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Budget

Culture announcements in the 2014 Budget

- The Cultural Gifts Scheme – which allows people tax deductions in return for gifting significant items to the nation – is to be increased from a limit of £30m to £40m in 2014/15 (currently the budget for the Scheme is being fully used). [Museums Association](#)
- The government will contribute £1m to the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta next year (events are already being added to the [dedicated website here](#)).
- There will be major tax reliefs for theatre: 25% for touring productions and a 20% tax credit for all other productions. The relief will apply to subsidised as well as commercial productions and will also include musicals, opera, ballet and dance. [The Stage](#), [Arts Council](#)
- English Cathedrals will receive £20m towards repairs in recognition of their part in the First World War centenary commemorations. (The Church of England has welcomed this but also says that it faces a £87m repairs shortfall: Canterbury Cathedral recently failed in a £10m bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Lincoln Cathedral needs £16m for repairs). [Telegraph](#)
- A new Alan Turing Institute will be given £42m over five years to look at new ways of collecting, organising and analysing big data for the benefit of business. [Guardian](#)

Responses from cultural bodies

- The government did not reduce the VAT on housing and renovation repair from 20% to 5%, despite calls from a large campaign group including the Heritage Alliance, which expressed disappointment. [Heritage Alliance](#)
- The National Science Heritage Forum said it would have liked to see some of the money made available to science organisations which work in heritage. [National Science Heritage Forum](#)
- Arts & Business welcomed the tax relief on film and theatre production, but argued that since museums are increasingly producing blockbuster exhibitions, there should be a much wider tax relief on creativity. Director Philip Spedding said “*Let’s get some money into the system so that theatres and filmmakers, museum curators and choreographers, painters and writers can all look to developing new projects that will bring much needed sustainability to the sector.*” [Arts & Business](#)

[Gov.uk](#) (full speech and whole Budget document)

Philanthropy

‘Why we give’ – UK giving culture dissected

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) has produced a new report, *Why We Give*, which explores responses to the question of what inspires 700 larger donors to give – people who give thousands each year to good causes.

The most frequently cited reasons were values based: 97% said 'my personal values', 96% 'my own sense of morality/ethics', 75% 'a specific belief about a particular cause', 71% 'faith', 61% 'effect of personal experiences'. However when asked what measures might increase giving, return on investment was mentioned more frequently: 77% thought a better understanding of existing tax incentives would help and 76% would welcome more generous tax breaks.

CAF has simultaneously published a discussion paper, *Give Me A Break*, which argues that US style philanthropy will not translate easily into the UK culture. They say that the US system is heavily slanted towards major giving by very wealthy philanthropists, where there is a strong social expectation that such people will give and a more positive attitude to wealth. The UK by contrast has a more fragmented system, including Gift Aid which allows many smaller donors to give and an honours system which to some extent replaces major public giving as a mark of having attained public eminence. [Charities Aid Foundation](#), [Arts Professional](#), [Charities Aid Foundation](#) (Give Me A Break report)

Cuts

37 posts to go at National Museums Liverpool

National Museums Liverpool (NML) has announced a net loss of 37 posts in 2014/15 because of 'unrelenting cuts'. The figure comes from the combination of 66 posts being lost and 29 alternative posts being created. Letters have been sent to staff inviting them to consider voluntary redundancy, reduced hours and job shares.

The group of eight museums has lost a quarter of its government funding since 2010. Director Dr David Fleming said "*The situation is bleak. For the past four years we've faced unrelenting funding cuts as we try to operate world class museums. We have difficult decisions to make as we cope with the severe reductions to our budgets. We want to do everything we can to avoid compulsory redundancies.*" NML also reports that there has been a reduction in events across all venues. [BBC](#)

Reductions to York Museums Trust as part of York Council cuts package

York Council is raising Council Tax and cutting 240 posts in an attempt to save £240m over the next two years. Budget cuts will also include reductions in investment in York Museums Trust and York Theatre Royal. [BBC](#)

Local Government Association calls for more lottery money for arts and culture

The Local Government Association (LGA) has called for a review of the amount of Lottery money spent on arts and culture. It argues that more Big Lottery money should be redirected to sustaining culture as local government budgets face increasing strain from cuts.

