park

V&A has announced more details of its plans for a site in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – a seven story building likely to be open in 2021. £47m of the £49m needed to build the museum has already been raised. It is described as 'an entirely new kind of civic institution' modelling how cultural and educational organisations can work together. Space for exhibitions, residencies and research will sit side by side. Design in the digital age will be a major theme. It will also embrace contemporary political issues: *"at its core will be the ability and remit to respond quickly to current affairs, and to use objects, the V&A collection... to interpret events in the wider world."* V&A Director Martin Roth said, *"it is a chance to reinvent Henry Cole's original vision for Albertopolis for the digital age, and to engage with the astounding creativity and heritage of east London. The creation of something so new, ambitious and risk-taking is a colossal opportunity and responsibility"*. [Museums Journal](#), [V&A](#)

Also: The £120 million redevelopment at the V&A's main site is nearing completion and should open in 2017. It will include the world's first porcelain courtyard with a 1,100sq m exhibition space beneath. [ALVA](#)

No holds Bard – new Shakespeare resources

The British Library has created inventive resources to mark 400 years since the death of William Shakespeare. In partnership with Vodafone, it has produced 'digital wallpaper' showing a virtual bookshelf with original folios of some of Shakespeare's most famous plays. By using QR codes on the wallpaper, schoolchildren across the country will be able to download their own digital first editions. 300 books, maps, playbills and paintings from the library have also gone online on a new Discovering Shakespeare site. Meanwhile, the BBC is ambitiously tracking all the Shakespearean performances across the country for the past 400 years – from major venues to local town halls. [British Library](#) (Discovering Shakespeare), [BBC](#), [Vodafone](#), [DCMS blog](#)

New directors interviewed

The Art Newspaper has interviewed the new Director of Tate Modern Frances Morris about how she plans to shape the gallery. Morris has been employed at Tate for 30 years but says she was previously too wrapped up in major projects to apply for the post of Director. She adds that for the Tate "the significant shift is towards a much more international picture... The collection was originally built according to a dominant art history which we are very familiar with, but the real story is a much bigger one, because that dominant story left out a lot of places and a lot of practices and a lot of women artists". The new building will be 'the story of now' from the 1960s to the present, with the Tanks providing 'live art roots'. An experienced fundraiser, who has recruited 300 patrons, she looks forward to a greater engagement with corporate fundraising. She says 'there are lots of processes that we are going to be doing for the first time' encouraging her to be a 'stay at home' Director at least initially. [The Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only)

Also: the National Gallery's new Director, Gabriele Finaldi, gave an interview to the *Guardian*. He spoke about how the National Gallery can tell a story of European connections, what inspired him to become a curator and the challenges of acquiring works for the collection. [Guardian](#)

Cornwall Museums Partnership produces new film *Community Matters*

Cornwall Museums Partnership has produced a seven minute film celebrating its programme of events for communities. Community activities range from boatbuilding, rowing and singing, to becoming a charging Viking, or (in the case of one very small visitor) entirely daubing their body with blue paint. Stuart Slade of the National Maritime Museum Cornwall says family programming means that it gets 'audiences who don't usually think of themselves as museum visitors'. The work has ranged from Takeover Days for teenagers to work with older people who can become isolated in Cornwall. 'Uplifting', 'really fun' and 'life changing' are among the comments of visitors filmed at packed events. CMP invite you to share their film on social media. [YouTube](#)

Wallace Collection takes live subtitling in house

Following a successful funding bid and some help from the organisation Stagertext, the Wallace Collection is now able to provide live subtitling for its talks in house. Deepa Shastri of Stagertext said, "this proves that any museum or cultural venue can provide live subtitling, even if they have limited resources." [M+H](#)

Politics



Conservators work on restoring one of Joseph Wright's Colosseum paintings. Courtesy of Derby Museums Trust.

