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Museums and the local authority squeeze

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation publishes 'Mapping the Cuts'

The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation has published a succinct 23 page report summarising the recent cuts across environment, culture and local government, and exploring where this might create the greatest social need.

It reprises figures from the Museums Association showing that 51% of respondents had funding cuts in 2012/13 and argues that as both Arts Council England and local authorities cut back their funding for culture, philanthropists and businesses will also draw back from supporting arts and cultural groups because they will be perceived as 'sub prime'.

The report also looks interestingly at the pattern of local authority cuts - which shows deprived northern local authorities may taking a disproportionate hit compared with the South East. It cites an 11.3% cut in Liverpool compared to 0.6% in Wokingham. They argue that northern communities are facing a 'triple whammy' of welfare reform, loss of public services and cuts to voluntary and community organisations. Esmee Fairbairn, Museums Association,

Portrait of Wealthy Americans Taking Away the Body of St Stephen

The Wren Church St Stephen Walbrook has received permission from a Church of England court to sell Benjamin West's painting *Devout Men Taking Away the Body of St Stephen* to an unnamed US foundation for \$2.85m. Arguments about the sale have been complicated by the fact that the original hanging of the painting in 1776 was unofficial and to the detriment of the surrounding Wren Church, and that in the 1980s the painting was, also without permission, put into store by Samaritans founder Chad Varah. It has been in storage ever since. The sale has been contentious - an export license has been applied for but the Church Buildings Council is considering an appeal. Art Newspaper

Also: The government have imposed an export ban until 15th October on an early self-portrait of Rembrandt laughing. £16.5million is needed to keep the picture in the UK. Gov.uk

Local Government Association encourages Councils to value historical assets

English Heritage and the Local Government Association have just published a group of case studies demonstrating that even against a background of cuts, neglecting or removing support from heritage is a false economy. In her introduction Councillor Flick Rea writes *"the case studies vividly show that heritage has the ability to help councils achieve a range of local priorities – from boosting economic growth through tourism, jobs and attracting businesses, to improving the attractiveness of places and engaging communities."*

Among the case studies is Barnsley Council, which started from a base of one million museum visitors each year, bringing £13m to the economy and has now attracted European and lottery funding to grow the sector further and build a new museum. Local Government Association

Reports of arts crisis outside London following cuts

Various sources are pointing to a culture funding crisis outside London following cuts. Research by the Labour Party showed that the arts are 56% reliant on squeezed local councils beyond the capital, and receive far smaller sums from Arts Council England because of the concentration of national institutions in the capital (e.g. £1.29 in the South East vs. £21.33 in London). In the East Midlands where West Bromwich gallery The Public is threatened with closure, its Director warned of a 'cultural desert' if the double whammy of low council investment and lower philanthropy rates outside the capital continued. Writing for the Spectator, Art Fund Director Stephen Deuchar points out that 9 out of 10 finalists for the annual Arts Fund prize were supported by local authorities and that this vibrant regional culture may be smothered if more funding is withdrawn. Politics home, Express and Star, ITV, Spectator

Row escalates over Croydon Council's Riesco Collection Sale

Last month we reported that Croydon Council was contentiously intending to sell 24 items from its Riesco Collection of Chinese ceramics for an estimated £13m. It has now confirmed the sale will go ahead, and plans to spend the money on refurbishing a local theatre.

A succession of museum bodies have criticised the sale. The HLF say that they may attempt to reclaim some or all of the £934,000 they invested in Croydon's museum service. The Museums Association say the plans break its code of ethics, and Arts Council of England says it will now explore whether to remove the Museum of Croydon's accreditation. This will jeopardise any future funding bids by the museum service.

Croydon Council want to sell quickly in response to the boom in the price of Chinese artefacts. Of those who responded to a consultation on the sale, only one group were in favour. Councillor Tim Pollard, cabinet member for children, families and learning, said: "Clearly this has been a difficult decision to make, and one that we have not taken lightly...[But] the costs of maintaining this collection do not provide value for money to Croydon taxpayers, whereas the possibility of investing in the future of the Fairfield Halls will breathe new life into culture in Croydon for residents to experience and enjoy in the 21st century."