Councillor Flick Rea, Chair of the LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, said: "*The National Lottery has given billions of pounds to good causes and our country is a more culturally rich and diverse place because of it. However, as funding continues to get cut and council budgets are getting increasingly tighter, we now need to have a conversation around how money is allocated and ensure that it is ending up where it is needed the most. The Government's decision to continually focus its most severe cuts on councils, which deliver hundreds of services on which millions of people rely each day, is inevitably having an impact on the arts, heritage and sport, and the additional boost provided by lottery funding is ever more important.*" [Local Government Association](#)

Take your partners to survive funding cuts, says culture academic

Writing for the *New Statesman*, Gerald Lidstone, Director of the Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship at Goldsmiths, argues that the Arts Council should not 'backfill' money shortfalls left by local government cuts, but instead accept that some arts organisations will fold in the current climate. He argues that philanthropy won't fill the gap on risky projects, and recommends a culture where organisations are protected by "a much more collaborative relationship with organisational supporters and audiences". [New Statesman](#)

Hadrian's Wall Trust to close through lack of funds

The Hadrian's Wall Trust is to close in September as it has become financially unsustainable. English Heritage had been gradually decreasing its grant with a view to the trust becoming financially self-sustaining over the next few years, but the strategy has failed to work. In a statement, its Trustees write:

"As we approach a new financial year, the Trust has been in discussion with its key partners, all of which are themselves working under significant financial constraints. This is the challenging environment in which charities operate today and it is against this background that the Trustees have decided with deep regret that their only option is to seek the orderly and solvent closure of the Hadrian's Wall Trust over the next six months."

Funders of the trust including English Heritage are now working to put other plans in place to protect the wall. [Hadrians Wall Trust](#), [Museums Association](#)

Widespread anxiety claimed over English Heritage split

The *Independent* reports that the 600 responses to the consultation on splitting English Heritage to create an independent charity have shown considerable anxiety about the plan. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings argues that the £80m grant for the new body to carry out repairs across 440 historical sites is not enough, and the Council for British Archaeology said that the scheme had been 'rushed'. Others argue that there is no contingency plan if the books do not balance, or a major disaster like foot and mouth or flooding affect properties. Shadow Culture Minister Helen Goodman called for the scheme to be sent back to the drawing board.

However, writing to respondents, Culture Secretary Maria Miller said that two thirds of respondents were supportive of the plan and English Heritage Chief Executive Simon Thurley said that the current plans are the 'only way forward'. [Independent](#)

Future of high value objects in Southampton City Art Gallery collections in doubt

Southampton City Council is still debating whether to sell off high value items from the City Art Gallery's £150m collection to cover the cost of repairing the roof. A group called Save Our Art has delivered a petition asking for the collection to be put into an independent trust to protect it.

The Council say they will only sell items as a last resort. Last year they wrote to Culture Minister Ed Vaizey to ask for accreditation rules to be relaxed to allow for more sales, but this has been refused. [Museums Association](#)

English arts funding distribution

First hearings about Arts Council England before parliamentary committee

The first hearings about the work of Arts Council England (ACE) have taken place in front of a parliamentary committee. The witnesses were Dame Liz Forgan, former Chair, ACE and Peter Stark, Christopher Gordon and David Powell, authors of the report *Rebalancing our Cultural Capital*.

Points arising in Dame Liz's witness session include:

- Arts policy has worked: there has been flourishing around what were once "absolutely desperate places" built around investment in the arts – such as Nottingham, Margate, Manchester, Liverpool and Gateshead.
- It is difficult for the Arts Council when some local authorities 'throw in the towel' with the arts, and others don't – should the Arts Council give money to the places where support is evaporating locally, and thus risk encouraging other local authorities to make cuts while expecting the Arts Council to step into the gap?
- The balance of arts funding is based on a "tremendous campaign of conversation and discussion", workshops and consultancy, the result of which is an artistic strategy. Staff live in places where the work is done, know the quality of people running organisations, and so are able to offer informed views about the quality of art, people and efficiency of operation. Then geographical spread is explored at a higher level. It is a very scrupulous process.
- It is useful to look at the history of how lottery money has been spent – if you establish large organisations without the infrastructure and audiences to support them, they fail. So the cities are

without any doubt the focus and the engine of arts renewal. There is a pretty decent spread and this is a crude but useful way of looking at larger grants and top level picture of spending. At the community level the equality argument is much more powerful.

- One MP said that “when the axe fell – New Victoria Theatre, Staffordshire, was the only organisation funded by the Arts Council”. Liz Forgan acknowledged that “there were some horrible decisions”.
- In the last round of cuts overseen by Liz Forgan the balance shifted very marginally to the regions (around 1%).
- Members of the committee visited the National Media Museum where visitor numbers have recently fallen. One commented that many people don't go to Bradford as a weekend away, and so it may be more difficult for it to attract visitors. Liz Forgan said that there are examples of turning a vicious circle into a virtuous circle by beginning with more modest development. She pointed to Cornwall where the Lost Gardens of Heligan and then Tate St Ives were both risks, but have gradually built a large tourist choice.
- Liz Forgan acknowledged that lottery money is different from Grant in Aid and there is a case to “keep looking” for opportunities to fund good projects in the regions, but to shift an arbitrary and enormous amount of money is not a good thing to do.
- She pointed to the National Youth Orchestra, which is technically a London organisation because its HQ is one room in Somerset House, but which carries out three quarters of its work touring elsewhere.

