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November 2007

Welcome to this month's NMDC newsletter which contains an update on our activities and the latest news from the museum sector in the UK and beyond. www.nationalmuseums.org.uk

Members' News

London, Sugar and Slavery Gallery Opens at Museum in Docklands

London, Sugar and Slavery, a new permanent gallery examining London's involvement in transatlantic slavery and its legacy, will open at the Museum in Docklands on 10 November 2007. Personal accounts, film, music, interactives and over 140 objects will explore the trade in sugar and humans, slave resistance and the campaign for abolition. A sound and light experience will encourage visitors to consider the meaning of enslavement and freedom, and space in the gallery will be given to community projects designed to involve Londoners of all ages.

The public opening of the gallery will include storytelling, music, a debate, a remembrance service and a play reading. Admission to the Museum will be free on 10 and 11 November.

www.molq.org.uk/English/NewsRoom/Current/LSSlavery.htm

Launchpad at the Science Museum

Launchpad, the Science Museum's interactive gallery, will reopen on 24 November following relocation and development. The new gallery will be a third bigger than before and contain over 50 interactive exhibits, shows and demonstrations, offering visitors an opportunity to capture their shadow, launch a rocket, spin like a skater or control a magnetic cloud. www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/launchpad/

VisionWorks Opens at the Tower of London

Minister of State for Science and Innovation, Ian Pearson opened a new student material science zone at the Tower of London. *VisionWorks*, a partnership between Bayer MaterialScience and Royal Armouries, will enable thousands of 5-16 year old UK students each year to have a hands-on science learning experience, using objects from the past and present.

www.royalarmouries.org/extsite/view.jsp?sectionId=3446

Wallace Collection Live

The Wallace Collection is launching *Wallace Live*, a database of collections information available via the Internet, on 7 November. *Wallace Live* will eventually contain a record and image of every work of art in the collection, enabling visitors and non-visitors to enjoy the richness of the collections, which cannot be loaned. *Wallace Live* is part of a wider programme which aims to exploit the extensive information assets of Hertford House and the Wallace Collection in new and innovative ways. A variety of on-line resources are being developed, including a CD-Rom on European Arms and Armour and web based learning packages. www.wallacecollection.org/thecollection/wallacelive

Awards for NMDC Members

The **Imperial War Museum Duxford** has won the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year category at the East of England Tourism Awards, which highlight quality in the tourism industry. The museum, which was also Highly Commended in the Best Tourism Experience category, will go forward to the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2008 in Liverpool in April 2008. duxford.iwm.org.uk/server/show/nav.00d

The National Cold War Exhibition at the **RAF Museum Cosford** was named Large Visitor Attraction of the Year at the Tourism West Midlands Awards and will represent the region at the national Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2008. The exhibition has attracted more than 310,000 visitors since it opened in February. www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/news/article.cfm?news_id=140

RAF Museum Cosford also won the Building Award at the 2007 British Construction Industry Awards. The building was commended for its energy efficiency; sophisticated design; and use of specialist sub-contractors and standard products. www.rafmuseum.org.uk/cosford/news/article.cfm?news_id=139

Simon Sainsbury Bequest to Tate and National Gallery

It has been announced that Simon Sainsbury (1930-2006) bequeathed 18 paintings from his art collection to the National Gallery and Tate. Five paintings by Edgar Degas, Paul Gauguin, Claude Monet and Henri Rousseau will go to the National Gallery. Tate will receive 13 works by artists including Francis Bacon, Pierre Bonnard, Lucian Freud and Thomas Gainsborough. A display of the donated works will open at Tate Britain in summer 2008. Tate director Nicholas Serota called it "one of the most important bequests" to the nation in the last 100 years. www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/12962.htm
www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about/press/2007/sainsburybequest.htm

National Archives to Support Government Review of Access to Historical Records

The Prime Minister has commissioned a review of when historical records are transferred to The National Archives and opened to public access. The National Archives will support the review, which will be led by Paul Dacre, Editor in Chief of Associated Newspapers and a member of the Press Complaints Commission. The review will look at whether the current 30 year waiting period should be reduced and is due to report in spring 2008. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/176.htm

National Portrait Gallery Hospital Schools Project

More than 200 children and young people from four hospital schools will take part in a new Hospital Schools outreach programme, which will use the National Portrait Gallery's exhibition *Pop Art Portraits* to inspire children to work with artists and photographers on a multi-media project.

