

Welcome to NMDC's monthly news update...

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and much more...

NMDC NEWS

Museums: Making a difference to children, schools and families

On 23 November, NMDC and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) organised a constructive seminar on museum learning which brought together museum directors and heads of learning with officials from the DCSF and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS). DCSF Permanent Secretary David Bell and National Portrait Gallery Director, Sandy Nairne inspired participants with their opening presentations, and workshop discussions focused on:

- Extending the museum experience for young people through digitising collections - with case studies from the National Museums Online Learning Project and Flickr;
- Museums working in partnership with schools and children's services;
- Museums engaging students with science - with case studies from the Natural History Museum and Science Museum; and
- Museums building young people's creative skills and engagement with the creative industries.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Ben Bradshaw's *Progress* lecture

Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw gave a lecture on 3 November as part of *Progress's New Thinking for Britain's Next Decade* series. He described Government investment in the Tate Modern extension and British Museum extensions as a "massive political vote of confidence in our cultural sector" and said Labour would "continue to have that confidence in the years ahead. Maintaining investment, widening access and opportunity, not retreating or retrenching." [Progress](#)

Jeremy Hunt sets out Conservative policies on National Lottery

Shadow Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt MP has given a speech setting out the Conservative Party's vision for the future of the National Lottery. The package of measures unveiled by Mr Hunt is intended to increase returns to Lottery good causes by £186m a year and includes:

- returning the National Lottery to its original good causes of sport, arts, heritage and charities. The Big Lottery Fund will only fund projects in the voluntary and community sectors;
- banning all Lottery Distributors from having press, public relations and communications departments, and giving the National Lottery Promotions Unit sole responsibility for promoting the good causes;
- introducing a cap of 5% on administration costs; and
- abolishing the National Lottery Commission and giving its regulatory functions to the Gambling Commission. [Shadow DCMS website](#)

Culture Secretary and Opposition debate on Radio 4

A special edition of Radio 4's *Front Row* on 25 November featured a debate between Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw MP, his Conservative shadow, Jeremy Hunt MP, and Don Foster, Culture Spokesman for the Liberal Democrats. The programme is available on *BBC iplayer*. [Front Row](#)

Conservative cultural and creative industries blog

The Conservative Culture team, Jeremy Hunt and Ed Vaizey, have launched an online blog which aims to bring together members of the cultural world from all political angles to provide comment and suggestions on the issues they face. Culturepolitik.com also includes an online version of the Shadow DCMS weekly email which outlines the cultural events of the week from a politician's viewpoint. www.culturepolitick.com

Conservative Tourism Taskforce report

The findings of the Conservative Tourism Taskforce Report have been released. The Taskforce concludes that "heritage, culture and arts are crucial to understanding why visitors come here. They should be valued not purely as vehicles for social engineering, education and pleasure, but also as one of the country's great economic assets." The report's proposals include:

- a stronger, reinvigorated VisitEngland funded directly from DCMS rather than being funded through VisitBritain;
- a dedicated Minister for Tourism to lead tourism policy within the DCMS; and
- closer, more efficient and aligned work by the many public bodies that impact on tourism, including DCMS sponsored bodies.

The Shadow Culture team will now consider the Taskforce's recommendations. [Shadow DCMS](#)

TREASURE

New law gives those who acquire Treasure a duty to report it

The Coroners and Justice Act received Royal Assent on 12 November and introduces a package of reforms to the Treasure investigation system to help safeguard archaeological finds. As well as establishing a new Coroner for Treasure, the Act places a new duty on those who acquire objects which they believe to be Treasure to make a report to the Treasure Coroner within 14 days. Previously only those who found the Treasure have had a duty to report it. Closing this loophole will make a considerable difference to efforts to monitor sales of potential Treasure. The legislation also includes the presumption that, if there is no evidence to the contrary, a find will be assumed to have been discovered after September 1997 and to come from England and Wales, bringing it within the remit of the Treasure Act.

Treasure is defined as gold and silver objects, groups of coins from the same finds which are over 300 years old, and prehistoric base-metal assemblages.

The new legislation also amends the Treasure Act to reflect the practice that finders actually report Treasure to Finds Liaison Officers and not to the coroner, as the Treasure Act requires. This change recognising designated officers comes close to establishing Finds Liaison Officers on a statutory basis.