Consultation on libraries

DCMS has launched a consultation on the future of libraries to 2021. It has produced a draft ambition document, with proposed aims for the next five years, and seeks views on issues including new ways of working, what libraries can achieve, governance and delivery. It will not dictate what library services local authorities must deliver. An online survey will be open until 3rd June. [DCMS, Survey](#)

Scottish politicians at culture hustings

Scottish politicians attended a hustings to debate cultural provision, ahead of the forthcoming elections. Local authority cuts to culture were a major topic of discussion. Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said that culture had not been disproportionately cut by local authorities, even though it is not statutorily protected. She promised a new 'Cultural Experience Fund' so that pupils at all Scottish primary schools can visit museums and heritage sites. Labour MSP Claire Baker said that her party would raise income tax by 1p and use the resulting £500m to avoid cuts to education and local services including culture. Zara Kitson of the Scottish Green Party said more outreach to non-visiting groups is needed and praised the Glasgow Women's Library for doing community work 'spectacularly well'. [Museums Journal](#)

Anti-lobbying clause under review

The anti-lobbying clause which the government intended to add to its charity funding agreements has been delayed and put under review after representations from NCVO and others. The clause was intended to prevent public money from being used for lobbying, but NCVO argued that the clause would make it impossible for charities to advise government. NCVO, which is still hoping to abolish the provision completely, said, "*the clause, as it stands, goes much further than it says on the tin and will deter many charities and social enterprises from making representations to government and parliament.*" [Gov.uk, NCVO](#)

John Whittingdale and trustee selection at the NPG

Secretary of State John Whittingdale has been involved in controversy about the selection process for a new trustee of the National Portrait Gallery. 54 candidates were put forward to fill the role, with a shortlisting panel led by Sarah Anderson. John Whittingdale suggested five candidates he favoured, but allegedly complained when none were shortlisted by the panel. He reportedly asked for the removal of Anderson as Chair. A *Sunday Times* article contained details of a letter it had seen from Sir David Normington, the former Commissioner for Public Appointments, to Whittingdale. He noted that a number of Whittingdale's favoured candidates had strong connections to the Conservative Party and that selection should not be based on politics. He praised Sarah Anderson for encouraging other women to join public boards, adding "*that contribution is at risk if your complaint, which I do not believe is supported by the facts, is allowed to stand.*" The panel stood by its choice of shortlist even when asked to reconsider: at Whittingdale's request a new panel has now been convened with Anderson removed as Chair. DCMS denied there had been political intervention in public appointments saying "*the process is only being rerun in this case because the department believes the code was breached, leaving no choice but to make a formal complaint.*" A spokesperson for NPG said that the process for choosing trustees is governed by DCMS and the Gallery is not in a position to comment. [Museums Journal](#), [Independent](#)

Participation

Taking Part 2016

DCMS has published three Taking Part 'focus on' reports, exploring specific themes in statistical data for UK participation in culture and sport. The themes are libraries, social media and cross sector participation. There is also a longitudinal report, which looks at engagement with each of the DCMS sectors over three years. Findings include:

- In the longitudinal report, roughly half of all respondents said they had visited a museum or gallery in any year in the three year period. 70% had visited at least once in 3 years.
- Museums attract a tranche of visitors who come every few years so the distinction between new, occasional and former visitors is harder to track than in other sectors: a 'former' visitor may actually be someone who comes to museums, but less than annually.
- There is a core of 'consistent' visitors who may visit several times a year: these visits make up the majority of museum footfall. Of these, 9% visit every month, 40% three or four times a year and 50% once or twice a year. 71% are in the higher socio-economic group, they are also slightly more likely to be employed (70% working compared to 62% of less frequent attenders), and to own their own home (76% vs 62%).
- Of those who had not visited a museum at all over 3 years, 34% had an illness or disability.
- Among those visiting galleries more often, more free time was the most cited reason (19%). One in eight (13%) said they came more often to help with a child's education.
- In the cross sectoral report there are a number of pie charts showing the extent to which people participating in one DCMS sector also engage with others. The overlap between arts and museum audiences is large: only 5.5% visit museums but are not also arts audiences. However, of the 76% attending arts events, 30% do not go to museums. Similarly, almost all museum visitors also visit heritage sites. Around half of all museum audiences take part in sport.
- The social media report said that 70% of adults in the UK use social media, more than two thirds of these more than once a day. The report then breaks down usage by platform, gender and age. Those engaged by a DCMS sector are more likely to be on social media, with museum goers showing higher use than the average for DCMS sectors, particularly on LinkedIn. Sport participants are most frequently on social media, those who visit libraries are the least heavy users. [Gov.uk](#) ('focus on' reports), [Arts Professional](#)