This is the first London-based project to receive funding from the new Arts & Business *Invest* Programme and 20 volunteers from Lehman Brothers, sponsors of the exhibition, will record the project and work with the children in hospital. A report will be commissioned to inform practitioners about the methods used and provide a best practice tool-kit. www.npg.org.uk/live/prelhospital.asp

Mobile Tate

Architects De Rijke Marsh Morgan have been appointed to work on the feasibility of a project to create a Mobile Tate, to extend Tate's work outside its four galleries and create a new space for art in locations across the UK that will engage people, particularly young people, who do not usually visit galleries and museums. The architects will advise on the preliminary design and support the feasibility study. The study for a Mobile Tate forms part of Tate's national strategy that will be developed as a major cultural programme, starting in 2008. www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/11899.htm

Current Issues

2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review

On 9 October 2007 the Government announced its Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), which allocates funding to government departments for the next three years (2008-11). The Treasury announced an increase in the resource budget for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) from £1.6 billion in 2007-08 to £1.8 billion by 2010-11, 6.6% annual average growth. The majority of this increase will go towards the 2012 Olympic Games. Excluding the Olympic Games, DCMS will receive an increase in line with inflation, calculated at 2.7% per annum by the Treasury. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E/C/pbr_csr07_annexd13_162.pdf

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling, said in his speech to the House of Commons that the settlement: "guarantees an inflation increase for the arts, free access to museums and galleries, and extra sport...It will also deliver the cultural Olympiad in the run-up to London 2012".

[House of Commons Hansard Debates for 09 Oct 2007 \(pt 0004\)](#)

A DCMS announcement on the allocation of funding describes the CSR settlement as "generous" and says "this builds on record investment in arts and culture over the past 10 years so that an even wider range of people will benefit from high quality cultural experiences".

In addition, a series of reforms within DCMS, in line with its recent Capability Review, and a value for money reform programme, will generate annual net cash-releasing savings of £148 million by 2010-11.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms112_07.htm

Maurice Davies, deputy director of the Museums Association, described the comprehensive spending review settlement for the DCMS as "better than anticipated". www.museumsassociation.org/14878&_IXNEWS_=27

Art Fund Director David Barrie said "the reality is that after all the investment of the past ten years we are seeing a significant shift away from the arts towards sport and in particular to fund the Olympics". The statement notes that museum costs are rising faster than the Treasury rate of inflation. www.artfund.org/news/637

National Museums and Galleries

Revenue grant aid to England's national museums and galleries will increase from £302 million this year to £332 million in 2010/11. National museums and galleries will receive a settlement in line with the treasury calculated rate of inflation at 2.7% and there will be additional funding for special projects:

- £1.4 million for the new Museum of Liverpool development;
- £1.9 million for the Natural History Museum Darwin Centre Phase 2 running costs;
- £2.19 million for running costs at the Sackler Centre for Arts Education at the Victoria and Albert Museum;
- £0.93 million for the cost of merging the Museum of London with the Museum in Docklands.

Capital settlements for national museums and galleries are yet to be announced.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms117_07.htm

Speaking to Museums Journal, Natural History Museum Director Michael Dixon said: "I believe this is a positive outcome for the arts. James Purnell and Margaret Hodge have successfully argued the case and they deserve great credit for this."