The date when these changes will come into effect has not yet been announced and the Treasure Coroner is not likely to be appointed within the next year, DCMS is also moving ahead with its review of the Treasure Act and is expected to publish a consultation paper in January. [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(pp 14-17 and pp222-226\)](#) [Summary of the Treasure Act](#)

Staffordshire Hoard valued at almost £3.3m

The Staffordshire Hoard, the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold ever found, has been valued at £3.285m by the independent Treasure Valuation Committee. The valuation was immediately accepted by all parties, and the sum will be split equally between the finder and the landowner. A fundraising campaign will now begin for the joint acquisition of the hoard by Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent. Culture Minister Margaret Hodge MP and Regional Minister Ian Austin MP, the British Museum, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the West Midlands' local councils are united in their commitment to ensure that the Staffordshire Hoard has a permanent home in the West Midlands region. Highlights from the Hoard are currently on display at the British Museum. The British Museum Press has published a book on the Hoard with £1 of the £4.99 purchase price going to the appeal fund to acquire the hoard for the West Midlands. [Staffordshire Hoard website](#)

New report reveals success of Treasure and Portable Antiquities Scheme

The Staffordshire Hoard is one of over 400,000 finds recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) or reported Treasure since 1997. A joint annual report on the PAS and the Treasure Act 2007 reveals that 747 cases of Treasure were reported in 2007. Of these, 303 Treasure finds have been acquired by museums, and, in an increasing number of cases (55 in 2007), the finder and/or landowner has waived their rights to an award. A further 66,311 non-Treasure finds were recorded with the PAS on a voluntary basis. The PAS is managed by the British Museum in partnership with museums across England and Wales. It is funded by the MLA through the Renaissance in the Regions programme. Continued funding for the scheme was secured just over a year ago. [PAS website](#)

Tax scheme gives paintings and archives worth £19.8m to public collections

The newly published Acceptance in Lieu (AIL) report for 2008/9 records the transfer to public ownership of thirty-six paintings and archives, valued at £19.8 million, in lieu of £10.8 million-worth of inheritance tax. The Government scheme, administered by the MLA, allows those liable to inheritance tax to pay their tax bill by offering important heritage objects to the nation. An object is worth 17% more, in settling a tax liability, if it is offered in lieu of tax than if it is sold on the open market at the same price. The items saved for the nation included works by Titian, Van Dyck, Reynolds and Gainsborough, Roman antiquities and letters from Lord Nelson, as well as, for the first time, works by living artists. [PAS and Treasure Report 2007](#)

MUSEUM SECTOR NEWS

15th Anniversary of the National Lottery marked by 12% increase in funds for Good Causes

Since the first National Lottery draw in November 1994, over £23bn has been awarded to Good Causes. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded £1.4bn to museums and galleries, including:

- £977m to over 600 projects involving the construction and refurbishment of museum and gallery buildings;
- £146.7m to 484 projects for the acquisition of portable heritage by museums and galleries;
- £240m to 725 collections projects such as exhibitions, interpretation, collections management, learning programmes and outreach;

HLF funding for museum and gallery projects has supported 295 education posts and 247 spaces for learning. Substantial sums have also been awarded to museum projects by other Lottery Distributors, including the Arts Council, Millennium Commission and Big Lottery Fund.

Meanwhile, figures released by the National Lottery Commission show that Lottery sales have increased by around 5.5% in the past 12 months, compared to the same period the year before. This increase reflects a trend which has been developing over the past few years as a result of new games, marketing and sales channels rather than any direct impact from recession. Camelot has announced that 2008-9 was the most successful year for sales for a decade. In addition, returns to good causes are expected to go up by around £60-£100m each year because of the new licence structure introduced by the National Lottery Commission on 1 February 2009 and Camelot generating more sales and reducing their operating costs. [National Lottery Commission](#)

Last month, the HLF announced a £4.8m grant for Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery's *Birmingham - A City in the Making* project, a £9.7m initiative to develop new wing of galleries focussing on the history of the city and its people. There were also first-round passes for Stonehenge, London's Charles Dickens Museum, Colchester Castle Museum, Torre Abbey and Penarth Pavilion.

