

Welcome to NMDC's monthly news update. In this issue:

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NMDC NEWS

Dr Michael Dixon to continue as Chair until 2013

In their meeting last month, NMDC Directors unanimously agreed to the re-appointment of Dr Michael Dixon as Chair of the Conference for a further two years until March 2013. Members expressed their thanks for Michael's hard work and leadership of the group, particularly during a challenging time for the sector.

NMDC Chair's response to call for reintroduction of charging

Michael Dixon has responded to Tristram Hunt's [recent comment piece in the Observer](#) calling for a return to entrance fees to national museums at a time when funding cuts mean councils are closing or charging for entry to regional museums. In his letter to the Editor Dr Dixon argues that whilst there are valid concerns about the future of local authority funded museums, the benefits of the free admission policy make it excellent value for money. As well as noting that attendance has more than doubled on average since free admission was reintroduced in 2001, he points out the economic benefits of free admission, particularly from the increased number of overseas tourists, which mean that the income generated far outstrips the cost of the policy. Read the full letter [here](#).

NMDC work on philanthropy

As we reported in March, NMDC has been coordinating work on philanthropy with colleagues from organisations across the cultural sector in response to the variety of initiatives and consultations emerging from Government on the topic, in particular:

- Jeremy Hunt's 10 point plan on philanthropy announced on 8th December 2010;
- The Green Paper issued by the Cabinet Office as part of its cross-departmental review on encouraging social action;
- The Government's proposed review of tax incentives for philanthropy; and
- The independent Philanthropy Review led by Thomas Hughes-Hallett.

Read NMDC's response to the Government's Giving Green Paper [here](#).

As part of this work we have also been working with Government and others on potential measures that could be included in the 2011 Budget, and in particular we hoped to see improvements to donor benefit rules. We are very encouraged to see that some changes in this area have been included. A summary of other relevant areas in the Budget is below.

CHARITABLE GIVING

Budget includes incentives for charitable giving

In his Budget statement on 23 March, the Chancellor of the Exchequer unveiled a new tax incentive intended to boost legacy giving to charities. From April next year, people who donate 10% of their legacy will be eligible for a 10% reduction in their inheritance bills. Mr Osborne also outlined plans to make it easier for charities to claim gift aid, with an online filing system and a £5,000 allowance that each charity can claim without the need to have declarations from donors. The limit placed on sums which can be spent on thanking donors is to be raised from a maximum of £500 to £2,500. The Chancellor also promised to "consult in the coming year on how to encourage the donations of pre-eminent works of art and historical objects to our nation in return for a tax deduction."

The Government's 'Plan for Growth' was launched alongside the Budget, which sets out reforms designed to tackle barriers to enterprise, including initiatives to support the digital and creative industries (D&CI). This includes a commitment to consider simplifying payments for copyright

materials and freeing up orphan works (works that remain in copyright where the owner cannot be identified or found). The Government also intends to reduce the licensing burden for live music performances and other forms of entertainment such as theatre, cinema and indoor sport, by the end of this year. Ministers have also declared support for the establishment of the Creative Industries Council, intended to provide a voice for the sector with the financial community, coordinate action on barriers to growth and support initiatives to improve skills in the digital and creative industries. [Budget 2011](#) [Growth Review](#)

Dame Vivien Duffield gives £8.2m for creative learning spaces

Philanthropist Dame Vivien Duffield has announced grants totalling £8.2 million to create new learning spaces for children and young people in 11 cultural organisations across England. The grants include £2.5m each for Tate Britain and the National Theatre, £1m for the Royal Shakespeare Company and £200,000 to create 'Little Liverpool' at the Museum of Liverpool. These new donations will bring the total amount spent on 42 Clore learning spaces across the UK since 2000 to over £23.6m. The Clore Duffield Foundation's website now features an interactive map showing the location of Core learning spaces and centres. [Clore Duffield Foundation](#)