The authors of *Rebalancing our Cultural Capital* said:

- The investment of the last 20 years is hugely welcomed – but the enormous potential means that resources are in the wrong place.
- Lottery money is fundamentally different – at some level there should be a match between distribution and contribution figures. Westminster Council cut its arts budget completely without “any discernable penalty at all” in terms of its share of cultural money from ACE.
- They are not suggesting a purely per capita cultural policy.
- London is “at least two cities” and money is distributed unequally there too.
- They are recommending a weighted allocation by large areas. At present London and areas in the East and South East (a ‘day return’ away from the capital) receive £415m, the Midlands £140m, South West £60m and the Greater North £216m. They suggest there should be a redistribution of £120m per year of lottery money which will build cores in each region – not necessarily introduced over a single year.
- Lottery money was previously for new and additional activity. It used to be solely that purpose, but has now drifted to NPOs wholly funded by lottery; straight substitution is proposed for 2015–18.
- If you include out-of-London touring by museums and theatres, the report writers have so far identified £12m in benefit – this shifts the London to regions ratio in taxpayer spending from 15:1 to 14:1 so is not a significant difference. They ask why regional touring is so little represented in the capital city.
- If ACE offers security of funding to NPOs until 2018 there is no way that the proposals of the *Rebalancing* report can be actioned.

There will be further hearings of the committee shortly, and the current ACE Chair Sir Peter Bazalgette will be among those next to give evidence. [Parliament TV](#), [Art Professional](#)

Tottenham MP criticises cultural opportunities in poorer London boroughs

As the debate about London/regional arts funding distribution continues, David Lammy MP has highlighted the differences in provision across the capital itself. He has commissioned research showing that 27 out of 73 constituencies in London do not even have a cinema. He said “*The extent to which inequality in London pervades the lives of Londoners is deeply worrying – not just on issues of jobs, housing and transport, but also when it comes to culture and the arts.*” [The Voice](#)

Also: Visiting Bradford, ACE Chair Sir Peter Bazalgette said that the unequal amount of funding given to Leeds and Bradford reflected the fact that there were far more bids for support from Leeds. [Telegraph & Argus](#)

Arts Council England produces note on its work in rural areas

ACE has produced a short commentary on its work in rural areas. It says that it does not see the need for a specific rural strategy, but will continue to work closely with DEFRA to deliver work to the 17.6% of the population who live in rural areas. ACE also cites partners who are working with them on specific rural schemes, including the National Trust, Canal & River Trust, Forestry Commission and local museums and galleries.

Data from the Taking Part survey shows that people from rural areas are more likely to have engaged with the arts in the previous 12 months (80.9% rural areas vs 77.5% urban areas), museum attendance is virtually identical (48.2% rural, 49% urban) but rural people are less likely to use libraries. [Arts Council](#), [Arts Professional](#)

'A lot like Los Angeles (except for the weather)'

Writing for the Guardian, ACE's Director North, Alison Clark-Jenkins, argues that the domination of London in the arts is an inevitable result of its domination in every other field: for example, the spend per head on transport in London is £2.7k compared to £5 in the North East. She quotes economist Evan Davies' recent comment that the cure is to create a counter-pull from another set of super cities. Davies argues that this is already happening around Manchester, and a wider region from Leeds to Liverpool (working in a similar way to Los Angeles). Clark-Jenkins adds "Agglomeration can only ever be part of the answer in thinking about how public investment can stimulate cultural and artistic growth, not least because it's difficult to relate it directly to rural areas. But it's an important one because it's based on the economies of scale arising from talent and leadership in the cultural sector." [Guardian](#)

Resilience and new beginnings

A year on from the Great Fire of the Cuming Museum

The blaze lasted for three days and took 100 firefighters to extinguish, but a year on from the Cuming Museum fire 900 of the 950 objects on display have survived. Judy Aitken, Heritage Manager said "I have to say that not all of them are in great shape, but I think we've been fantastically lucky, and of the things that people will remember from the collections, and the things that people enjoyed looking at, a lot of that is intact".

Southwark Council is now looking at the rebuild of Walworth Town Hall as an opportunity to restore 'a civic heart' to the area, build an enhanced library and create an events space as well as rebuilding the museum. They also believe that a revived cultural hub in the area will draw people to shop with local businesses. [Museums Association](#)

Other museum developments

Buckingham County Museum will be moving into charitable trust status, to increase its fundraising opportunities. [Museums Association](#)

A £8.5m redevelopment has begun at Coventry Transport Museum, which will also include the restoration of a nearby grammar school, unused for 30 years. The museum is part of the Culture Coventry Trust, and the changes have been planned for six years. [Museums Association](#)

The Women's Library has reopened at London School of Economics, following its closure last year at a space owned by London Metropolitan University. An events space and activity room will open soon. [Museums Association](#)

Following a £1.2m grant to the Handel House Museum for significant redevelopment, its director Sarah Bardwell is blogging her experiences twice a week on her 'Hendrix at Home' blog (Handel House was also the home of Jimi Hendrix). [Hendrix at Home blog](#)

The Museum of Zoology in Cambridge is to close until 2016 for redevelopment following a £1.8m HLF grant. With 4 million specimens, they hold one of the world's largest zoology collections. The money will cover redisplay, outreach, online work and better storage. [ALVA](#)

A new 'Voices of Asia' gallery is opening at Leeds City Gallery on 18th April to celebrate the city's Asian links. [Asian Image](#)

New £10.5m museum for Shrewsbury

After five years' work, a new museum opened in Shrewsbury on April 1st, costing £10.5m. It opens with a contemporary art exhibition including Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst, as well as displays of prehistory, Roman, Medieval and 19th century galleries. Their website declares that 'special notice is hereby given of most wondrous developments' while @shrewsmuseum tweets its opening offer.