The National Lottery has also published a report evaluating the impact and evolution of Lottery funding over the past fifteen years. [National Lottery Good Causes](#)

New legislation enables national museums to return spoliated objects

The Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) Act received Royal Assent on 12 November. The Act gives the governing bodies of 15 national museums, the British Library and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, power to return certain cultural objects on grounds relating to events occurring during the Nazi era. Objects can now be returned to a claimant provided that the Spoliation Advisory Panel recommends return and the Secretary of State agrees. Previously these institutions were unable to deaccession items from their collections, and claimants could only be awarded an ex-gratia payment. The UK's national museums first signalled their commitment to giving prompt and serious consideration to claims to title for specific works in their collections in 1998, and since then nine claims have been considered by the Spoliation Advisory Panel.

The Act will come into effect early in the New Year, and will expire on 12 November 2019. The power extends to national institutions in Scotland, following the agreement of the Scottish Parliament. The power is not needed in Wales and Northern Ireland, where national museums can already return such items.

The legislation, introduced as a Private Members Bill by Andrew Dismore MP, was welcomed by NMDC and received all-party support in the House of Commons. Mr Dismore slept overnight on the floor of the Public Bill Office overnight so that he was first in the queue to ensure his bill received a Second Reading. Speaking in the House of Commons, Culture Minister Margaret Hodge MP said she hoped the Act would receive maximum publicity and encourage potential claimants to come forward.

The first item to be considered under the new legislation is likely to be the 12th century Benevento Missal owned by the British Library. The Spoliation Advisory Panel considered a claim for the manuscript in 2005 and concluded it had been looted between 1933-1945 and should be returned to Benevento, Italy, but until now the Library has been prevented by law from deaccessioning it. [The Holocaust \(Return of Cultural Objects\) Act 2009](#) [DCMS statement](#)

Background: [NMDC statement of principles on spoliation of works of art](#) [Spoliation Advisory Panel](#)

Museums and galleries included in new primary curriculum

The new primary curriculum announced by the Department for Schools and Families on 19 November includes specific references to museums and galleries. The recommendations of the Rose report, an independent review of the primary curriculum, have been accepted with very little change. There will be six areas of learning and a strong focus on skills rather than detailed content. The six areas are: understanding English, communication and languages; mathematical understanding; understanding the arts; historical, geographical and social understanding; understanding physical development, health and wellbeing; and scientific and technological understanding. The section on understanding the arts includes specific reference to learning about the role of public art galleries and museums or objects they buy and use, in their life, their locality and wider society. The section on the study of the past says children should visit historic buildings, museums, galleries and sites.

CultureLabel.com launches new digital museum package

CultureLabel.com, the website which promotes museum's online retail products, has exceeded expectations since it was launched at the end of July. The Museum of London reports that its online sales have increased by 50% as a result of CultureLabel.com. CultureLabel.com has now launched three new digital products for the cultural sector:

- E-ticketing – which enables the purchasing of digital tickets via mobile phone or email;
- Digital store for culture – which makes available electronic exhibition catalogues; and
- Artful - the first multi-museum *iPhone* app with collection images plus interpretation and additional information.

The Museum of London will be the first to launch the *iPhone* app to consumers in spring 2010. The Ashmolean Museum will also launch a digital store of eBooks with CultureLabel.com early next year, and the Courtauld Gallery will launch the e-ticketing solution for its forthcoming exhibition, *Michelangelo's Dream*. [Culturelabel.com](#)

MLA launches new fund for Designated Collections

MLA has launched a more targeted approach to the funding of Designated collections. The new Designation Development Fund will replace the Designation Challenge Fund, which since 2002 has invested £13m of Renaissance funding to improve the management and accessibility of Designated collections in museums. The initial £1.5m of funding from Renaissance for museums will be directed primarily towards four key areas of Designated collections - care of collections, researching and understanding collections, making collections accessible and making collections sustainable.

Additional funding from MLA's Improvement Fund will also be available for Designated collections in libraries and archives.