MLA and Renaissance in the Regions

DCMS resource funding for the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) will rise from £61.6m in 2007/08 to £62.4m in 2010/11. Within this, funding for the Renaissance in the Regions programme will receive an index-linked CSR settlement, rising at 2.7% a year, from £45 million this year to £48.7 million in 2010/11. This represents an effective cut in funding for MLA outside Renaissance in the Regions.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms125_07.htm

Mark Taylor, Director of the Museums Association, said: "The Renaissance settlement is good and means that hubs can now plan for the next three years, although it is disappointing there is no extra funding." www.museumsassociation.org/14972&IXPOS=manews1.1

Roy Clare, Chief Executive of MLA, said: "The MLA Partnership can emerge from this period stronger and better than ever...The objectives for improving effectiveness and efficiency are tough; there is no time to lose and we must rapidly build up and reinforce our reputation for delivery."

MLA plans to reduce its costs by more than 20%, by unifying its regional agencies, moving some functions out of London, relocating to smaller premises in the capital and making some posts redundant. www.mla.gov.uk/website/news/press_releases/CSR_Renaissance_plus

Arts Council England

Arts Council England will receive an extra £50 million by 2011, with funding rising from £417 million this year to £467 million in 2010/11, a real-term annual increase of 1.1% (12% over the whole period).

Sir Christopher Frayling, Chair of Arts Council England, said: "This is a very good result...We have campaigned long and hard for this settlement and in the context of a tough spending round it is good to know that the government has listened to the case we put for the arts...This increase will allow us to build on the current excellent health of the arts in England."

www.artscouncil.org.uk/pressnews/press_detail.php?browse=recent&id=996

Arts Industry reports that the campaign by the arts, with its emphasis on achievement, had helped make the case for funding. www.artsindustry.co.uk/news.asp?id=63

Other DCMS Sectors

The CSR confirms the first phase of Government investment of £3.62 billion over the next three years to deliver the **Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012**, as announced in March 2007.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms113_07.htm

The DCMS grant to **English Heritage** will rise from £123.7 million at present to £130.7 million in 2010/11, below the level of inflation. English Heritage will be expected to make savings in staff and administration costs, focussing more of its funding on grants to maintain historic properties for the nation. www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms118_07.htm

DCMS resource funding for **tourism** will reduce from £55.1 million this year, to £45.8 million in 2010/11, reflecting a decision to target funding at infrastructure and cultural institutions. DCMS has also announced a review of how best to maximise the impact of DCMS tourism funding.

www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Press_notices/archive_2007/dcms123_07.htm

The 2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review: Meeting the aspirations of the British people is available at: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/report/pbr_csr07_repindex.cfm

Public Service Agreements

The Government has announced cross-departmental Public Service Agreements (PSAs), setting out priorities for the CSR07 period. 30 PSAs are grouped under four headings: *Sustainable growth and prosperity* (PSAs 1-7); *Fairness and opportunity for all* (PSAs 8-17); *Stronger communities and a better quality of life* (PSAs 18-26); and *A more secure, fair and environmentally sustainable world* (PSAs 27-30).

Culture and heritage targets are part of PSA 21 *Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities*, led by the Department of Communities and Local Government. Within this, Indicator Six focuses on "the extent to which people participate in culture and sport."

DCMS is the lead department for PSA Delivery Agreement 22: *to Deliver a successful Olympic Games and Paralympic Games with a sustainable legacy and get more children and young people taking part in high quality PE and sport*. Indicator Four notes the expected increase in public participation in cultural and community activities associated with the 2012 games, but the indicator refers only to uptake of sporting activities. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psacomunities.cfm

2007 Pre-Budget Report and Comprehensive Spending Review: Public Service Agreements index is at: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psaindex.cfm

Government Response to Caring for Our Collections Report

The Government has published its response to the Culture Media and Sport Select Committee's Report *Caring for our Collections*. It states: "Our museums, galleries and archives are, indeed, among the best in the world. They are an integral part of the cultural offer which makes the UK both one of the most exciting countries to visit and one of the best in which to live".

The Government response rejects the report's view that funding increases in line with inflation "may not meet real and unavoidable increases in running costs", citing major increases in grant in aid and capital funding to national museums in the last 10 years and improved fundraising from other sources.