The work was funded by Shropshire Council with assistance from the European Regional Development Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England, the Walker Trust, The Art Fund and Friends of Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. [Shrewsbury Museum](#), [BBC](#)

Museum of the Year – how to win

In 2007 the William Morris Gallery had 'a shut-up look, like a care home' and faced cuts to funding. It was saved by a public campaign which led to a £5m redevelopment. This year it won Museum of the Year and exceeded its 50,000 visitor target by 80,000. Blogging for Creative & Cultural Skills, staff Anna Mason and Rebecca Jacobs give a five point plan for victory. They suggest:

- Build a support network: "Talk to people in the local council, in funding bodies and in official positions in the arts about the levels of support available to your organisation."
- Engage the public.
- Take risks "we tried to be ambitious in relation to our size".
- Promote ahead: the William Morris Gallery harnessed social media and local networks as well as distributing 16,000 pieces of print promotion.
- Harness the talent nascent in the local community "By involving people, you're encouraging them to take a stake in the gallery."

[Creative & Cultural Skills](#)

Van Dyck price reduced as National Portrait Gallery's campaign continues

The National Portrait Gallery's Save Van Dyck campaign has received a boost after an agreement with the current owner Alfred Bader, the art dealer Philip Mould, and the collector James Stunt.

Billionaire Stunt had previously bought the painting, but agreed to withdraw from the purchase because of campaigning to keep the picture in public ownership. This means that the gallery can now buy the work for £10m - £2.5m less than their original target. However, the gallery still only has 4 months to find the £6.4m still needed despite significant donations by 8,000 members of the public. [BBC](#)

Also: The National Portrait Gallery has unveiled its first 'People's Portrait' commissioned following a public vote. Viewers of the BBC's One Show nominated Falklands veteran Simon Weston for the portrait, which is nearly life sized. Weston, who suffered severe burns during the Falklands War, is shown holding his medals. Director Sandy Nairne described it as "a powerful portrait of Simon Weston as a strong and inspiring character". [Guardian](#)

Ringling, singing stones: new theories about Stonehenge

Following a study at the Royal College of Art, a new theory has been added to all the others about the purpose of Stonehenge: it might be a musical instrument. Since the 1920s there have been theories about why stones from nearly 200 miles away were dragged to Stonehenge: the RCA say that it is because when struck, stones from the area sound remarkably like bells. Atlantic Cities adds: "They sound so much like a bell, in fact, that churches in the region [of Wales] used them as their bells until the 1700s. A nearby village is named Maenclochog, meaning ringling stones." Weathering and their burial in the ground means that the singing stones of Stonehenge are now rather muted, but they still bear the marks of being repeatedly struck. [Atlantic Cities](#)

Your thoughts needed: surveys and consultations

Experiencing the Digital World

The Experiencing the Digital World project looks at the role of digital technologies and spaces in engaging new museum audiences. Academics at Leeds University are conducting a literature review, but also seeking a snapshot from museums about how digital strategies are currently used. They would be grateful to museums filling in [this five minute survey](#). They will be issuing a short briefing document with their conclusions – further details from James: J dot F dot Stark@leeds.ac.uk

Tell English Heritage what you thought of 2013 Heritage Counts report

English Heritage is asking those who read the 2013 *Heritage Counts* report to fill in a five minute survey, so they can make improvements ahead of the 2014 report. [Surveymonkey](#)

English Heritage consult on National Heritage Protection Plan

English Heritage is now consulting on the National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP) and is inviting people to participate in two ways. Firstly there is an [online survey here](#). Secondly there are consultancy events in cities across the country during April – you can book a place on [Eventbrite here](#). Both will help shape priorities for the next iteration of the NHPP for 2015–20.