Designated collections are those recognised as being of national and international importance held in England's non-national museums, libraries and archives. The Designation Scheme was launched in 1997 and there are now 131 collections held in 104 organisations throughout England. A review of the Designation Scheme has also been published. [MLA website](#)

Cost-saving deal for local museums to use British Pathé archive

An agreement between British Pathé and the MLA will allow low-cost access to the entire British Pathé film archive for use in exhibitions, displays and public events at local regional museums. The agreement provides unlimited and instant online access to the entire British Pathé film archive, to download in broadcast quality, for a monthly subscription fee of £60. The subscription is available to local regional museums which belong to MLA's Accreditation Scheme, or are working towards Accreditation and sign up before 31 January 2010. It is also available to individual public libraries and archives operated by local authorities. National museums are to be charged at a different monthly rate which is currently under discussion. [MLA press release](#) [British Pathé](#)

LGBT month 2010 launched at the British Museum

Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw MP spoke at the pre-launch of Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) History Month at the British Museum. He said that he was "delighted that the next LGBT History Month is looking to our museums, galleries, theatres and other cultural institutions". He said "the cultural sector has traditionally swept the rest of society along on in its wake on equality issues." Mr Bradshaw issued a challenge to the cultural sector to make 2010's event "the biggest LGBT month ever in terms of activity". LGBT month takes place in February each year and the theme of the 2010 event will be Education and Young People. [Ben Bradshaw's speech](#) [LGBT History Month](#)

Museums demonstrate commitment to informal adult learning

Over 3,000 individual museums, libraries and archives have now signed the Learning Revolution pledge signalling their commitment to promote a culture of lifelong learning within local communities. MLA has been working with the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills to raise the profile of informal adult learning in museums, libraries and archives. The sector's commitment has been recognised by Kevin Brennan MP, Minister for Further Education, Skills, Apprenticeships and Consumer Affairs, who said: "Because they're located in all kinds of communities, museums, libraries and archives are uniquely placed to encourage more people to be inspired to learn." MLA Chair Sir Andrew Motion said: "It's now up to local authorities to recognise the natural backdrop to a joined-up local learning infrastructure that museums, libraries and archives can provide." [MLA website](#)

Latest data on museum participation in Scotland

Scotland's Chief Statistician has published a range of statistics relating to cultural attendance and participation by adults in Scotland in 2008. 38% of respondents had visited a museum or gallery in the past 12 months. The data shows wide variation in attendance within demographic groups, with only 28% participation in the most deprived social group and 33% of young people (aged 16-24). The survey found that visitors from the most deprived social group were the group most likely to be motivated to visit "to see something to interest children". 82% of those who visited museums enjoyed their visit. Respondents in the age group 16-24 years were considerably less likely to enjoy their visit but more likely to learn something new from their visit compared to other age groups. This age group were also most likely to attend with the intention of "meeting friends or family". [Scottish Government](#)

New partnership to support Scottish museums

Museums Galleries Scotland and the Collections Trust have announced a new partnership to encourage the development of the Scottish museums and galleries sector in the areas of collections and digital content. The partnership will encourage Scottish museums to collaborate in UK-wide and international digital projects and programmes. It will also support the development of the *Collections Link* website to provide free access to Collections Management standards, guidelines and information. [Museums Galleries Scotland](#)

New legislation will unlock copyright restrictions on museum collections

The Government's Digital Economy Bill, published on 20 October, includes measures to unlock large volumes of previously unusable cultural content for public or commercial use. The legislation covers 'orphan works' where the rights holder cannot be identified or found. There are an estimated 25 million orphan works in UK museums and galleries. Orphan works make up an estimated 40% of the British Library's in-copyright collection material and the Library has issued a statement welcoming the legislation. [British Library](#)

The legal firm Farrer & Co has published two new briefings on copyright issues covering online copyright infringement and orphan works. [Farrer & Co](#)

CULTURAL SECTOR NEWS

British tourism showing signs of growth

VisitBritain says Britain's tourism industry looks to have reached a turning point during the key summer months, according to new provisional figures from the International Passenger Survey. During July to September, 3% more international visitors holidayed in Britain than over the same period in 2008. There are encouraging signs that the North American market is recovering, with a 6% growth in total visits during the three months to September, the first quarter to post growth since early 2008. However, the total number of visits for the first nine months of 2009 is 8% lower compared to 2008 visitor numbers, though spending is unchanged. [VisitBritain](#)

National Trust visitor figures up by 18%

The National Trust is experiencing a boom in its operations despite the recession. Visitor numbers are up by almost 18 per cent on 2008 and membership has grown from around 3.65 million to almost 3.8 million over the last 12 months. The Trust's catering and retail operations are also up by 22 per cent and 15 per cent respectively, and bookings at holiday cottages are eight per cent higher than last year. [National Trust](#)