However, in a speech in the House of Lords, the Earl of Clancarty pointed out that "there is a history here. In 2010, Croydon Council threatened to axe all arts services and sell off 13 local libraries. Fortunately there has been enough of a public outcry for this not to happen, although the popular David Lean Cinema, which was also part of the Clocktower complex, has already been closed."

The Riesco family is understood to be divided on the issue. Riesco's surviving daughter, now 98, is content for the sale to go ahead, but at least one of his great-grandchildren opposes the plans. Croydon Guardian, Museums Association (accreditation), Guardian, Museums Association (sale to go ahead), House of Lords

Whithorn Trust faces closure

The Whithorn Trust in Scotland is threatened with closure after a £10,500 shortfall in the funds offered by local government. The Trust administers various Iron Age and Bronze Age sites as well as an early Christian settlement with links to the shadowy 4th century figure St Ninian. This heritage attracts 75,000 people a year and generates an estimated £500,000 for the local economy. Now a petition has been launched suggesting that the venue is "too important as a museum and tourist venue for its fate and funding to be left to local council members". It asks for a coalition of partners, including the Council, to set up a dedicated funding structure. Museums Association, Whithorn Trust

Seasonal closing for three Canterbury Museums

It now seems very likely that a number of Canterbury museums will be closed for extended periods or shut altogether as Canterbury City Council looked to make savings of £65,000. The proposals include the closure of the Roman Museum in Canterbury and seasonal opening only for Canterbury Heritage, Herne Bay and Whitstable Museums. A snippet in the Museums Journal reports a rebellion by Tory Councillors against these measures, but this was on an advisory committee only, and unless there are requests to 'call in' the decision for further analysis in the next couple of days, the planned cuts will automatically go ahead. Museums Journal (this link is mostly about the Whithorn Trust, but reports the Tory rebellion further down) Canterbury Times, Independent, Canterbury Council (detailed report on museum costs)

Museums Association's Cuts Survey

The Museums Association is undertaking it's Cuts Survey for the third year and would very much like museums to take part. It provides an important overview of the impact of the cuts and an insight into the health of the sector across the UK. Last year's survey found that 51% of museums that took part in the survey had experienced budget cuts and 11% had been forced to close whole sites.

The survey will be online until 5th August and can be completed here. The results of the survey will be available in September.

Trustee sackings at the Foundling Museum prompt letter from Attorney General's office

The abrupt sacking of all the independently-appointed trustees of the Foundling Museum in late May, including artist Jeremy Deller has caused surprise across the cultural sector, and has also provoked a letter from the Attorney General's office to express concern that the "treatment of the museum ... does not appear to fit with the spirit and intent of the arrangements put before the Attorney General [in 2001]". The row has arisen following disagreements between the Foundling Museum and its parent charity, Coram, about the direction of the museum.

Talks are ongoing between the Foundling and Coram. Additionally, many bodies who have funded the Foundling in recent years (including the Art Fund and the JP Getty Trust) have met with Coram and written to the Charity Commission and Attorney General to raise concerns. The Charity Commission is now reviewing Coram's actions and the relationships between the two charities and will submit a report to the Attorney General in late summer, who will then determine next steps if necessary. There is likely to be further news on the outcome in late September. Funding bodies are calling on the Coram Trust to accept the outcome of the review. Guardian

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Education

New national curriculum published

The government has published its proposed new National Curriculum - there is now a final opportunity to comment until August 7th. The Cultural Learning Alliance has said that the changes are a 'mixed bag' with some strong positive features:

"We are delighted to see that space in the History curriculum has opened up to allow for more emphasis on local history and heritage, and that unhelpful phrases like 'appreciation of beauty' and 'the creation of pleasing objects' have been removed from the Art and Design specifications. Similarly, the Music Curriculum appears to be broadly in good shape, with a strong emphasis on musicianship and creativity. Much of the language used to describe learning across all subjects has been modified to encourage a less passive and more active and engaging experience."

However they express disappointment that Dance, Drama and Film are barely represented in the curriculum and that only Design shows a strong connection to the Creative Industries.