Philanthropist's £15m donation saves paintings for the nation

Investment manager Jonathan Ruffer has donated £15m to secure the future of thirteen 17th century paintings by Spanish artist Francisco de Zurbaran at Auckland Castle, County Durham. The Church Commissioners had proposed to sell the paintings at auction to provide funds to support 10 priests in poorer areas of England. The paintings will now be sold to the newly created Zurbaran Trust which will have a specific obligation to ensure their preservation and continued public display at Auckland Castle. In a debate on the Zurbaran Paintings in the House of Commons on 31 March, Helen Goodman, MP for Bishop Auckland, spoke of the support from the Directors of the National Gallery and British Museum for the campaign to save the paintings. [Church of England](#)

Artangel and VTB Capital donate works to Tate

Artangel and Tate have announced The Artangel Collection, a new initiative to bring 21 outstanding film and video works, commissioned and produced by Artangel over the past 20 years, to galleries and museums across the UK, and to commission new works in collaboration with Ikon, Birmingham and the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester. Artangel and artists will donate nine existing bodies of work to Tate and from 2012 Artangel plans to develop with Tate a wider network of galleries and museums based outside London to which works from the Collection would be loaned. [More](#)

VTB Capital, Russia's leading investment company has also presented a series of works by the acclaimed Russian artist Olga Chernysheva to the Tate Collection. The gift marks the start of an annual initiative developed by London arts foundation Calvert 22 to donate significant contemporary Russian artworks to UK national public arts organisations. [More](#)

Also

The **Outset Design/V&A Acquisition Fund to Benefit the V&A** was launched at a gala dinner last month. *The Art Newspaper* reports that Outset patrons aim to raise £100,000 annually for the new fund, boosting modern and contemporary design collecting. [Art Newspaper](#)

The *Financial Times* reports that Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt MP is writing to "dozens of FTSE 100 chief executives asking for personal meeting" as part of his initiative to encourage corporate investment in the arts. [Financial Times](#)

National Museum Wales has opened a new exhibition celebrating the legacy of the Museum's greatest benefactor, Derek Williams (1929-1984) an important collector of modern British art. [More](#)

CULTURAL FUNDING

Arts Council funding announcement includes Lottery funds for touring and schools partnerships

As has been widely reported in the media, Arts Council England (ACE) announced its three year funding allocations from 2012-15 on 30 March. The key points include:

- A National Portfolio of 695 organisations replaces the previous Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) portfolio of 849, and includes 110 newly funded organisations;

- A total of £956.6m grant-in-aid has been allocated, representing a cut of 14.9% over the period, as part of a 29.6% reduction in Government funding for ACE from 2011-2015;
- ACE received 1,333 applications for bids totalling £1.4 billion;
- 270 organisations had a real terms funding increase including MIMA (up 143%) and the Barbican Centre (up 108%), while applications from 638 organisations, including 206 RFOs were rejected.
- Big national organisations including the English National Ballet, Royal Opera House and National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Company received a 15% cut, of a similar scale to the cut in Government funding for national museums announced last October;
- ACE has reduced the number of intermediate agencies it funds including cutting funding for VAGA (Visual Arts and Galleries Association). Meanwhile, Engage, the specialist agency for gallery learning, has received a 50% increase in funding;
- £54m of Lottery income over three years will be attached to the National portfolio and earmarked for touring, with a particular focus on areas and communities that have little or no access to high quality arts;
- £31m of Lottery funding has been allocated over three years to establish and fund 10 delivery organisations that will bridge the gap between arts organisations and schools and communities, following the end of the £38 million Creative Partnerships scheme;
- ACE will also identify a small number of 'leadership' organisations chosen for their ability to take responsibility for the development of the arts beyond their organisation and share expertise for example in fundraising, digital skills and talent development.