Mayor outlines £50m economic benefit of London tourism campaign

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has reported that his £2m investment in the successful *Only in London* tourism campaign has generated £50m economic benefit for the capital. The Mayor also announced a further £400,000 investment for the campaign, which he expects will create a further return of £8million for London. The *Only in London* campaign focuses on unique experiences that the city has to offer and has been rolled out in Europe and North America in recent months. It also aims to encourage Londoners to explore their city. [Mayor's statement](#)

London Culture and 2012

The Mayor of London's Cultural Strategy Group (LCSG) has published a new guide to getting involved in the capital's cultural celebrations in the run up to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The document provides an overview of the main organisations involved, the Cultural Olympiad programme, funding opportunities and news of the Greater London Authority's role in planning the celebrations including developing a web-based 2012 Culture 'Clash Diary'. The LCSG and Mayor of London also co-hosted an open meeting last month to discuss how the cultural sector can get involved in 2012. A video of the event and copies of the presentations have been published online. [London Culture and 2012](#)

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport have just commissioned PricewaterhouseCoopers to develop a 2012 Games Evaluation Framework to ensure that the activities and investments related to the Games and their legacy can be robustly and comprehensively evaluated. [DCMS](#)

Arts and Business Chair steps down and new Advisory Council established

Arts and Business has established a new Advisory Council to bring it "greater expertise and commercial know-how". The Advisory Council includes business leaders, philanthropists researchers and cultural thinkers including: Charles Saumarez Smith, Chief Executive of the Royal Academy; Tony Hall, Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House; and British Museum Trustee Bonnie Greer.

Baroness (Helena) Kennedy announced last month that she was standing down, with immediate effect, as Chair of Arts & Business. Baroness Kennedy was one year into her second three year term. The acting Chair is now Steven Williams, a Director of Unilever.

The 31st Arts and Business Awards were held at the V&A on 12 November, honouring best practice in bringing creativity into contact with business experience. [Arts and Business](#)

Government publishes real terms figures for arts, heritage and sports funding - 1997-2009

Figures published by DCMS show that government funding for arts has increased by 71% in real terms since 1997 and sports funding has increased by 231%. The Government's figures show that in the same period heritage funding has fallen by 6.5% in real terms. The figures for cash and real terms funding for each year from 1997-2009 were published in response to a Parliamentary Question. [Hansard](#)

Other figures published by the Government on 9 November show that spend on heritage matters has increased by more than £120m in real terms since 1997. These figures include funding for museums and galleries and the Renaissance in the Regions programme. [Hansard](#)

Archives for the 21st Century

The Government has set out a new strategic vision for publicly funded archive services which "re-asserts the vital importance of archives as the gateway to the nation's common legacy, whilst reflecting the technological transition society is going through." *Archives for the 21st Century* aims to create a more dynamic and sustainable archive sector that participates actively within the many diverse communities it serves. The policy sets out five recommendations:

- Develop bigger and better services in partnership to increase sustainability;
- Strengthen leadership and a responsive, skilled workforce;
- Co-ordinate a response to the growing challenge of managing digital information so that it is accessible now and remains discoverable in the future;
- Make available comprehensive online access for archive discovery through catalogues and to digitised archive content;
- Participate actively in cultural and learning partnerships to promote a sense of identity and place within the community.

The implementation of the policy and ensuing action plan will be supported in England by the National Archives and MLA. A policy for Wales will be supported by CyMAL: Museums and Libraries. [MLA website](#)

Launch of Archives Awareness Campaign

The Archive Awareness *Take Flight* campaign was launched last month. The campaign focuses on a wide variety of archival work in economic and industrial history, the impact of movements of people, innovation, ideas, engineering and science-from the literal to the obscure. Archives across the UK will be working with local groups and communities on special themed events this winter.