Design bodies say they are pleased with the new National Curriculum which will include use of 3D printers, microprocessors, laser cutters and robots from September 2014. Chief Executive of the Design Council, John Mathers, said "We're pleased that the government has taken on board our five design principles and listened to industry." Digital Arts Online, Telegraph (changes by subject), Gov.uk (new curriculum), Cultural Learning Alliance

Cultural Education report now published

The government has also been working towards a National Plan for Cultural Education. It has taken a first step in this direction with a summary published during July. Commenting on the document, the Cultural Learning Alliance said that it welcomes the fact that so many visionary schools with excellent cultural projects have been celebrated. Nevertheless they add that it is only the 'beginning of the government's journey' towards a cultural education that reaches every child in the country. Their proposals include 'more fit for purpose GCSEs', accountability measures that ensure schools teach subjects not included in the Ebacc list and an awareness that a healthy arts and museum infrastructure beyond the school walls are vital to support this education. Gov.uk (report pdf), Gov.uk (short preamble), Cultural Learning Alliance

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Balancing the books

Salami off the menu as ACE lays plans until 2018

Arts Council England has announced its next funding round for Major Partner Museums. In the light of the recent cuts, it reminds participants that 'funding may go down as well as up' and that it cannot guarantee commitments beyond 2015/16 as they are dependent on future government financial decisions. Chief Executive Alan Davey said

As with our last investment round, the application process will result in some organisations not receiving funding while others may see their funding go up or down. We'll also be welcoming applications from new organisations. There is no benefit in 'salami-slicing' and spreading the funds too thinly to make a substantial difference to anyone.

He also spoke about his sympathy for those having to make 'invidious' decisions in local authorities but added, "I would urge local authorities to consider not just the cost of funding the arts but what they give back now – and what more they could give with further encouragement." Museums need to apply for Major Partner Museum funding by January 2014. Arts Industry (subscription only), Museums Journal, Arts Council (next funding round announced).

Arts Council publishes Annual report (with handy infographics)

Arts Council England has published the big statistics of its spend over the last year, along with handy infographics covering what it invested in, a pie chart breakdown, and how ACE funding compares to other sources of cultural sector income. £45,041,000 was spent on museums in 2012/13. Averaged across the whole cultural sector, ACE provides 29% of funding for its regularly funded organisations, with 49% coming from earned income, 11% from sponsorship and philanthropy, and 12% from local authorities and other local public grants. Arts Council (Annual Report),

Detailed research shows heritage worth £26.4bn to the economy

The latest figures from the HLF show that heritage is worth £26.4bn to the UK economy. The statistics come as part of ongoing research compiled by Oxford Economics, whose first release of figures in 2010 were based on 2007 data and then estimated a figure of £20.6bn. The £5.8bn increase in only a few years is explained by:

- A 13% rise in international visits to the UK between 2007 - 2011;
- Domestic day trips rising by 47% in the same period;
- Visitors spent more on these trips in 2011 compared to 2007: 28% more for international visitors, 7% for internal tourists;
- 28% of people's holiday itinerary now includes heritage attractions (these figures may have been measured more accurately in the more recent survey); and
- Inflation - however over the same period inflation was 14%, so only about half of the increase can be attributed to this.

The report adds:

The heritage tourism economy is therefore larger than many commonly defined sectors of the economy. For example, based on figures for 2011 from the ONS Annual Business Survey, the estimated £5.07 billion in direct GDP attributable to the heritage tourism economy is larger than the

value added of the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry (£1.7 billion), the beer manufacturing industry (£2.4 billion), the paper and paper products manufacturing industry (£3.9 billion), and the construction of roads and railways (£2.8 billion).

The HLF's report also provides some concrete local examples of economic impact. For example, Jackfield Tile Museum now supports 73 jobs in the wider economy in rural Shropshire, compared to 40 before HLF redevelopment. HLF

Also: Visit England has welcomed the news that their budget has not been cut in the last Spending Review. They cite figures that tourism as a whole is worth £97bn to the economy. Visit England

Also: National Parks England has also announced figures for their contribution to the economy, which are estimated as somewhere between £4.1bn and £6.3bn. ALVA