[Arts Council](#)

Northern Ireland Executive reduces scale of cuts to culture

On 4 March, the Northern Ireland Executive announced it has revised its decision to cut the budget for culture more harshly than other sectors as a result of the public consultation on its draft budget. Although the detail has yet to be confirmed, Arts Council Northern Ireland reports that the arts look set to lose £1.4 million over the four year budget period, rather than the disproportionate £4.2 million that was initially proposed in the draft Budget 2011-15. During his budget presentation to the Assembly, Sammy Wilson MP, the Minister of Finance and Personnel said "I have not, however, ignored the results of the consultation. There will be another £2 million current expenditure and £2 million capital expenditure available for libraries over the four-year period." [Arts Council Northern Ireland](#) [Assembly Report](#)

Scottish Government's extra £2m for Portrait of the Nation

Portrait of the Nation, the project to renovate and revitalise the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, has received a £2 million funding boost from the Scottish Government. The completed Portrait Gallery will open on 30 November 2011. [National Galleries of Scotland](#)

£2.8m for Welsh libraries, museums and archives

Minister for Heritage Alun Ffred Jones has announced an investment of £2.8 million in grants to develop the work of libraries, museums and archives across Wales. The funding supports a range of projects that vary from large scale modernisation of public library buildings to supporting volunteer-run museums. A total of £346, 515 has been allocated for 28 projects involving museums across Wales. [Welsh Assembly Government](#)

Select Committee report on arts and heritage funding

The Culture, Media and Sport Committee published its report on arts funding on 28 March. The Committee was critical of the "surprising decision" to abolish the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and continued "we are concerned that the Arts Council - itself under pressure - will not be as effective a replacement and urge the Government to review this again in 2012."

The Committee acknowledged that cuts in public spending will have a "major impact on arts and heritage organisations, and some may well be forced to close." However, the report also notes that over recent years the arts have enjoyed a period of high levels of public investment and criticised some previous funding decisions as a "gross waste of public money". The report also suggests ways in which arts and heritage organisations might improve financial management and explore other funding schemes. The report, which was published before the Arts Council's funding allocations were announced, also expressed concern about the speed with which ACE had made decisions for its new National Portfolio funding programme. [Select Committee report](#)

Arts and Business in England

Arts & Business in England has announced that it is embarking on a new strategy with a business model predominantly funded by the private sector, following the removal of funding from Arts Council England. Although staff at the organisation have been issued with formal notice that they are at risk of redundancy, Arts and Business in England retains its ambition to be the world leader in cultural and commercial collaborations, developing sustainable partnerships with business, philanthropists and the arts. [Arts & Business](#)

Also

The British Academy has announced that it will wind down funding for the **Council for British Archaeology** by 2015-6. The Academy currently provides some 25% of the CBA's income. [More](#)

Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (BMAG) have introduced admission charges for their community museums. Entry to the main BMAG site continues to be free. [More](#)

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

NAO “not able to conclude DCMS is achieving value for money”

The National Audit Office has published a report on the *Financial management in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport* which says that although the Department “has improved the maturity of its financial management in a number of areas... the NAO has not able to conclude that the Department is achieving value for money.”

The report is critical of the way in which decisions were made about spending cuts, saying: “the Department’s decision to close and merge a number of its arm’s-length bodies was not informed by a financial analysis of the costs and benefits. It based its decisions on estimates which did not take account of the full costs of closure such as lease cancellation, redundancy and pension costs. The decision was not informed by estimation of future savings or of what the pay-back period would be.”

The report also highlights the “substantial challenge it faces in providing effective financial oversight of its arm’s-length bodies” and recommends that DCMS should “seek a new, more coherent approach”, but adds that “a reduction in the number of staff is likely to impact on the Department’s ability to deliver the improvements needed in financial management.”

The report is also critical of DCMS’s repeated over-commitment of capital funding allocations to sponsored bodies and “undue dependence on HM Treasury continuing to allow the Department to access previously accumulated under-spends.” The NAO highlights the “knock on effect on strategic planning” for individual organisations. [NAO Report](#)

Cultural sector urged to respond to Curriculum Review

As we reported last month, the Department of Education is currently reviewing the National Curriculum and is considering plans for a much reduced curriculum, with only English, Maths, Science and PE included as statutory subjects for schools to teach. The Cultural Learning Alliance is concerned that the new curriculum, coupled with the recent introduction of the English Baccalaureate, could lead to inequality of access to the arts for children and young people across the country and is urging professionals and organisations in the cultural sector to respond to the Government’s consultation. To help encourage this, the Alliance has created a simple how-to guide for the sector. The consultation closes on 14 April. [Cultural Learning Alliance](#) [Department for Education](#)