Autism in museums

Blogging for the Association of Independent Museums, Claire Madge describes the museum sector's evolving offer for people with autism and how Kids in Museums is championing the work. At a recent conference Sam Thompson from the Science Museum described their Night Owls event for 16 to 24-year-olds on the spectrum. Developing the event with the community allowed the museum to create popular talks such as one on mobile phone design, which the museum would not have programmed without their input. [AIM](#)

Minorities and women on the shortlist: new research

As Arts Council England and the recent Culture White Paper encourage cultural organisations to become more diverse, new research published in the Harvard Business Review demonstrates that the diversity of shortlists affects whether a BME or female candidate is appointed. The US researchers found that a single woman on an otherwise male shortlist had 0% chance of being appointed. However, when there were two or more women on a shortlist their chance of being hired was virtually equal to that of the male candidates. There were similar findings for shortlisted BME candidates: where race and gender are concealed in the shortlisting process, minorities and women always do better. [Harvard Business Review](#)

Also: The BBC has committed to making sure that 50% of all leading roles will be female across all genres of programme by 2020. There will also be a similar target of 15% for BME representation. [BBC](#)

From hard to soft power in museums

Arts Council England's Director of Museums John Orna-Ornstein and visual arts critic Aidan Dunne have both written about the journey of museums from hard to soft power – and from a paternalistic approach to something genuinely collaborative. Orna-Ornstein describes this as 'Museums 3.0' driven by both funding constraints and the web. He cites the practical support and swift fundraising in the wake of the BAC fire as an example of the potential good result of this sort of relationship. Dunne takes the new Knowledge Quarter near King's Cross as a starting point – encompassing institutions from the British Library to the *Guardian* and asks 'if museums are agents of soft power, whose interests do they represent?' The answer, a range of curators suggest, is that to retain the loyalty of audiences which identify strongly with their cities, the museum must listen to and reflect their concerns – which may include issues from flooding to refugee settlement and crime. Orna-Ornstein points out that the unreconstructed approach is still alive and well however: "*I saw this most acutely in Kolkata, when I watched busloads of people shipped in from distant villages and literally prodded around the Victoria Memorial displays in the apparent hope that the experience would better them.*" [ACE blog](#), [Irish Times](#)

Sustaining local and civic museums

Peter Bazalgette on the 'single biggest challenge for our sector' - local government funding

Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of Arts Council England, has given a speech to the New Local Government Network about the 'single biggest challenge for our sector' - the pressure on local authority budgets. Local authorities remain the biggest funders of culture in the UK. Northern councils alone spent around a third of a billion on culture in 2015, but this is a decrease of £70m – equivalent to the whole Arts Council England spend on National Portfolio Organisations nationwide last year – meaning that increasingly difficult choices have to be made.

- Peter Bazalgette said that the Chancellor's national settlement for arts and museums had been very positive. However, local museums depended on local councils for £184m in 2014/15 and 'museums are at the sharp end' of the cuts leading to reduced education services, reduced opening hours and a growing trend for museum closures – including in Lancashire and Nottinghamshire as well as Orpington Priory and Haig Colliery Mining Museum. There have been 14 closures in last 5 years, a period in which local authorities have cut £33m.
- Local government understands the benefits of culture and the 17% or £236m cuts to culture are proportionately less than cuts to council funding as a whole. However, the costs of social care are growing as funds decline further. Through alternative income streams, diversification and tax credits the cultural sector has 'managed pretty well' up until now. NPOs have managed to create a 17% increase in income despite 27% local authority cuts. Bazalgette said 'our real concern is the next four years.'

However, he also highlighted a number of good ideas councils have used to continue to make funds available for culture. These include:

- Saving money through shared services – such as a Manchester scheme where cultural centres and library services share space.
- Collaborations with higher education – for instance between the University of the West of England and the city of Bristol, or Durham University displaying material from the former Light Infantry Museum.