Potential partner scoping questionnaire: Art Share Wales

A grant from the Art Fund has revived a partnership between Arts Share Wales and National Museums Wales. The scheme last ran from 2005 to 2011, facilitating 400 loans as well as creating new artworks inspired by collections and supporting learning projects. Ahead of the new round, organisers would like potential participant museums to fill in a questionnaire – you can get this by contacting Angela Gaffney, National Partnerships Manager (029) 2057 3316 (Angela dot Gaffney@museumswales.ac.uk)

Awards

Museums + Heritage Award Shortlist 2014

The shortlist for each of the ten Museums + Heritage Awards has been announced. The museums in the running for the innovation prize have produced some of the best ideas of the last year: the British Museum's [Pompeii Live](#), Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums ([Half Memory](#)), V&A ([digital explorer map](#)), Design Museum ([The Future is Here: a new industrial revolution](#)), Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre's [The Jodrell Bank Projections](#) and Land Design Studio and ISO ([Hearts of Oak](#), Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust). Winners will be announced on 14th May. [Museums + Heritage](#)

Europa Nostra winner announced

Winners of the 2014 Europa Nostra awards for excellence in conservation, research, dedicated service and education, training and awareness raising have been announced. Two of the 30 winners were UK based: a 'Shaping Culture' partnership between the cities of Norwich and Ghent, and the conservation of Abbotsford, the former home of Sir Walter Scott. [Europa Nostra](#), [Europa Nostra](#) (Norwich), [Europa Nostra](#) (Abbotsford)

Accreditation awarded to four archives

Archive Service Accreditation is the new UK wide standard for the archives service. Its committee has announced that it has just accredited four archives as having reached national standards for long-term collection, preservation and accessibility of the nation's archive heritage. They include the first ever accreditations in Scotland and Wales. The four are: Falkirk Archives, Richard Burton Archives at the University of Swansea, Unilever Archives and Records Management and the National Archives. [National Archives](#)

More awards for Mary Rose

The Mary Rose Museum has won two prestigious Civic Trust Awards – the main award, for outstanding architecture and design, and the Michael Middleton Special Award, for exceptional work within a conservation area. Deputy Director Robert Lapraik said “*we are all incredibly proud of our museum and it is fantastic to get recognition for this wonderful building*”. [Mary Rose Trust](#)

Venues sought for ARMA Artist in Residence 2015

Museums and galleries are invited to apply to host the ARMA Artist in residence scheme 2015. The successful applicant will receive £2k, with a further £15k being awarded to the artist. Currently the artist Maria Zahle is in residence at the New Walk Museum and Art Gallery in Leicester. The deadline for applications is 10am on 22nd April. [Engage](#)

Win a NICE award

The Network for Innovation in Culture and Creativity in Europe is seeking entrants for its 2014 awards which celebrate creative industries projects which have a ‘spillover effect’ on the societies and economies which surround them. Up to €5k in prize money is available and the closing date is 15th April. [BOP consulting](#)

Other funds opening

The Prism Fund which offers up to £20k or 90% funding for the preservation of industrial and scientific material has now opened for 2014/15. [Arts Council](#),

The Textile Society has opened its Museum, Archive and Conservation award of up to £5k to support textile related projects for exhibition or publication. The deadline is June 2nd 2014. [Textile Society](#)

Collections

‘Collections united, shall never be defeated’

Collections Trust CEO Nick Poole has made the case for a ‘distributed national collection’ – the idea that all the collections in the UK should be curated as a single entity with hundreds of outlets. He says:

- “To UK museums accustomed to acting more or less autonomously, the Distributed National Collection can sometimes look like a land-grab. But the idea is not to weaken individual museums. It is to strengthen all of us by promoting unity and strengthening our advocacy on a National stage.”
- “Currently, Local Authority museums stand exposed and more or less alone when confronted with difficult spending decisions by local councillors. If, instead of thinking of every museum as an island, we saw every museum as part of the national cultural infrastructure, then a threat to one museum might come to be seen as a threat to us all, and would therefore be much easier to defend.”
- If a Distributed National Collection belongs to everyone, and everyone has a right to see it, it would increase the obligation for partnership and loans between large and small institutions, with a shared obligation to help people to benefit.
- He adds that there is significant duplication across collections: “We have far, far too much stuff.” A distributed national collection would be able to divest itself of its oversupply of flatirons and rationalise what the museum sector should collectively keep.

Poole acknowledges that the idea is a radical one in the context of the way the sector currently works, but says that it resurfaces once each generation and that the National Strategies for Museums in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland may be a step towards this vision. [Collections Link](#)

Cefni Barnet Fund for object research offers bursaries

The Cefni Barnet Fund is offering bursaries up to £500 for object research by Welsh Museum staff. The funding can include attending conferences, if that is directly for the purpose of object research. Priority will be given to projects that advance the idea of a Distributed National Collection. The deadline is Friday 25th April and full details and application forms are available from john at arenig.demon.co.uk

Tate painting ruled Nazi loot

A Constable painting, *Beaching a Boat, Brighton*, is likely to be returned to claimants after the Spoliation Advisory Panel ruled that it is likely to have been Nazi loot. The painting was donated to the Tate by Mrs P M Rainsford in 1986, who had purchased it in the 1960s. But it now seems probable that in 1944, the picture was owned by a Hungarian art collector and that it was taken from him by Nazis. The Tate said that it would be recommending the return of the painting to the claimants to its Trustees when they meet in May. [Gov.uk](#), [Tate](#)

Value of culture

ACE produces evidence review on the value of culture

Arts Council England has carried out a literature review of the value of culture to society. It tracks positive effects on the economy, health and wellbeing, engagement with society and education.