Also

DCMS is consulting on plans for temporary restrictions to advertising and trading in the area around competition venues and road race routes during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. [More](#)

DCMS has announced eleven sites around the UK on a ‘Tentative List’ for potential nomination for UNESCO World Heritage Status including Chatham Dockyard, the Forth Bridge and the Slate Industry of North Wales. The new Tentative List will now be submitted to UNESCO with the aim of nominating new sites from 2012. [More](#)

MUSEUM NEWS

Over 47% of adults visit museums, galleries and archives

Latest figures from the DCMS Taking Part survey reveal that between 2005 and 2010, the proportion of people in England visiting a museum, gallery or archive in the last year increased from 42.3% to 47.2%. Over the same period, the proportion of people visiting a public library declined (from 48.2% to 39.0%), while the proportion visiting heritage sites and engaging with the arts remained steady.

Digital participation levels are also rising: between 2005 and 2010, there was an increase in the proportion of people visiting museum and gallery websites from 15.8% to 24.6%. Within this, the percentage of people visiting museum and gallery websites to find out about or order tickets for an exhibition or event increased from 47.9 per cent in 2005/06 to 54.1 per cent in 2010, whereas the percentage looking at items from a collection dropped from 33.7 to 22.8 per cent during the same period. [DCMS Taking Part Survey](#)

MA Ethics Committee accepts public benefit of Bolton collection sale

The Museums Association's Ethics Committee has responded to Bolton Council's plans to sell 36 works from the Bolton Museum and Art Gallery to raise £500,000 to relocate and improve the Museum's storage facilities. The Committee said that it was satisfied that the sale was not intended to generate short-term income, and that "the creation of the new store will significantly improve the long term public benefit from the remaining collection". However, the Committee felt that the Museum had not been able to demonstrate that alternative sources of funding had been thoroughly explored, as the code also requires; and it also recommended more public consultation. The Museums Association (MA) revised its Code of Ethics in 2007 and now allows financially motivated disposals in exceptional circumstances. [Museums Association](#)

MLA responsibilities to transfer to Arts Council England on 1 October

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) have announced that its museums and libraries responsibilities will transfer to Arts Council England on 1 October. MLA is now conducting an intensive consultation with its staff and trades union representatives about this process and the implications for affected individuals. An announcement about the future location of the MLA's archive responsibilities will be made by the DCMS in due course. [MLA statement](#)

Natural History Museum's "landmark decision" on human remains

The Trustees of the Natural History Museum have agreed to return 138 ancestral remains to the Torres Strait Islands (TSI). This is the largest single return of remains to Australia and is described as "a landmark decision for the Museum, bringing a new collaborative approach to repatriation." The decision builds on 18 months of dialogue with the TSI community and the Australian government. The Museum and Torres Strait Islanders will now work together to agree how responsibility for the remains will be transferred and how they will be cared for and accessed for future study. The Museum has also offered a placement for a Torres Strait Islander to work with the Museum to share both scientific and museum skills, and to develop a better understanding of how indigenous perspectives might inform the Museum's future activities. [Natural History Museum](#)

Industrial Heritage at Risk

English Heritage is embarking on a project to determine how much of the country's industrial heritage is at risk of neglect, decay or demolition and to inspire debate about what needs saving and how. The results of the Industrial *Heritage at Risk* research, including public opinion will be revealed at the launch of the annual English Heritage *Heritage at Risk* register in October. [English Heritage](#)

Record year for Heritage Open Days but challenges ahead

A new report reveals that last year was a record year for Heritage Open Days, with over 1 million visits to over 4,463 participating properties across England. The weekend of celebration of local architecture, history and culture is now in its seventeenth year and is England's leading voluntary cultural event, with an estimated 39,350 volunteers donating a total of 578,445 hours in 2010. The report warns however that "the programme's future will hinge on whether local authorities will be able to commit staff time and funding on a similar level as in previous years", concluding that "ultimately though, the programme's grassroots foundations will prove its life insurance." [Heritage Open Days](#)