- Imaginative new sources of local revenue – Kent County Council has asked firms making bids for large waste contracts to consider how they can contribute to arts and culture as part of their offer. Liverpool is piloting a voluntary tourism levy on businesses which benefit from city visitors and a hotel bed tax.
- Preventive health: NHS Gloucester and the local council are working on a scheme where the arts are used to deliver evidence based clinical outcomes in conditions from cancer to dementia.
- Durham Council has ring fenced funding to allow the Bowes Museum to host the Yves Saint Laurent show which it could not usually afford. Once it puts on the show any profits will be divided between Bowes and the Council. The Council will put the profits into a ring fenced pot for cultural initiatives.
- Elsewhere there are schemes to redirect money from car parks to museums. Seed money from ACE allowed Yorkshire Sculpture Park to make several hundred thousand each year in car parking fees.
- More collaborative tourism plans: Cornwall 365 aims to attract tourists to the county throughout the year, and Lincoln's citywide offer around the Magna Carta sought to attract visitors during the 800th anniversary.

Bazalgette concluded by saying that ACE talks to 240 councils each year bringing its experience and expertise – and urging councils to enter talks and take up the offer of workshops. “*The alternative is really bleak – the loss of irreplaceable cultural assets, the loss of a sense of place.*” [ACE](#), [YouTube](#) (film of complete speech) [SWFed](#) (Gloucester NHS collaboration), [Arts Professional](#)

Choirs for emphysema and mental health in museums

The New Economics Foundation has published a new ACE-funded report exploring how councils are beginning to use arts and culture as a way of delivering mental and physical health services. Examples include a bespoke choir in Gloucestershire for people recovering from respiratory conditions after they have been discharged from pulmonary rehabilitation. Kent County Council has spent £4 million on a community mental health programme which involves theatres and museums. NEF's report includes proposals for how to grow this vein of work, such as building capacity in cultural organisations. [NEF](#)

Birmingham holds 'unconstrained inquiry' into cultural investment

Birmingham City Council is holding a deliberately 'unconstrained' inquiry into how it can grow cultural investment in the city. Partners include ACE, Aston Business School and the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce. Topics under discussion include using cultural assets to free up revenue, sharing risk with developers and using shared equity, commonly used in the screen industry. Birmingham's cultural budgets have been intensely squeezed since 2010. Council Chief Executive Mark Rogers said “*we can't do this on our own; this inquiry is very much a joint enterprise, bringing together the best thinkers to enable us to have a thriving and vibrant cultural future for the city and surrounding area for years to come.*” The results of the enquiry will be announced later in the year. [Arts Professional](#)

Events

Museum collections, contemporary art

What is it like to be a contemporary artist working in response to a museum collection? RAMM is holding a Contemporary Collaboration Conference on 3rd November featuring a number of artists who have worked in this way including Mark Anstee, and Professor Sonia Boyce MBE RA, plus curators bringing a museum perspective. Tickets are just £6. [RAMM](#)

The Art of Fundraising

Oxford University Museums Partnership is holding an event on the Art of Fundraising on 14th June at the Ashmolean. It explores how recent years have seen the context and dynamics of public funding changing fundamentally. Cultural organisations need to get better at asking for money whilst focusing their attention on increasing and diversifying funding sources. The event has been designed in partnership with a cohort of early-career fundraisers from the Arts Fundraising Fellowship Programme. Tickets are £50. [OUMP](#)

Call for papers: diversifying the use of museum buildings

Oxford University Museums Partnership would like to invite submissions from colleagues working in museums or cultural organisations which demonstrate a diversity of approaches to venue hire; from weddings, corporate hire and filming to hosting gigs, late nights and sleep overs, and other quirky events such as 'date nights' to contribute to an upcoming conference. [OUMP](#)

Museums and cultural landscapes: ICOM 2016

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) is holding its 24th General Conference in Milan on 3rd – 9th July. The topic is how museums and their collections should connect to the wider cultural heritage landscape around them. The organisers write: "*museums should become musei diffusi, extended museums and garrisons to protect the cultural heritage conserved outside their walls.*" Day passes begin at €150, tickets for the whole conference are from €350. [ICOM](#)