The report also acknowledges large gaps in information – there is generally a lack of double blind control trials and longitudinal studies, partly because of the expense of such research, and partly because of the ‘messiness’ of the arts as they intertwine with the rest of culture. Such extensive studies are slightly more common in the US. However, ACE suggests that the best route to sound data might be to draw from existing big data sets for everything from Taking Part to the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England and the British Household Panel Survey. They add that ‘deferred’ benefits of the arts can be particularly hard to track.

In his introduction to the Review, Chair Sir Peter Bazalgette committed ACE to greater research in coming years:

“For the first time, the Arts Council will also be committing substantial research grants to plug some of these gaps in our knowledge. One of the main problems is finding the framework and language with which to express these benefits – creating the right lens through which this transforming ghost of art, everywhere but often invisible, at last shows up as an identifiable presence. But we’ve a lot more work to do in just learning to ask the right questions. In particular we will be looking to form partnerships with the higher education research departments, drawing on their specialist knowledge, facilities and links across the cultural sector.” [Arts Council](#), [The Stage](#)

Maria Miller addresses Local Government Association conference

Speaking in Portsmouth on 3rd March, Culture Secretary Maria Miller addressed the LGA conference on the continuing value of arts and culture in difficult financial times and gave examples of the benefits of supporting the sector. Among her examples were:

- The Mary Rose Museum has attracted three quarters of a million people to Portsmouth in only 9 months.
- Investment in the Hepworth Wakefield by the local council brought £10m to the local economy in the first year.
- There is evidence of savings to the NHS and improved mental health through participation in the arts.
- The arts bring communities together – like the regular SO Festival in Skegness and the effects of City of Culture status on Derry-Londonderry.
- Partnerships are helping Councils to continue supporting the arts, such as Luton Cultural Services Trust, which supports 12 cultural bodies across the town, and the merger between cultural bodies in Birmingham to create ‘Birmingham Museums’, the UK’s largest independent museums trust.
- Universities are forming partnerships with cultural organisations. “Evolve” at the University of Derby offers support and space to new and growing businesses, and the University also supports the theatre in Derby.

Miller also pointed to outreach work by national institutions, such as the PlusTate network and the British Museum's touring exhibition *Roman Empire: Power and People*, which was developed with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. [Gov.uk](#)

Welsh Government publishes culture and poverty report

The Welsh Government has published *Culture and Poverty: Harnessing the power of the arts, culture and heritage to promote social justice in Wales*. It has been produced by Baroness Kay Andrews and the Government will respond by July. Baroness Andrews has produced 33 recommendations to help poorer communities access the arts to broaden horizons and increase ambitions. These include:

- Institutions to become more community and child friendly, similar to the Kids in Museums model.
- Government to explore transport barriers to visiting cultural sites.
- Strategic direction to place institutions at the heart of communities.
- Embedding cultural enrichment in school curriculums and outside school activity, with teachers getting relevant training.
- Work with regeneration bodies including the HLF and Prince's Regeneration Trust to identify cultural activity opportunities around heritage sites.
- Developing consistent KPIs for the arts, cultural and heritage sector that incentivise efforts to improve wellbeing through engaging people in cultural projects in the community.

Baroness Andrews said: "*The foundations are all there. What is needed is common purpose and clear frameworks to enable people to work together creatively.*" [Welsh Government, Arts Industry](#) (subscription only)

Visitor numbers

Art Newspaper publishes global gallery visitor statistics

The Art Newspaper has published its annual look at the most popular art exhibitions and art galleries across the world. Ranking is calculated by the number of visitors per day. Headline stats include:

- The most visited art museum last year was the Louvre with 9,334,435 visitors.
- The British Museum moves up to second place with 6,701,036 overall visitors, overtaking the Metropolitan Museum of Art (6,226,727). Also in the top ten are the National Gallery (6,031,574) and the Tate (4,884,939).
- The most popular single exhibitions were predominantly in Asia, with the National Palace Museum in Taipei taking the top two spots with *The Western Zhou Dynasty* (1,007,062 visitors) and *The Lingnan School of Painting* (921,130). Also featuring in the top ten are the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil - *Impressionism: Paris and Modernity* (561,142) which was the most visited free exhibition, the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo - *Raphael* (505,246) and Shanghai Museum - *World of Faberge* (572,799).
- The top ten London exhibitions were dominated by free shows at the Saatchi Gallery: *Paper, Breaking the Ice: Moscow Art 1960s – 80s, Hugo Boss: Red Never Follows, Gaiety Is the Most Outstanding Feature*, and *New Order: British Art Today* were the top five. They are followed by the *Manet* show at the RA and Tate Britain's *Simon Starling: Phantom Ride*.
- The three most popular decorative art exhibitions were in Shanghai, with the V&A's *Hollywood Costume* the sixth most visited globally.
- The most visited antiquities show was *In the Light of Armana: Nefertiti* at the Neues Museum, Berlin (600,000). The British Museum's *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum* was third (471,910) and its Cyrus cylinder played a starring role in the fourth placed exhibition *The Cyrus Cylinder and Ancient Persia*, at the Freer and Sackler Galleries, Washington DC (99,547).