On tax incentives for philanthropy, the response states that the government is particularly keen "to see better use made of the existing incentives for philanthropy". It points out that the Treasury is consulting on measures to increase the take up of Gift Aid and states that the Government "will continue to try to identify ways to increase the uptake of existing forms of tax efficient giving".

The response welcomes the Committee's encouragement of the development of stronger links between national museums and regional, and local, museums and highlights work by the NMDC UK Affairs Committee and MLA looking at ways to improve and increase such partnerships.

The response acknowledges the success of Renaissance in the Regions and says that recommendations for its future will be considered as part of the MLA review of Renaissance due in June 2008.

www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/F08EF45A-8DC1-4D2A-BA2E-0BA24ED49C80/0/Cm7233_GovResponseCaringCollections.pdf

Arts & Business Online Tax Guide

Arts & Business (A&B), which is dedicated to increasing private investment in the arts, has launched an on-line tax guide explaining how to give efficiently and effectively to the arts. The guide, for arts fundraisers, donors and wealth managers, aims to demonstrate that it is easy to give to the arts. Speaking at the launch, Margaret Hodge, Minister for Culture, Creative Industries & Tourism, said that encouraging private giving to culture is one of her priorities, but that it remains a challenge to create a culture in which people feel that giving to the arts and culture is part of their lives.

www.aandb.org.uk/taxguide/

Headline Findings from the Taking Part Child Survey

The first report based on the DCMS Taking Part child survey outlines baseline levels of engagement amongst 11 to 15 year olds. Virtually all children had engaged in at least one cultural or sporting activity during the last 12 months. 55% of children attended a museum or gallery and of these, 82% visited out of school lessons (45% of all children). When asked to rate their visits to museums and galleries (on a scale of 1, awful to 10, brilliant), 46% gave a rating from 5 to 7, and 45% from 8 to 10.

[Taking Part: The National Survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport - Headline findings from the child survey](#)

China-UK: Connections through Culture development grants

The British Council is offering a number of small development grants to UK organisations embarking on projects with Chinese partners, to further face-to-face discussions to develop projects beyond initial expressions of interest. The deadline for applications for visits taking place before the end of May 2008 is **15 November 2007**. ctc.britishcouncil.org.cn/en/info/communicate/grant-application.jsp

Northern Ireland Assembly Motion for Increase in Arts Funding

The Northern Ireland Assembly has passed a motion calling on the Executive to "raise the level of arts funding to at least the United Kingdom average within the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review". The motion "recognises the critical role that the arts can play in promoting a positive international image of Northern Ireland, attracting visitors and growing the local economy and the contribution that community arts make to social cohesion". The proposed budget for the arts for 2008-2011 is due to be published in November. www.niassembly.gov.uk/record/reports2007/071009.htm

Transition Director for Creative Scotland

The Joint Board of the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen have announced the appointment of Anne Bonnar as Transition Director to lead the project to establish the new cultural development body, Creative Scotland. Anne has been Chair of the Federation of Scottish Theatre and co-founded arts management consultancy Bonnar Keenlyside, where she specialises in leading major change, organisational development and recovery projects. She is a director of the National Theatre of Scotland and trustee of the National Galleries of Scotland. www.scottisharts.org.uk/1/latestnews/1004932.aspx

The Scottish Arts Council will host a cultural summit next February to explore and debate issues relating to the development of Creative Scotland. www.scottisharts.org.uk/1/latestnews/1004846.aspx

Inspiration, Identity, Learning: The Value of Museums: Second Study

Since 2003 the DCMS and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), now Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), have sponsored a partnership between national and regional museums designed to increase and deepen relationships between museums and schools and communities. An evaluation of the programme, which involved twelve national museums and over fifty regional museum partners in seventeen projects, was carried out by the University of Leicester.