Call for papers: research conference on Arts and Dementia

A first international conference on Arts and Dementia will be taking place at the Royal Society for Public Health on 9th – 10th March 2017. International keynote speakers are already confirmed, but the organisers are seeking further papers. Researchers, artists, clinicians, people with dementia and caregivers will be participating. Up to 10 doctoral students will have their conference fees covered if they are presenting a paper. The submission deadline is 15th July 2016. Full details from paul.camic@canterbury.ac.uk. [RSPH](#) (scroll, to see full flyer)

Children's Arts Week

Children's Art Week is taking place from the 11th - 19th of June, run by engage. Last year 18,000 children took part in 146 events. Venues including museums and galleries are invited to register their participation before 9th May. The first 40 venues to register will be eligible for a £50 support grant. [Engage](#)

Let's Get Real: cultural retail and identity

Culture24's next Let's Get Real conference takes place on 27th October at The Whitworth, and super early bird tickets are £75. This year the focus is cultural retail, and it explores practical strategies and how to find a balance between culture and commerce. [Culture24](#)

Museums at Night this month

The Museums at Night festival takes place on 11th-14th May, with over 500 events to choose from across the UK. The organisers encourage museum staff to attend if they are not organising an event themselves. Listing are [here](#). Tweets in support of the event are also welcomed, possible text and an image [here](#).

Contemporary Art Society's Reactivate the Collection conference

The Contemporary Art Society's annual conference's place at the Museum of London on 13th May. 'Reactivate the Collection' looks at approaches including inviting artists to curate collections, and using partnerships to make collections more digitally available to new audiences. Tickets are £10 for non members. [CAS](#)

Money Matters Symposium

Museums Galleries Scotland is running a 'new kind of training event' to teach income generating skills. Themes include enterprising boards, maximising income, fundraising, loans, and museum case studies. MGS will also be offering bursaries for participants to get further training after the course. The event takes place on 25th May at the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh. [MGS](#) (booking), [MGS](#)

Touring

TEG publishes new touring resources

The Touring Exhibitions Group has published three substantial new resources, the product of a £40k grant from the ACE Museums Resilience Fund. They are:

- An analysis of touring exhibitions practice in the UK
- Economics of touring exhibitions: recommendations for practice
- A toolkit for developing an economic and production strategy

The research found that the biggest growth in touring is among independent museums and those based in the North. The average touring exhibition is 200sqm, and the average budget £62.5k, although exhibitions under £5k are well represented. No public UK touring exhibitions touring to UK venues have made a profit, but organisations value the wider benefits of touring – from profile raising to audience development. The greatest experience of touring is held at national and local authority museums, which are most likely to have been involved in touring for more than a decade. [TEG](#), [M+H](#)

The benefits of Working Internationally

Chair of ICOM, Dr Carol Scott has blogged about the ongoing Working Internationally Regional Project, delivered in partnership with, amongst others, NMDC. The Project helps regional museums to develop international partnerships. She highlights some common misconceptions – particularly the idea that international work is an 'add on', when in fact it can be used strategically to re-energise a whole programme and bring greater public value. There are also more funding options available than museums may realise: a wealth of online resources section are available on the ICOM site. [M+H](#), [ICOM](#) (resources including funding)

Awards

EMYA 2016: from millennia of history to microbial life

Imaginative and sometimes brave museum services across Europe have been celebrated in this year's EMYA awards, run by the European Museum Forum. POLIN, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews has won European Museum of the Year 2016. Opened in 2013, the museum tells the story of a millennia of Jewish history, and stands in what was once a vibrant Jewish area of Warsaw. Also in Poland, the new European Solidarity Centre which explores the Solidarity movement in Poland received two awards. Vukovar City Museum, Croatia, itself completely destroyed by war in 1991, has worked on reconstructing the social and cultural life of Vukovar since 1997 and won an award for social outreach. Micropia in the Netherlands, which tells the story of microbial life, won an award for challenging common perceptions of museums. Two UK institutions won special commendations: the Science Museum for its new Information Age gallery and The Whitworth for its imaginative redesign. [M+H](#), [EMYA](#), [POLIN](#), [European Solidarity Centre](#), [Vukovar City Museum](#), [Micropia](#)