[Archives Awareness Campaign](#)

National Heritage Memorial Fund helps to save Siegfried Sassoon's archive

The National Heritage Memorial Fund has provided an award of £550,000 to enable Cambridge University to acquire the personal archive of First World War soldier, poet and author, Siegfried Sassoon, for the nation. The total cost of the archive is £1.25m. [NHMF statement](#)

Health and safety guidance to help teachers organise school trips

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has launched a consultation on guidance to help teachers organise school trips. The DCSF statement says: "Activities outside the classroom have significant benefits for young people and help to bring learning to life. They support children to develop knowledge, understanding and skills beyond the classroom walls, through educational activities." The *Health and Safety of Learners Outside the Classroom* (HASLOC) guidance aims to provide builds on the Quality Badge Scheme for learning providers, launched earlier this year. The consultation runs until 8 February. [DCSF statement](#)

Also:

MLA is promoting a [Get it Loud in Libraries](#) toolkit which gives a step-by-step guide to staging live music events in public libraries.

Participation Cymru have produced good practice guides on public engagement - [How to get started with citizen engagement and Understanding barriers to engagement](#).

APPOINTMENTS

Dr Penelope Curtis, has been appointed as the **Director of Tate Britain**. Dr Curtis has been Curator of the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds since 1999. Dr Curtis will take up her appointment in April 2010. The founding Director of Tate Britain, Dr Stephen Deuchar, leaves Tate in December 2009 after eleven years in the role to become the Director of The Art Fund. [More](#)

Harry Reeves OBE has been appointed as Secretary-General of the **UK National Commission for UNESCO**. Mr Reeves is currently Deputy Director of Culture at DCMS where he has been responsible for policy on architecture and the built and historic environment since September 2004. He will take up his new post in January.

David Worthington will be acting Chair of **Creative & Cultural Skills** until new Board members are recruited in January. **Tony Hall**, Chief Executive of the Royal Opera House, has stepped down as Chair after five years. [More](#)

The Prime Minister has reappointed **Eddie Davies OBE** as a Trustee of the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, and **David Moorhouse CBE** and **Dr David Quarmby CBE** as Trustees of the **National Maritime Museum**. [More](#)

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM NEWS

Italy's first national museum of contemporary art and architecture

MAXXI - the National Museum of the XXI Century Arts, Italy's first national museum of contemporary art and architecture, will open in Rome in spring 2010. Last month, Culture Minister Sandro Bondi welcomed journalists to a preview of the completed building, designed by architect Zaha Hadid. MAXXI will have 10,000 sqm of display space, with two museums - MAXXI art and MAXXI architecture and temporary exhibition spaces. The building has been designed as a "multi-disciplinary and multi-purpose campus of the arts and culture" with auditorium, library and media library, bookshop and cafeteria, outdoor spaces, live events and commercial activities, laboratories, and places for study and leisure, as well as the two museums. MAXXI has been established as a Foundation, so far fully owned by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities, but open to cooperation and integration with other public and private entities. The total cost of the project is €150m project and the visitor forecast is 200,000-400,000 per year. [MAXXI](#)

Pompidou Mobile tent will take masterpieces to rural France

The Pompidou Centre in Paris has unveiled plans for Pompidou Mobile, a roving museum in a 1000 sq m tent. *The Associated Press* reports that the visiting the Pompidou Mobile will be free, and that the project's priorities are rural regions and the poor, crime-ridden suburbs of French cities. There will be three three-month long displays per year, beginning at the end of 2010. The high-tech canvas structure, with environmentally controlled display areas, will cost approximately €3m and regional governments will fund the museum's operating costs. [Associated Press](#) [Pompidou Centre](#)

Guggenheim plans to expand to "Bilbao effect" to Guernica

The Museo Guggenheim Bilbao is completing feasibility studies for satellite museum near the historic town of Guernica. *The Art Newspaper* reports that the Biscay Provincial Council has allocated €1m to fund the environmental and economic analyses, and pledged €100m for construction, about half the estimated cost. The proposal is not to create a new independent Guggenheim museum, but a satellite run and operated by the museum in Bilbao with additional running costs of approximately €10m a year. [The Art Newspaper](#)

German Government split over museum appointments

A row has erupted in the new German Government over appointments to the Board of the new World War Two Museum, which the German Cabinet must approve. Reuters reports that the Foreign Minister, Guido Westerwelle of the Free Democrats, plans to veto the appointment of Erika Steinbach, head of the German League of Expellees and a member of Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats party, because it could damage relations with Poland. Ms Steinbach, a driving force behind the museum, which will depict the plight of Germans and other groups forced out of eastern Europe, voted against recognising Germany's border with Poland in a symbolic parliamentary vote in 1990. Earlier this year, the Polish Prime Minister personally asked Mrs Merkel not to consider Ms Steinbach for a role on the museum's board, saying this would be "painful for Poland." [Reuters](#)