The research concludes that the programme has been successful, with a strong emphasis on working towards social inclusion, effective and deepening partnerships between the educational and museum sectors, powerful learning outcomes for pupils and the potential for strong partnerships between museums and communities. [Inspiration, Identity, Learning: The Value of Museums: Second Study](#)

Sainsbury Review of Government Science and Innovation Policies

Lord Sainsbury of Turville has published his review of the role of science and innovation in ensuring the UK remains competitive in a globalised economy, which was commissioned by the Chancellor. The review warns that emerging research nations are challenging the UK's leading position and calls for a major campaign to enhance the teaching of science and technology, including raising the number of qualified teachers, establishing a National Science Competition and rationalising schemes to inspire young people to take up careers in science and engineering.

In response, the Government pledged £1 billion over the next three years to boost business innovation and technology development and a new science and innovation strategy, which would incorporate plans for implementing the review. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/sainsbury_review/sainsbury_index.cfm

History Matters Campaign Report

Around 1.2 million people responded to the History Matters - Pass It On campaign in 2006. Heritage Link, English Heritage, the National Trust, Historic Houses Association and the Heritage Lottery Fund have published a report on the campaign, which includes some of the reasons that history matters to people, taken from the 10,000 History Matters postcards and 20,000 declarations of support received. The report is available at: www.heritagelink.org.uk/docs/WhyHistoryMatters07.pdf

DCMS: How We Make a difference

This guide sets out the principles and factors DCMS needs to consider when choosing what work to pursue and how to approach it in order to deliver the maximum possible value for the public. It aims to enable the Department to prioritise activities and to provide greater clarity to partners and stakeholders about what they can expect from DCMS. ["How we make a difference" guidance document](#)

Report on Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning

The Commission for Disabled Staff in Lifelong Learning, coordinated by NIACE, has published an interim report into the employment of disabled people in the lifelong learning sector, which includes museums and libraries. The report concludes that the sector "has some distance to go if it is to encourage more and different staff into the sector". The Commission is consulting on proposed actions until **7 December 2007**. It is also collecting evidence on experiences and employment practice until **16 November 2007**. www.niace.org.uk/projects/commissionfordisabledstaff

Art Fund Collect

Art Fund Collect is a new £50,000 scheme, developed in partnership with the Crafts Council, to allow curators to acquire works by artists and makers at the Collect fair for contemporary applied and decorative arts. Selected curators will have 3 hours to make their choice during a special preview of Collect 2008, at the Victoria and Albert Museum in January 2008. The Art Fund is inviting proposals from curators with collections or an interest in contemporary craft. www.artfund.org/news/638

NADFAS Apprentice Support Scheme

The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) has set up a bursary scheme to encourage and support employers to take on and train a new apprentice or trainee in applied arts and crafts. Bursaries of up to £5000 will be available for the first year of training through the Patricia Fay Memorial Fund. www.nadfas.org.uk/default.asp?section=209&page=1517

Collaborative Research Studentships in Science and Heritage

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) has announced the first call to be made under the cross-Council Science and Heritage Programme, for proposals for collaboration between universities, museums, galleries and other partners on research in science and heritage. The awards offer doctoral students the chance to conduct research with a non-academic body and are co-funded by AHRC and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. The deadline for applications is **6 December 2007**. www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/sfi/ahrcsi/scienceheritage/collab_res_studentships.asp

MA Guide to Loans Administration

The MA, in conjunction with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, has published the first draft of its best practice guide to loans administration. The document includes a model loan form and advice that aims to simplify the lending process for museums, as well as examples of loans documentation from museums and sector bodies. www.museumsassociation.org/14103

Changes to MA Code of Ethics on Disposal Approved

The Museums Association (MA) has voted to change its ethical code to simplify disposing of items from museum collections while strengthening safeguards against inappropriate disposal. The change was approved by an overwhelming majority at the MA annual general meeting at the MA Conference. www.museumsassociation.org/14971&IXPOS=manews1.2