AnnoTate and ArtUK among the GLAMi winners

The international museums tech conference Museums and the Web has given its annual GLAMi awards to exceptional digital projects from around the world. Tate Britain was Platinum winner for its AnnoTate project in which members of the public helped transcribe 17,000 letters and documents written by artists. ArtUK won bronze for its major work organising 3,000 public collections. The Paul Mellon Centre also won Bronze for its new free British Art Studies online journal. The Gold winner was a website showing a total solar eclipse from Micronesia in real time, by the Exploratorium in San Francisco. [Museums and the Web](#), [AnnoTate](#), [Total Solar Eclipse](#)

Historic England launch Angel Awards for 2016

Historic England has launched its Angel Awards for 2016, which celebrates people and communities who rescue or renovate historic buildings. The application deadline is midnight on 3rd July. [Historic England](#)

Museum of the Year shortlist announced

The Art Fund has announced the five museums shortlisted for its £100k Museum of the Year Award. They are:

- Arnolfini, Bristol which was refurbished in 2015 and has begun a new partnership with the University of the West of England to create a city campus for 1500 students.
- Bethlem Museum of the Mind, which reopened in March 2015 and has dramatically increased visitor numbers.
- Jupiter Artland, a sculpture park 12 miles from Edinburgh which has opened a newly constructed ballroom for indoor exhibitions.

- V&A, which had a particularly strong year in 2015, including the bestselling *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* exhibition.
- York Art Gallery, which has reopened with a striking display of its ceramic collection.

The winner will be announced on 9th July. For a second year the public is being invited to take photographs of the institutions: the photographer Rankin will choose one for each venue to win a prize. [Art Fund](#), [Guardian](#)

Funding

Tate argues it should not contribute to funding regulator

Following the Etherington report which found that some charities are bringing the sector into disrepute by over forceful fundraising techniques, a new Funding Regulator is being set up. 50 large charities have each been asked to contribute £15k to its setup costs. However, the charitable arm of Tate has declined to contribute. Tate argues that it is already regulated by DCMS and has never participated in the fundraising techniques criticised by Etherington. It adds that it fully supports the idea of a regulator but that it is 'not clear that it would be appropriate to contribute'. [Civil Society](#)

Increase in culture bequests in wills

A report by legacy data analysts Smee and Ford suggests that more people are being persuaded to leave bequests to cultural organisations in their wills. 12.5% of organisations mentioned in wills for the first time in 2015 were cultural or heritage bodies. This is an increase from the 9% in 2012 when records began. [Arts Professional](#)

BP funding and the arts

BP has announced that in addition to ending its funding of the Tate, it will no longer be supporting Edinburgh International Festival which it has sponsored for 34 years. It gave a similar reason to the one for its departure from the Tate: an 'extremely challenging business environment'. Meanwhile the organisation Art Not Oil has used the Freedom of Information Act to obtain documents from national museums which it claims shows BP influencing the content of exhibitions. All the museums concerned refute this interpretation. The British Museum was among those denying that their correspondence showed any undue influence, after BP agreed to pay for the purchase of contemporary Aboriginal art for the museum's collections. "*Corporate partners of the British Museum do not have any influence over the content of our exhibitions. The situation you reference concerns the acquisition of a work for the permanent collection, which was being generously supported by BP.*" [Guardian](#), [Guardian](#)

Last chance to see?

The case for saving UK overseas heritage

Former English Heritage director Philip Davies has proposed that the UK government should set up a small £2m pilot fund to preserve UK heritage overseas – from whaling stations in the South Atlantic to now ruined former government buildings in India. He argues that the work will aid local regeneration while also acting as an advertisement for the UK as a source of expertise and as a tourist destination. The *Telegraph* has published a series of haunting images of ruined buildings from the colonial past to illustrate the sort of work that might be undertaken. [Telegraph](#)

Earliest paintings of merchant class at risk of leaving UK

An export bar has been placed on a set of 16th century portraits, believed to be the earliest paintings of an English family who were not royals or aristocrats. The pictures, described as a 'remarkable survival' show the Smythes, headed by the international merchant Thomas Smythe who was also a London customs collector. The recommended price is £350k, and the bar is in place until 21st July, with a possible extension to October. [Gov.uk](#)