Vatican begins new dialogue between Catholic Church and the arts

Pope Benedict XVI has invited 500 international artists, sculptors, architects, musicians and film directors to a meeting in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel to begin a new dialogue between the Catholic Church and the arts. BBC News reports that, before the meeting, the invited artists are to be taken on a guided tour of the Vatican's art collection and "they will be gently encouraged to make a gift of one of their works to the Vatican collection." [BBC News](#)

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston wins legal challenge to €250m legacy

The daughter of an oil philanthropist has lost a legal battle which sought to invalidate her father's bequests to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston and a family foundation. Alfred C Glassell Jr's daughter contended that the museum and its lawyers pressured her father to change his will. Mr Glassell was chair of the museum's board of trustees in the 1990s and a major donor to the museum in his lifetime. The museum will receive roughly \$200-\$250 million from the estate. *The Art Newspaper* reports that museum is also pursuing a clause in the will which means Ms Glassell stands to lose the rest of her inheritance for contesting the will. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Google to put Iraq National Museum collection online

The search engine Google is working with Iraq's National Museum on a project to make 14,000 digital images taken at the museum freely available online from the beginning of next year. Google's Chief Executive, Eric Schmidt, made the announcement during a visit to Baghdad last month. The project involves digitising and electronically cataloguing artefacts at the museum, with the costs being borne jointly by Google and the US State Department. [Google](#)

Smithsonian receives federal funding increase and \$30m Legacy Fund

The United States Congress has approved a 4% rise in Federal funding for the Smithsonian Institution in 2010. The \$761.4m budget includes an additional \$3m for collections care for the Smithsonian's museums, \$89.3 million for facilities revitalisation and \$35.7 million for design and planning for future projects. There is also a \$30m federal Legacy Fund which will provide matched funding for any funds or in-kind contributions the Smithsonian secures towards the renovation of its Arts and Industries Building. [Smithsonian](#)

NEWS FROM NMDC MEMBERS

[Amgueddfa Cymru National Museum Wales](#) has returned Maori remains to New Zealand. The private repatriation - arranged in partnership with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa - saw the skeletal remains of one female and the bones of 11 others returned to their original community in New Zealand. The remains were handed over in a private repatriation ceremony at the National Museum Cardiff on 16 November. [More](#)

[The British Museum](#) and the BBC have announced details of *A History of the World* - a unique and unprecedented partnership focusing on world history. A core part of the project is the BBC Radio 4 series, 'A History of the World in 100 Objects' which will be broadcast from 18 January 2010. There is also 13-part CBBC series entitled *Relic: Guardians of the Museum*, in which teams of children visit the Museum at night to unlock the mysteries behind 13 of the objects featured in, and inspired by, the Radio 4 series. The partnership includes large scale activity across the country, with 350 museum venues around the UK contributing. [More](#)

The Directors of the [V&A](#) and Museums Sheffield have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enable their partnership to continue for a further five years. The partnership has been running since 1999 and has included exhibitions, gallery development, staff secondments and exchange of information and expertise in areas from management to marketing and technical operations. [More](#)

The [V&A](#) has produced its first *iPhone* application. Featuring *Tipu's Tiger*, the application accompanies the exhibition *Maharaja: The Splendour of India's Royal Courts* and a new book *Tipu's Tigers*, and allows users to play the Tiger's keyboard and explore the object from almost any angle. [More](#)

Genetic research on 150 year old birds in the [Natural History Museum's](#) collection has provided new evidence to assist the conservation of a critically endangered and historically important species, *Floreana mockingbird*. The research was carried out by an international team including the Natural History Museum and led by the University of Zurich. [More](#)

[Imperial War Museum Duxford](#) and the University of Cambridge are collaborating on a range of courses in spring 2010, including a course on war, peace and social change in 20th century art. [More](#)