English Heritage sends annual report & accounts to Parliament

English Heritage has published its annual report. Both introductory articles point to difficulties and extensive restructuring brought about by cuts, however Chief Executive Simon Thurley says, "while the [latest] total cut of 2% is substantial, the steps we have taken to reduce non-pay expenditure obviate the need for further structural change and should result in a balanced budget in 2013/14." Work in the last year includes the National Heritage Protection Plan "effectively a business plan for the historic environment", grants of £19.57m and major projects such as improvements to Stonehenge. Next year, a very rare example of a prisoner of war camp at Harperley in County Durham is to be restored. English Heritage

Bank of England confirms the Jane Austen tenner

We reported last month on the growing row as the Bank of England laid plans to remove the only woman on the reverse of English currency. Protests included a staged demonstration outside the Bank by women dressed as Boudicca and Emmeline Pankhurst. However, capitulating in late July, the Bank's new Governor Mark Carney announced that it would be the rather more demure and financially-conscious Jane Austen gracing the ten pound note from 2017. Money which had been raised to challenge the Bank in court will now be donated to women's charities. Guardian (dressing up demo), Guardian (Austen victory), MsMagazine

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Members news

Major new gallery at York Castle Museum

York Castle Museum has received £1,167,900 from the HLF to expand the museum into a major new gallery, including better disabled access. A new floor of York Castle Museum will be opened, including a gallery about the First World War *1914: When the World Changed Forever*. The project will also include 500 volunteering opportunities, and involve people from across the region in developing the new spaces. York Castle Museum

Visitors flock to newly opened Mary Rose

The Mary Rose museum has seen 100,000 visitors in the eight weeks since it opened to the public. Chief Executive of the Trust, Rear Admiral John Lippett, said 'this is a phenomenal number, we are absolutely delighted.' Mary Rose

Tate Britain's £45m facelift nearly complete

The final touches are being added to extensive improvements at Tate Britain, which should be complete in November. They include a stained glass window for the entrance of the art gallery by Richard Wright (the Tate has only two other pieces of stained glass in its collection, one being Bossayani's *The Angel Blesses the Women Washing Clothes* also at Tate Britain). There will also be new cafes and bars. Funders of the refurbishment include the Manton Foundation, Heritage Lottery Fund, the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, Linbury Trust and the Monument Trust. The Art Newspaper

MGS awards £300k from strategic investment funds

Museums Galleries Scotland has awarded strategic investment funds to nine projects. They include a new roof for one of the most northerly museums, the Old Haa Museum on Shetland, and help for the Scottish Railway Preservation Society to prevent metal theft. The next round of funds will be available in 2014. Museums Galleries Scotland, Museums Association, Bobby Tulloch (Old Haa Museum website)

Future of the Science Museum Group

It has been revealed that the National Media Museum in Bradford was the site earmarked for closure if cuts to the Science Museum Group had exceeded 5%. A meeting of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee discussed its ongoing challenges, with Culture Minister Ed Vaizey saying that he is 'not territorial' and that help from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills would be welcome. Museums Journal

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Innovative use of new technology

A licence to print gold at the Museum of London

As debate continues about whether 3D printing is a passing fad or the future of Western commerce, two museums are exploring it in depth. The Design Museum's new exhibition, running until 29th October, declares '*The Future is here - a new industrial revolution*' and adds that the line between designer, manufacturer and consumer are becoming increasingly blurred. Meanwhile *New Scientist* reports that replicas of the Cheapside Hoard, created by the Museum of London, will be invaluable for object research, as well as allowing visitors to pick up and touch at least a simulacrum of the priceless collection. Guardian, New Scientist, Museum of London, Design Museum

Saved by a billion laser points: preserving the Science Museum shipping gallery

The Science Museum's Shipping Galleries were opened in 1963, and so by the time they closed in 2012 the displays themselves were a piece of history. The museum therefore decided to get the entire space and its 1,800 objects laser scanned. Using data collected at a billion laser points they have now produced a 3D recreation of the space which it's possible to 'fly through' and look at all the exhibits in detail. The first results of what will be a much bigger online project have just been released in a video. At first sight, it looks like the results may be more elegant than many existing museum walkthrough programmes. Culture24

Also: As an increasing number of projects seek to reach people through digitisation, a Welsh Government survey shows that a fifth of their population have never used the internet. Pif online

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Philanthropy

Lord Browne speaks at the Art Fund about encouraging philanthropy

Former BP oil executive and current Tate Chairman Lord Browne has given a speech at The Art Fund outlining concrete proposals for increasing philanthropy. He emphasised that he did not want to see philanthropy taking the place of already heavily-cut State support for institutions, but argued that the relationship between State funding and services should be more contractual, so it is clearer what government is 'buying' with its funding and what cultural institutions can reasonably deliver for that money. He argued that this might not save the government money, but would create a more attractive terrain for philanthropists to act within.