Also

British architect Amanda Levete has won the international commission to build a £35m extension to the **Victoria & Albert Museum**. The project will recover 3,000 sq metres of back-of-house space for galleries and public areas, including an underground gallery for temporary exhibitions. The *Guardian* reports that almost half the funding has already been raised: the new extension is due to be completed by 2015. [More](#)

Virginia Tandy OBE, former President of the Museums Association, is standing down from her post as Director of Culture at Manchester City Council this month. [More](#)

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The **Walker Art Gallery** has opened a new interactive gallery, British Art 1880 to 1950, providing a new interpretation of the Gallery's collection. Interactive features include a time-line information on artists, their works and key historic events; specially-created canvases that can be touched by visitors to give a real understanding of the different techniques and methods; a sound-scape giving a "voice" to one of the most popular paintings; tactile paper images for visitors with visual impairments; and permanent activities for families to explore the works. National Museums Liverpool has also announced that the new **Museum of Liverpool** will open on 19 July. [More](#)

The **British Library** has made 65,000 largely out-of-print 19th Century titles available to entrepreneurs building applications within the *IC tomorrow Digital Innovation Contest*. The Contest is investing in up to 20 consumer trials across creative market sectors including music, TV/film and publishing aimed at helping entrepreneurs bring innovative UK digital applications to market. [More](#)

The **Royal Air Force Museum** has opened a 4D Theatre, combining 3D computer animation with dynamic seating and special environmental effects to give visitors the feeling of flying in a B-17 Bomber or jet plane. [More](#) The museum has also launched a Flickr Appeal asking the public to assist in recording some of the more unusual photographs in the Museum's un-accessioned collections on www.flickr.com/photos/royalairforcemuseum

The **Natural History Museum's** interactive film *Who do you think you really are?* has won the British Universities Film and Video Council (BUFVC) for Learning on Screen Premier Award (multimedia). [More](#)

TOURISM

London & Partners: New promotional agency for London

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson launched a new promotional agency for London on 1 April. London & Partners will provide a co-ordinated approach to presenting London both domestically and internationally as a place to visit, invest and study. The new agency brings together the work of Visit London, Think London and Study London, which were previously responsible for attracting tourism, inward investment and international students to the capital. London & Partners will be led by interim chair Dame Judith Mayhew Jonas and interim CEO Danny Lopez. The agency currently has staff in six key global locations and work is underway to "identify synergies that will support the promotional activity for the whole organisation." London & Partners is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, funded by the Mayor of London and commercial partners. [London & Partners](#)

Also

VisitBritain has brought together the leading travel bloggers from across the globe with the aim to create the UK's most influential travel blog. Within 24-hours, the blog has already reached over 850,000 impressions on Twitter, with people from 75 different countries visiting it. www.visitbritainsuperblog.com

INTERNATIONAL

Egyptian Museum losses confirmed

Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities has confirmed that 54 objects were stolen from the Egyptian Museum on 28 January. The Ministry issued a revised statement correcting information provided by the then Minister, Zahi Hawass in February. *The Art Newspaper* includes a summary of damage to other heritage sites in Egypt. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Guggenheim responds to proposed artist boycott over Abu Dhabi construction

On March 17, a group of artists issued a call to action to boycott the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum (and potentially other Guggenheim museums) over the rights of workers at the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum site following a report by Human Rights Watch. The Guggenheim Foundation has responded by issuing a statement that it "is firmly committed to working to protect workers' rights on the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum site" and explaining the important steps taken over the past six months that demonstrate this commitment. [Guggenheim statement](#)

Getty returns spoliated art but rejects proposal for long-term loan to Italy

The J. Paul Getty Museum announced on 28 March that it will deaccession *Landscape with Cottage and Figures* (about 1640) by Pieter Molijn, in order to transfer the painting to the heirs of Jacques Goudstikker, a Jewish art dealer who fled the Netherlands just before the Nazi invasion in 1940. The Getty acquired the painting in good faith at auction in 1972, and has never exhibited the work. [Getty Molijn statement](#)