Acceptance in lieu of Lucien Freud painting

An unfinished Lucien Freud self portrait from the 1980s has been gifted to the National Portrait Gallery under the Acceptance in Lieu scheme. The picture joins sketchbooks and letters which the Gallery received in 2015; all will appear in a small display from 11th June. [ACE](#)

Also: The Welsh Government has accepted 72 items associated with the Battle of Waterloo from the estate of the seventh Marquess of Anglesey in lieu of tax. The objects will continue to be displayed at a National Trust property. [Welsh Government](#)

Re-openings

Cynon Valley Museum reopens

After being open for only one day a month for more than two years due to funding cuts, Cynon Valley Museum is to re-open. The Museum is now run by a trust. Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, which withdrew funding, has nevertheless been able to attract £62.5k from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the new trust's work. Chair, Dinah Pye, said, "*the [council's] endearing commitment to the museum, combined with the relentless hard work of trustee members to successfully secure additional funding from several other sources, has enabled the Trust to preserve a hugely important local heritage asset for future generations.*" [Wales Online](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Museum of Brands moves to London Lighthouse

The Museum of Brands, which tells the story of the rise of advertising and branded goods since 1800 is moving to the former London Lighthouse building, where it will have more room for displays and reach a wider public. The museum is hoping to quadruple its visitors in the next four years. [Museum of Brands](#), [M+H](#)

Get Creative marks its first anniversary

April 2nd marked the first year of the Get Creative collaboration, which saw the BBC joining forces with hundreds of arts organisations including Fun Palaces and What Next? to encourage more people to take part in creative activities. Since Johnny Vegas launched the initiative with a wonky pottery demonstration, one million have visited the website and 1080 organisations have delivered hundreds of creativity events. Anniversary events on April 2nd included animation workshops in Wales and improv classes in Liverpool. [BBC](#)

Three-year dispute at National Museums Scotland resolved

The Scottish Government has intervened to resolve the three-year dispute between the PCS union and National Museums Scotland over weekend pay. It has contributed £900k to £1.2m package which will be used for one-off compensation payments to 179 staff, who will no longer receive weekend working allowances. Planned strikes in April and May have now been cancelled. [Museums Journal](#)

Sketching and knickers: twitterstorm over drawing in museums

Debate erupted in the twittersphere this month after Guardian journalist Oliver Wainright posted a picture of the V&A's 'no sketching' sign at its new exhibition *Undressed: A Brief History of Underwear*. Wainright condemned the request as against 'everything the museum stands for.' The V&A told *Hyperallergic* that loan agreements at some temporary exhibitions do not allow sketching, but that sketchers are still welcome in the rest of the museum. Press coverage also discussed the issue of sketching in very crowded exhibitions with long queues. Practice varies globally: many major museums do not allow sketching at temporary exhibitions, whilst Rijksmuseum launched a campaign last November urging visitors to sketch exhibits instead of taking photographs. *Hyperallergic* concludes, "*while it's unfortunate that artists are unable to draw certain works of art in buildings intended to educate, no museum should be shamed for a policy that is far from unique and that really stems from legally binding contracts.*" [Hyperallergic](#), [Guardian](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Jobs

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

- [Photographic Collections Conservator - National Library of Scotland](#)
- [Conservation Manager, Sculpture and Installation - Tate](#)
- [Visitor Insights Administrator - the British Museum](#)
- [Visitor Experience Supervisor - RAF Museum](#)
- [Learning Producer \(Secondary Schools\) - National Army Museum](#)

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

And finally...

The BBC has been digging through its archives for images of the women who worked for the corporation in the 1920s and 30s, when it was a brand new industry. Flapper hats, bobbed hair and horn-rimmed glasses meet new technology in the pictures. For the first decade there was no 'Marriage Bar' - a commonly enforced piece of employment law which meant women could be asked to retire when they married. In 1928 the BBC took the almost unheard of step of offering maternity leave to its Director of School Broadcasting, Mary Sommerville. Women were also responsible for the 1924 launch of the programme [Women's Hour](#), which, after an early example of a listener vote, contained fewer features on domesticity. [BBC](#)

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