He spoke about his admiration for American philanthropists like Andrew Carnegie, who gave away 90% of his wealth before his death, and said that although US models of giving should be viewed with some caution, there were things to be learned from that model. He added that philanthropy should not just be for the mega-rich:

"When I arrived in the United States to work as Chief Financial Officer of the company Sohio, I received a letter from the philanthropic organisation United Way, a huge network of community

organisations... Their letter welcomed me to the city and told me what my fair share of their funding in Cleveland would be. It was very matter of fact, and everyone received a letter - from the most junior staff to the Chief Executive. These requests weren't regarded as presumptuous or unwelcome. They are simply representative of what happens when you have a real culture of giving."

He added that with new digital platforms encouraging micro-philanthropy and Britain already towards the top of the European league table for charity, it was possible to evolve philanthropy further in the UK. Art Fund

Philanthropists who deserve a medal

The Prince of Wales medal for arts philanthropy has now opened for nominations for a sixth year. Judges are looking for 'unknown philanthropists' as well as established givers. Chairs, Chief Executives and Development Directors may nominate any philanthropist who has given prior to August 2013 this year. Five winners will be honoured at a reception in December. Arts&Business

Heritage Alliance on the brink of an ambitious 'Giving to Heritage' scheme

The HLF estimates that the effect of government cuts will be a loss of £700m in investment in heritage across the UK over the next 5 years. The Heritage Alliance is now applying for £0.5m in funds to teach heritage enthusiasts to diversify funding sources for the sector. The Heritage Alliance hope to offer 8,500 training opportunities for them during 2014/15. They invite people to fill out a survey to assist their bid. Heritage Alliance, Heritage Alliance (newsletter - scroll for relevant article), Survey

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Film

Time travel and zombie assisted regeneration for Scotland

First Minister Alex Salmond has announced a package of expert support to encourage more large movie projects to come to Scotland. Zombie movie *World War Z* was recently filmed in Glasgow, and it has just been announced that time travel drama *Outlander* will also be shot in Scotland. Salmond said:

"This announcement, which could see a crew of around 200 assembled and an estimated spend of £20 million in Scotland, is a wonderful endorsement of the scenery, talent and facilities on offer to film crews in this country and I can't wait to see some distinctly Scottish locations on screen."
Scottish Government

BFI records a good year for British film as museums get in on the act

The BFI's statistical yearbook shows that films that were at least partly British formed 15% of the global market last year. The book also reports that the demographic of cinema audiences is changing with over 45s forming the largest segment of cinema goers for the first time buying 36% of tickets, while the number of 15 - 24 year olds has declined.

Last month we reported on two museum shows that had become major cinema events (Pompeii Live and Exhibition Screen). A brief unscientific look at a rural smalltown cinema suggest that more institutions are following this trend (as with the V&A's Ziggy Stardust and the RSC's Richard II) and that cinema as an outpost of the 'live' cultural sector may become more common. BOP, BFI

BFI shocked by cuts

The BFI is among the organisations receiving a 10% cut from DCMS, a result which it describes as 'disappointing and worrying', especially as DCMS signed off on its five year plan in the autumn of last year. The BFI said it had "no choice but to stop valuable frontline activities and reduce support for partner organisations." Guardian,

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Prizes and Commissions

RAMM wins Collections Trust award

The Collections Trust has announced its annual award winners:

- **Collections Practice Award:** Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery - won for its most important review of collections since opening in 1868. The review of its million objects is intended to unlock further potential for learning and research.
- **Participatory Practice Award:** Beaney House of Art & Knowledge - for 'the paper apothecary' - a life sized apothecary shop made entirely from paper by Animate Arts Company
- **Collections on a Budget Award:** East Grinstead Museum - for their digitisation project