The Getty also announced on 28 March that it had been discussing the future relationship between the Getty and the Marche Region of Italy, the original home of *Statue of a Victorious Youth* known as the Getty Bronze, which is the subject of a legal dispute between the Getty and the Italian Government. The Getty statement said the Italian representative "suggested this might include the exchange of objects between the Marche Region and the Getty on a long-term loan basis" and the Museum had made it clear that the bronze was "not a matter for discussion." The statement concluded the Getty is "completely confident of our ownership of the Getty Bronze, and we will vigorously defend our position." [Getty Bronze statement](#)

IN PARLIAMENT

Amendments to the Public Bodies Bill

The Government has dropped controversial clauses in the Public Bodies Bill that would have given Ministers, rather than Parliament, the power to decide whether or not to retain or abolish hundreds of arms-length bodies including the Boards of Trustees of the British Library Board, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. The decision to drop Section 11 and Schedule 7 follows the first round of debates on the Bill in the House of Lords. [Public Bodies Bill](#)

Railway Heritage Designation to transfer to NMSI

The Department for Transport and DCMS have agreed that the powers of the Railway Heritage Committee (RHC) should be transferred to the National Museum of Science and Industry (NMSI) after the RHC is abolished. The RHC designates records and artefacts which are historically significant and should be permanently preserved and agrees which institution should hold them. The abolition of the RHC was announced last July. The decision is set out in a letter to the RHC's former chair, Lord Faulkner of Worcester, on 22 March and follows a debate in the House of Lords on 28 February on an amendment to the Public Bodies Bill proposed by Lord Faulkner, which would have removed the RHC from the list of bodies to be abolished. [Letter to Lord Faulkner](#) [Public Bodies Bill Debate](#)

Also

English Heritage has established a new **Historic Wrecks Panel** to replace the Advisory Committee on Historic Wreck Sites, which is being abolished in the Public Bodies Bill. [English Heritage](#)

APPOINTMENTS

Trustees

Welsh Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones has announced the appointment of Elisabeth Elias as the President of Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales' Board of Trustees. Mrs Elias is currently the Vice-President of the Museum. [More](#)

The Prime Minister has appointed photographer Mary McCartney as a Trustee of the **National Portrait Gallery**; and **Seona Reid CBE**, Director of Glasgow School of Art, as Trustee for Scotland, and a Deputy Chair, of **The National Heritage Memorial Fund**.

The Prime Minister has also reappointed Sir Howard Newby and Lady Catherine Chisholm as Trustees of the **National Museum of Science and Industry** and extended the term of Dame Marjorie Scardino as Trustee of the **Victoria & Albert Museum**. [More](#)

Also

Professor Gordon Marshall FBA, currently Vice-Chancellor at the University of Reading, is to become Director of the **Leverhulme Trust** with effect from 1st October 2011. He will succeed the present Director, Professor Sir Richard Brook, who is retiring in September. [More](#)

NMDC JOBS

Our jobs website, www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk also has details of over 35 current vacancies around the UK including:

- Cataloguer, Early Printed Books, British Library
- Digital Marketing Manager, Imperial War Museum
- Finance & Business Manager, National Galleries of Scotland
- Frames & Gilded Furniture Conservator, V&A
- Security Team Member, The Wallace Collection
- Head of Sales and Operations, Natural History Museum
- Human Resources Manager, National Gallery
- Senior Curator of the History of Science, National Maritime Museum

For details of these jobs and many more visit www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk

And finally...

Unlocking the secrets of museum smells

A research project at Strathclyde University is developing technology to "sniff" museum smells to provide clues to the condition of objects. Scientists and conservators are aiming to develop hand-held, portable devices for taking samples of air surrounding items such as sculptures, tapestries and books and separating out the components to see whether they contain anything which could be used to understand better the composition, or condition, of the objects. [More](#)

This newsletter can also be read online at <http://nmdcgit.nmdc.webfactional.com/news/newsletters/>