The Big Green Challenge

NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, has launched *The Big Green Challenge*, a £1 million competition challenging groups across the UK to demonstrate new ways to reduce their CO2 emissions. The two year competition will give ten finalists a year to put their ideas into practice. The group with the most imaginative, and proven, approach will win the majority of the £1 million fund. The competition will be open for initial applications from January to the end of February 2008. Groups interested in applying should register at: www.biggreenchallenge.org.uk

Guide to Running Out of School Hours Clubs

A new mini-guide, developed by ContinYou with MLA South West and North Somerset Museums and Extended Schools Team, is a free downloadable guide designed to provide support, guidance, ideas and resources to help museums set up and run successful study support or out of school hours clubs. [www.continyou.org.uk/files/extra%20time%20mini%20guide%20to%20museums\(1\).pdf](http://www.continyou.org.uk/files/extra%20time%20mini%20guide%20to%20museums(1).pdf)

Online Collaboration with Universities and Schools on JANET

JANET, the UK education and research network, has launched JANET Collaborate, a new online prototype service for education. This free service is aimed at teachers, lecturers and support staff in universities, colleges and schools who want to find others with whom they can collaborate. This includes content providers, such as museums, galleries and archives, who can use the service to publicise their videoconferencing sessions to teachers and lecturers. www.janetcollaborate.ac.uk

Digital Services for the Cultural Sector

Digital Services for the Cultural Sector (DiSCS-UK) aims to support museums, libraries, archives and other cultural organisations in the use of technology. Set up by MLA North East and One North East, DiSCS-UK has a database of 96 companies providing a wide range of services from digital photography to website design. It is planned to extend this nationally, to enable museums, libraries and archives to seek advice, post an invitation to tender, view suppliers' training and accreditation records online and nominate suppliers to join DiSCS-UK. For more information visit: www.DiSCS-UK.info

Parliamentary Report

Third Reading of the Greater London Authority Bill in the House of Lords

On 9 October the House of Lords debated the impact of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Bill on the Museum of London. Lords sought assurance from the Government that the Bill would not allow the GLA greater power in respect of the Museum of London than the Government currently has. Speaking for the Government, Baroness Morgan of Drefelin reassured the Lords that the "Bill does not take away any of the rights, powers and responsibilities which the City of London Corporation and the Museum of London board of governors have".

She said that the functions and powers of the board of governors of the Museum of London in relation to its operations - including care and display of collections; employment of staff; loan, acquisition and disposal of objects; and provision of archaeological services - will not change as a result of the Bill and that The Museum of London will continue to be a separate legal entity.

[Lords Hansard text for 9 Oct 200709 Oct 2007 \(pt 0005\)](#)

Parliamentary Questions

Income from Admission Fees to National Museums and Galleries

Conservative culture spokesman Ed Vaizey asked the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much income was generated by entrance fees at national museums and galleries between 1995-96 and the abolition of admission charges. [House of Commons Hansard Written Answers for 23 Oct 2007 \(pt 0011\)](#)

The McMaster Review

In response to questions about the McMaster review of how the Government supports the arts, Culture Minister Margaret Hodge said that there will be a series of interviews and meetings with stakeholders in order to inform Sir Brian's thinking ahead of the review's publication. She said that DCMS would publish information about the review on its website, along with details of how members of the public can contribute. [House of Commons Hansard Written Answers for 08 Oct 2007 \(pt 0065\)](#)

Information and Press Officers in National Museums

Conservative MPs asked a series of questions about the number of information officers in national museums and other DCMS-sponsored organisations. [House of Commons Hansard Written Answers for 08 Oct 2007 \(pt 0065\)](#)

Select Committee Report on Funding of Science and Discovery Centres

The House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee has published its report into the funding of science and discovery centres. The report recommends that the Government make available limited, short-term funding to science centres that are struggling financially and take steps to reduce the tax burden on science and other educational centres. Specific recommendations include adapting the Museum Accreditation Scheme to provide a separate funding stream for educational and public engagement services, which could be accessed by organisations such as science centres, which do not receive Government support because they do not house collections.