[The Sir John Soane's Museum](#) has acquired an ring it was unable to buy at auction after the successful bidder learnt of the Museum's interest and felt it should return to its original home. The gold mourning ring containing a lock of Napoleon's hair, one of Sir John Soane's prized possessions and was kept in the Soane family after his death. The Art Fund has provided a grant of £30,000 towards the acquisition cost. [The Art Fund](#)

Major projects

The [V&A's](#) new Medieval and Renaissance galleries will open on 2 December. The £32m redevelopment is the biggest project undertaken by the V&A since the opening of the British Galleries in 2001. Spanning the entire east wing of the Museum, the new sequence of displays will be broadly chronological, from 300 to 1600. Architects MUMA have designed ten new galleries, reconfiguring existing museum spaces and constructing a new day-lit gallery from a previously unused area. The project has been funded by £9.75m from the Heritage Lottery Fund and more than £20m of private donations. [More](#)

The [Ashmolean Museum](#) will be officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen on 2 December. The museum reopened to the public on 7 November after a £61m redevelopment which doubled the display space. The museum attracted 22,000 visitors on its opening weekend and is currently averaging 6,000 visitors a day. [More](#)

[Ulster Museum](#) received almost 60,000 people visits in the first 10 days following its re-opening on 22nd October. The refurbished museum now has 1,225 sqm more exhibition space than the former site. [More](#)

The [Museum of London](#) has opened its new state-of-the-art Clore Learning Centre. The Centre, supported by the Clore Duffield Foundation, the Heritage Lottery Fund and others has a series of multi-purpose activity spaces, a fully equipped e-learning studio and a 230-seat theatre. The Centre is part of a £20m redevelopment of the Museum, including the new Galleries of Modern London opening in spring 2010. [More](#)

The [National Galleries of Scotland](#) have now raised 80% of the £17.6m required for the major redevelopment of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. The *Portrait of the Nation* project, due for completion in autumn 2011, will increase gallery space in the building by 50% the amount of gallery space and create a range of new visitor facilities. [More](#)

Awards

[International Slavery Museum, Liverpool](#) has been honoured by UNESCO for "the museum's contribution to the promotion of the ideals of human dignity, solidarity and mutual respect in multi-cultural, multi-confessional and multi-ethnic societies." The Director-General of UNESCO gave the Museum an Honorary Mention in the UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence. The Slavery Museum was one of only two institutions throughout the world to have had the honour. [More](#)

At the Visit London Awards 2009, the [National Maritime Museum](#) won Visitor Attraction of the Year and Best Tourism Experience. The [Imperial War Museum](#) and [Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms](#) also won awards in these categories. Nicholas Babbs at the NMM also won the bronze prize for Outstanding Customer Service. The [Natural History Museum](#) won Peoples Choice Award for the Best London for Free Experience, the Marketing/PR Campaign of the Year award, and a silver award for Business Venue of the Year. [More](#)

[Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery's](#) Pre-Raphaelite website has won two more awards: a British Interactive Media Association (BIMA) Award in the category of Arts and Culture, and a DADI (Drum Awards for the Digital Industries) award for the Best Use of Technical Innovation. The DADI awards ceremony was held at the Royal Armouries in Leeds on 13th November. [More](#)

[The Science Museum](#), [National Railway Museum](#) and [National Media Museum](#) have received World Class Service accreditation, an employer driven initiative dedicated to helping organisations in the lifestyle and heritage sector deliver outstanding customer service. The accreditation is based on a detailed set of standards covering the museums' service environment and practices and has involved staff in all departments and at all levels across the National Museum of Science and Industry. [More](#)

NMDC Newsletter survey

Thank you for all the great feedback we've received so far. If you haven't already done so, please take a couple of minutes to complete our quick online survey and let us know what you think of this newsletter. [Click here for survey](#)

NMDC JOBS

Our jobs website, www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk currently has details of over 25 vacancies at museums around the UK including:

- Head of Object Conservation, National Maritime Museum
- Publications Manager, National Museums Liverpool
- Assistant Outreach Officer, National Museums Liverpool
- Digital Services Manager, Natural History Museum
- Project Assistant, Transforming Tate Modern

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

And finally...

A new book on the history of agony aunts includes the following beauty tip from the *Journal des Modes* (1893): "intellectual studies are being advised by modern doctors; and these say that to visit museums is as good an anti-fat exercise as to climb the Alps." [Daily Mail](#)

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