[The Art Newspaper](#) (subscription only for this content)

Record breaking year for the Museum of London

The Museum of London Group has hugely increased its visitor numbers in a single year. For the 12 months to March 2013, the Museum in Docklands and Museum of London received 615,000 visitors, but in the 11 months to early March 2014, one million people visited. Director Sharon Ament hopes to further grow numbers to 1.5m by 2017/18. Since October 2013, the Museum of London has been showing *The Cheapside Hoard: London's Lost Jewels* which attracted considerable press coverage and critical acclaim. [Museum of London](#)

Employment

Lack of diversity hurting cultural sector, says CCS

Creative & Cultural Skills has published a new report *Building a Creative Nation: Evidence Review* which argues that the growth of the creative industries is being stifled by recruitment from a small 'in crowd'. High level qualifications for entry level jobs and the expectation that many will work for free are also highlighted as problems, as are gender and ethnicity imbalances in parts of the sector.

The report adds that schemes like the Work Programme and Youth Contract wage incentive scheme have failed to get much reach in the creative industries, because so many are microbusinesses. They argue that there is a role for government in creating new schemes more fit for purpose.

In a foreword, joint Chief Executive Pauline Tambling writes "*The relative preference of creative businesses to recruit unpaid workers, from a very small network of in-the-know applicants, is stifling the ability of businesses to diversify and grow. This may be a reason why creative businesses remain as micro, rather than major players on the economic landscape.*" [The Stage](#), [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [CCSkills](#)

Museums Galleries Scotland invests in openings for non-graduates

MGS has received £422.4k from the Heritage Lottery Fund to help more non-graduates make a career in the cultural sector. The Heritage Horizons programme will give one year traineeships, beginning in the autumn, which will give an SVQ Level Four qualification in museum practice. It is hoped that the scheme will plug skills shortages, offer rewarding careers and increase the diversity of the sector. [Museums Galleries Scotland](#)

Clore/ACE report on cultural sector leadership

The Arts Council and Clore Foundation have commissioned an independent report on leadership in the cultural sector. They say that lack of confidence is one of the primary reasons for reluctance to progress in the sector, and that employers should more actively develop their staff. Echoing Creative & Cultural Skills' comments about problems at entry level in the sector, the report says that ill-defined career paths and lack of diversity also mean that leaders are drawn from a very narrow pool. [Clore Leadership](#)

Appointments

The Culture Secretary Maria Miller has appointed five new trustees to the board of the Royal Armouries: Dr Andrew Burnett, Professor Anne Curry, Jason Kingsley, Christine Mayer and Deborah Mills. [Gov.uk](#)

Sir Richard Lambert has been appointed as the next Chairman of Trustees of the British Museum. He is a former editor of the Financial Times and Director General of the CBI. [British Museum](#)

Kate Adie and Professor Mary Beard will join the government's First World War centenary advisory board. [Gov.uk](#)

Former civil servant Sir Hayden Phillips GCB DL has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest. He will be in post for the next five years. [Gov.uk](#)

Events

National blackout to mark FWW centenary

In what has been described as "one of the most dramatic UK-wide events ever organised" households across the UK are being asked to switch off their lights for one hour at 11pm on August 4th to mark the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War. The plan echoes Sir Edward Grey's famous comment on the eve of the war: "the lamps are going out all over Europe, we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime." [Telegraph](#)

Behind the Scenes of the Museum: Artists in Collections

A one day conference at the Foyle Art Learning Space, Cardiff, looks at how artists and curators can work more closely together in museum spaces. Speakers include curator and writer James Putnam, Head of Applied Arts at National Museum Wales, Andrew Renton and artist Sarah Younan. Tickets are free but booking is essential. [Axisweb](#)

Remix Sydney: opportunities for cultural distance learning

Attending the Remix conference in Sydney, Australia, which blends culture, technology and entrepreneurship may be a bit of a stretch for many UK institutions. However, the British Council and Google -backed event will be filmed and made available to UK audiences for free after the conference on 8–9th May. 75 speakers include senior staff from BuzzFeed, Vice and Google and Louise Herron, CEO of Sydney Opera House. Previous events have taken place in London (with major museums as participants), Hong Kong and United Arab Emirates. This event will continue to reflect a globalised digitally-led cultural picture. [Remix](#)

All Wales Museums Campaign being planned

An All Wales Museums Campaign is taking place on 4th–12th October and is in the early stages of planning. There will be joint branding, 'key events' in North and South Wales, a toolkit, a PR plan and third party endorsement. A first planning meeting is taking place at National Museum Cardiff on 30th April – contact [nicola dot williams@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.dot.williams@wrexham.gov.uk) to volunteer for the working group.