The report recommends that the Government commission independent research to ascertain the effectiveness of science centres and that responsibility for science centres be formally written into the Minister for Science and Innovation's portfolio. [House of Commons - Science and Technology - Eleventh Report](#)

Update on Select Committee Report into Science and Heritage

In an update to its report on Science and Heritage published last year, the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee applauds the progress that has been made by heritage and science organisations in implementing its recommendations.

The Committee encourages "stakeholders within the heritage sector, including the National Museums and Galleries, the National Trust and Historic Royal Palaces, as well as universities, research councils and other funding bodies, to throw their full weight behind this initiative." and urges DCMS to "add to its objectives an explicit reference to the need to conserve our cultural heritage" and to appoint a Chief Scientific Adviser with an interest in heritage science.

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200607/ldselect/ldscitech/168/16802.htm

Education and Skills Committee Report on Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum

The House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee has published its report on Creative Partnerships and the Curriculum. The report finds a "very high level of support for more creative approaches to teaching among school staff and creative practitioners" and recommends that evidence should be "more systematically collected and analysed more rigorously".

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmeduski/1034/103402.htm

Public Accounts Select Committee Report on Heritage Lottery Fund

In its report on the Heritage Lottery Fund accounts, the House of Commons Public Accounts Select Committee calls on DCMS to "provide the Heritage Lottery Fund with a frank assessment of when and by how much its income will fall [due to the diversion of Lottery funds to the 2012 Olympic Games], and its goals and expectations for recouping money from the sale of land".

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmpubacc/502/50203.htm

International Issues

French National Museums Trial Free Admission

Fourteen national museums in France will introduce free admission to their permanent collections for a trial period of six months from 1 January 2008 and four major Paris museums will introduce free admission one evening a week for 18-25 year olds. The trial will be studied to assess the impact of free admission on attendance and on the museums' ability to attract people who do not normally visit.

The government will decide whether to extend free admission to other national museums based on the results of the study. www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/index.htm (French Ministry for Culture)

www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/23/arts/EU-A-E-ART-France-Free-Museums.php

US Tax Laws on Fractional Gifts Impact Donations

The Director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Neal Benezra, has said that changes in US tax laws that have restricted fractional gifts - where collectors give a museum a partial ownership interest in a work of art and the right to display the work for part of each year, while the collector receives a partial tax break - have had a major impact on donations to the museum. Speaking to Time Magazine, he said: "We have more fractional gifts than any museum in the country, something like 800. That change has had an unbelievably negative impact on our acquisition program, a profoundly negative impact. The difference in the number of gifts from one year to the next has dropped off by 80%..."

time-blog.com/looking_around/2007/10/more_quick_talk_with_sfmomas_n.html

New US Legislation Introduced on Fractional Gifts

New legislation has been introduced in the US Congress that seeks to modify the rules for charitable contributions of fractional gifts, which have adversely affected donations of art. The proposed legislation states that fractional gifts should be completed within 9 months of the death of the donor, rather than within 10 years of the initial donation; allows fair-market value deduction for subsequent fractional donations; removes estate and gift tax rules for fractional giving and retains the requirement that museums have "substantial physical possession of the property" during the process.

thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/L?c110:./list/c110h.lst:3801

www.tomudall.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=310&Itemid=1

Prado Extension Opens

The Prado in Madrid has opened a new extension designed by Rafael Moneo. The extension, which incorporates a restored 17th-century cloister, provides temporary exhibition galleries, conservation studios, a store and print room. The new facilities will alleviate the need for works of art on permanent display to be moved to accommodate temporary exhibitions and allow more of the permanent collection to be displayed.

www.theartnewspaper.com/article.asp?id=6270

www.museodelprado.es/en/ingles/the-extension/

Forthcoming NMDC Meetings

NMDC Meeting

Friday 16 November, 11am, V&A

HR Forum

Friday 7 December, 11am, Museum in Docklands

If you have any comments on the NMDC Newsletter or would like to contribute to a future edition, please email the Editor, Zoë Nasatyr, at news@nationalmuseums.org.uk

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