RAMM has also just won a prize for its excellent café. Collections Trust, RAMM, RAMM (Collections review),

Contemporary Art Society Announces shortlist

The Contemporary Art Society offers an annual £60,000 prize for a museum to commission a work of contemporary art. A shortlist of four has just been announced for 2013: the Ashmolean, Birmingham Museums Trust, Hepworth Wakefield and the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. Museums Journal

Europa Nostra Annual Awards open

Europa Nostra has announced the opening of its 2014 heritage award. Categories include conservation, research, dedicated service by individuals or organisations and education, training & awareness raising. There are up to six prizes of 10,000 euros in each category. The closing date for applications is 9th September 2013. Europa Nostra

Fiction touches history in new Artangel commissions

Artangel commissions have a habit of touching some of the deeper mythologies of modern UK society, from Jeremy Deller's *Battle of Orgreave* to Michael Landy's *Break Down*. The first two winners of the new Artangel *Open* scheme, to create ten pieces of site-specific artwork in the UK, seem to echo this trend although the exact details are still under wraps. We are told that "Katrina Palmer's new project will excavate an undisclosed place in England through writing and installation" meanwhile Ben Rivers' work uses film and installation to tell stories from the margins of society. The date for the next round of *Open* has now been set as 28th February 2014. Artangel

St David Awards for achievement

The Welsh Government has launched new awards for exceptional achievements by people in Wales. There are nine awards including ones for culture, enterprise, citizenship and innovation and technology. Nominations can be made between September and November this year, for first awards in Spring 2014. Welsh Government

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Fighting History crime

Help the Home Office with their crime survey

The Home Office is asking museums and art galleries to take part in their Commercial Victimisation Survey 2013. The survey will explore the nature, extent and commercial cost of crime, and be used to discover where government support and advice could be most useful in preventing crime. The cultural and entertainment sectors are being included for the first time. Museums have already been selected for the survey, so the government request is simply that you fill in the questionnaire if contacted. Home Office, Gov.uk (past surveys)

V&A head of security warns against Chinese object thefts

The V&A's Head of Security, Vernon Rapley, and Andy Bliss, the police officer responsible nationally for tackling heritage crime, have both expressed concern about the growing threat to Chinese collections from criminal gangs with links to China. Rapley said "We have a reliable source which strongly suggests that some criminal actions taking place against UK collections involve criminals in China. I am concerned that they may be commissioning people to commit crimes." There have been thefts and attempted thefts of Chinese objects at half a dozen museums over the past couple of years. The Art Newspaper

Cottage Museum reopens

The Woodhall Spa Cottage museum, which shut after an arson attack last year, has now reopened. The museum is entirely volunteer run, and still seeking to raise another £0.5m for further development. Cottage Museum, Horncastle News

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New museums

Bethlem Royal Hospital gets new 'Museum of the Mind'

Bethlem Royal Hospital has had a museum for many years, holding some striking art created by some of its previous patients including Richard Dadd and Louis Wain. However the material is now being moved from a shabby 1960s administration block to a newly refurbished 1930s building with art deco features. The £4m revamp is being funded by various trusts and funds to create a new 'Museum of the Mind'. A £550k HLF contribution will create a new permanent exhibition celebrating the achievements of those living with mental ill-health. Museum of London e-muse, Bethlem Museum.

Dark, sweet and sticky fate planned for Pontefract

Pontefract is historically at the centre of the UK's liquorice making industry, with sweet giants Tangerine and Haribo both still operating factories in the town. Now Pontefract Groups Together want to turn the town's magistrates court into a museum space celebrating the history of liquorice. Secretary of the group and former Labour MP Sir William O'Brien, said "Pontefract has a history of 400 years involvement with liquorice. It is renowned worldwide and we have nothing to show of that heritage and history and we consider it is time that was put right." BBC

From holy wells to satanic mills: HLF backs new museum for Flintshire

The HLF has given a first round grant of £60,000 to help a history group put together a case for a further £900k HLF investment in a new heritage complex. Greenfield Valley Heritage Park currently has a small farm museum and some abbey ruins, but there is potential to create a far more substantial heritage attraction. Basingwerk Abbey was founded in 1131 next to St Winifride's healing well - then in the 18th century the area was a hive of mills as part of the Industrial Revolution. The site also wants to explore the story of London orphans sold to mill owners. BBC, Greenfield Valley, St Winifride's Well