Education

'Takeover Day' evaluated

Last November, Kids In Museums' 'Takeover Day' allowed 6,000 children to engulf and generally improve 150 museums and galleries. Volunteer organiser Tempe Nell has published a brief summary of learning points from the day. Her highlights include:

- Children from St Vincent's Primary School became young curators of the Wallace Collection. They led tours and "the crowd of listening adults increased with every room".
- While the Wallace was building on an existing relationship, the Cutty Sark invited children from a school five minutes from their door who had never previously visited, who provided a mini-consultancy. Neil adds: "*Learning Manager Catherine Stevenson has informed me the children's ideas are now being fed into the museum's strategic plan review including recreating the feeling of being at sea, making interpretation more humorous and creating a rocking ship for under 5s. For the Cutty Sark, Takeover Day 2013 will have a lasting effect on the museum's approach to interpretation.*"

There will be another Takeover Day in November 2014. [Museum of London](#)

Arts in Welsh education: government plans to STEAM ahead

Last September Professor Dai Smith published an independent report on how to embed arts in education in schools. Now the Welsh Government has said that it fully accepts and will implement all of his suggestions. These include:

"The Welsh Government should enhance the current curriculum to include creativity alongside numeracy and literacy as a core theme across all the subject disciplines and in both primary and secondary education; further the Welsh Government should consider an arts rich education to be core to the whole school experience of all pupils, and should, with the Arts Council of Wales, seek to enable wide experience of the arts outside school as well as interaction with professional artists in

the school environment."

Professor Smith said "I am delighted that the Welsh Government has responded so positively to all of my recommendations. As the report states, the Arts are potentially the game-changer in our current educational practice." Wales.gov.uk

BBC announces extended arts coverage

Director-General Tony Hall has announced that the BBC will be covering far more arts on its platforms, saying that it would be "*the biggest push we've made in the arts for a generation*". Announcements include:

- The Museums at Night Festival (15th–17thMay) will be broadcast in an hour long BBC2 programme.
- The BBC will also be working with the British Museum, Manchester International Festival, the Royal Academy and the National Galleries of Scotland.
- The BBC is also working with the Arts Council on a relaunch of The Space, and has begun broadcasting iplayer-only programming, which is another potential outlet for arts coverage.
- There will be more arts coverage on popular programmes like the One Show, to reconnect a generation with the arts.
- Kenneth Clark's 60s blockbuster *Civilisation* is to be followed up with a new series of the same name.

[Museums Association](#), [BBC](#)

Digital developments

Collections Trust blog series about making the most of digital

The Collections Trust will be looking at how to optimise museum digital offers over the coming weeks. In the first post, they explore differing staff relationships with digital and point out that digital is also transformative of external relationships: "*Many digital suppliers report that their work with museums is much more like a creative consultancy and much less like supplying a boxed product.*" [Collections Link](#)

Using Big Data to guess product value

How can cultural organisations guess what audiences will pay for an innovative product or service? What will they pay to download or live stream it? Blogging for Nesta, Juan Mateos-Garcia says that cultural institutions are still tiny players in the world of Big Data, but are beginning to find practical uses. 'Business model experiments' run by filmmaker Ben Wheatley on his own BFI sponsored film, answered useful questions on market positioning. Big Data can also be used to help develop creative experimentation - the Tate's analysis of how the online game *Wondermind* was used in 2011 has allowed them to build on its successes. [Nesta](#)

Jobs

Current vacancies on the NMDC jobs website include:

- [Senior Curator, Projects - Imperial War Museum](#)
- [Registrar - Museum of London](#)
- [Postdoctoral Research Fellow - V&A Research Institute Pilot](#)
- [Locomotion Finance Assistant - National Railway Museum](#)
- [Payroll Officer - Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery](#)
- [Referendum Curator - National Library of Scotland](#)
- [Researcher, Life Sciences - Natural History Museum](#)

See the full selection of current jobs at NMDC members' organisations [here](#).

And finally... the virtual world breaks the real one

A museum visitor, intent on taking a selfie, has broken off the leg from a 19th century copy of the Graeco-Roman statue *The Drunken Satyr* at the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera in Milan. The satyr, which lounges inebriated on a pedestal with outspread legs, may have looked pretty solid as the unknown student climbed into his lap to take a snap for Instagram. Unfortunately the hollow replica crumbled in the process. The destruction was captured on CCTV, but the culprit has not yet been caught.

Reporting the incident, culture mag *Dazed* sees the opportunity for further user-generated content, asking its readership "Have you ever destroyed a historic piece of art by accident? Are you the guy who took the statue's leg off? Please send us your picture if so". [Dazed](#)

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