New 1bn development to include brewing museum

Wandsworth Council has signed off on a project to regenerate the site of the Ram Brewery. The project includes 661 new homes, a micro brewery and a brewing museum as well as 10,000sq m of leisure space. Tim Garnham, joint Chief Executive of the developers Minerva said, "We have worked hard to create a scheme which will showcase the site's heritage buildings as well as provide new public spaces, incorporating the restoration of the River Wandle and establish the High Street as the centre of Wandsworth." ALVA

Reopening of the Cuming Museum planned

Southwark Council has announced plans to restore Old Walworth Town Hall, which contained the Cuming Museum and was devastated by fire earlier in the year. The museum space will be rebuilt, alongside a new library and performance spaces. In the meantime, Cuming Museum events continue at other venues in the borough. Museums Journal, Southwark Council (Cuming summer events), Southwark Council (new town hall planning document), The Walworth Society

Archaeology roundup: the world's oldest clock and other interesting things we dug up in July

A number of recently excavated objects hit the headlines during July. A 3000 year old gold torc found in boggy ground at Corrard in Co. Fermanagh has gone on display at Ulster Museum. Originally worn as an arm ring, the piece was tightening and stretched into a spring before being lost or deliberately discarded. Ulster Museum,

Even further back into prehistory, a calendar system from 10,000BC has been excavated in a Scottish field. It consists of twelve trenches and predates the previously oldest calendars, found in the Middle East, by five millennia. BBC

Meanwhile medieval ruins of a previously unknown large site have been discovered in Somerset, apparently laid to waste or abandoned well before the dissolution of the monasteries. Guardian

Also: A volunteer army is being mobilised to map over 5,000 Iron Age hillforts. Despite their number, little academic work has been done on the hillforts which are up to 3,000 years old. The project is now open to volunteers online at Oxford University's School of Archeology. School of Archeology, BBC

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Funding for Innovation

New fund for digital innovation in Wales

A new R&D fund has been opened to Welsh cultural organisations with a £400k funding pot. Museums and arts groups of all sizes are urged to collaborate with digital organisations to create proposals. The work is supported by Nesta, AHRC and the Arts Council of Wales, who hope it will allow them to pilot good ideas in the sector and see which work. They are in particular looking for new business models and greater audience reach. Themes which emerged as important to the sector in an original scoping exercise include:

- Social media interactivity
- Delivering content through digital platforms
- Giving archives greater reach through technology
- Mobile services
- Using digital for fundraising and sponsorship.

The deadline for application is September 9th. Arts Council of Wales, Nesta

Solve the world's problems and become a millionaire with Nesta

Nesta is in the early stages of organising a multi-million pound 'Challenge Prize' fund, which will reward people who come up with solutions to some of the world's most pressing problems. It will be launched in 2014, the 300th anniversary of the Longitude Prize, which won a London watchmaker a fortune when he solved the problem of accurate sea navigation. Nesta,

Also: The University of Cambridge has now digitised and published original inventions put forward for the Longitude Prize, plus other 18th century material including early pictures of Easter Island and its statues. Telegraph, Cambridge Digital Library

HLF supports project to increase fundraising capacity for Welsh heritage organisations

HLF has given the Wales Council for Voluntary Action initial support for a scheme to help raise fundraising capacity among Welsh heritage organisations. The project *Giving the Past a Future - sustainable heritage in Wales* will support museums, libraries and archives as well as local history groups. WCVA's Sustainable Funding Officer Eileen Kinsman said, "The aim is to up-skill and increase the confidence...in fundraising of staff and volunteers, so that they can increase their organisations' funding from private donors, corporate sources, trusts and foundations."

WCVA are also running an initial survey to make sure the project meets the needs of heritage organisations. [Take the Survey, WCVA](#)

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History meets Science

National Heritage Science Forum launch

A new group, the National Heritage Science Forum has been launched at the House of Lords. It encompasses all groups who are interested in technological and scientific work of relevance to the heritage sector. The group has formed in response to a 2005/6 Lords report, which highlighted:

- the lack of available new talent to replace retiring conservation scientists;
- the fragmentary nature of the sector, and
- the absence of strategic national priorities and vision.

AHRC has provided priming funds to create the forum. Further details are available from sarah.staniforth@nationaltrust.org.uk. [National Heritage Science Forum](#)

How digitising Welsh Natural History is helping current science

A history of change in the natural world is locked in museum collections, and curators are increasingly fielding enquiries from scientists wishing to track ecological developments over time. A [blog](#) for National Museums Wales explains how digitisation is helping make this information more accessible. [National Museums Wales](#)

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Evaluation

What to evaluate and how? - the Learning Museum handbook

The Learning Museum, a European project, has produced a third report, focusing on what and how museums should evaluate. Intended as a handbook of good practice, it gives examples of evaluation driven by social, cultural, economic and environmental factors and includes examples from the V&A and Museum of East Anglian Life. [The Learning Museum](#),

Aspire's experiments in better evaluation

Armed with a grant from Arts Council England, the Oxford Aspire group of museums has been running an excellent series of free events for museums to increase their resilience. Subjects have ranged from fundraising to more inventive venue hire. (Events continue here, but are currently sold out).

Now Aspire is evaluating its own success as a museum group using various innovative approaches - including a survey of museum non-attenders and exit survey kiosks in many museums which have allowed them to capture what was previously a year's worth of data in only three months. As a university town, they have also looked at how to improve their offer to students. [Oxford Aspire](#)

Survey on skills in the Welsh heritage sector

Creative & Cultural Skills and English Heritage will be conducting telephone research among Welsh cultural institutions on skills and workforce development issues in the sector. The results will be used to form a basis for shaping training, including a new qualification in Wales. Employers are encouraged to take part in the survey which will take about 20 minutes. At the time of going to press there was no web link for this project, but you can email samuel.mitchell@ccskills.org.uk for further details.

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Health and happiness

House of Lords debates Arts and Wellbeing

A debate in the House of Lords on July 25th explored the link between arts, health, education, compassion and wellbeing. Many speakers were implicitly critical of government departments undervaluing culture except as an economic tool. The Earl of Clancarty said:

It is very difficult to persuade successive Governments of the case for art for its own sake... That obstacle characterises the overarching narrative driving most of the debate on the arts at Westminster, whereby the effects of the arts on education, well-being and health are still the justification for them...

Most other peers affirmed the countercultural questioning and humanising power of the arts, and their ability to give insight, while also drawing attention to immediate pragmatic benefits.

Labour peer Lord Howarth of Newport spoke about the growing evidence that those who participate in the arts and museums recover more quickly from illness, adding that "arts interventions in healthcare produce benefits in terms of shorter hospital stays, reduced pain, improved blood pressure in patients and less need for drugs, as well as finding that staff turnover was less where this was happening". He added that health policy had intermittently supported an 'arts for health' agenda since 2007, and that government should look more closely at this area.

Lord Storey spoke about the importance of arts for children in disadvantaged communities saying, "I have a message for Mr Gove. The attainment in maths and English of students who engage in the arts improves, particularly in the case of children from low-income families". He gave concrete examples from schemes in Liverpool, also praising Kids in Museums and Arts Council England's Artsmark.

Baroness Northover was the second peer to explore the importance of creativity for children, regardless of background, with reference to the birth of Prince George of Cambridge - who is both a prospective future monarch and the great-great-grandson of a Durham miner. She argued that it is vital for children to experience the arts at school, especially where they might not have the opportunity to develop a talent at home. Hansard

Happy museum produce short film

The Happy Museum project has produced a short film to explain how their recipe for sustainability, greater museum participation and social good all fit together. Towards the beginning of the film there is also a demonstration of the remarkable things you can achieve with cardboard as the Beaney House of Art & Knowledge shows off its award-winning Paper Apothecary. Happy Museum

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Heritage jazzes with High Streets

'Cultural Destinations' funding stream launched

Arts Council England and Visit England have launched a new funding scheme to support partnerships between cultural organisations and their local tourist boards. *Cultural Destinations* could create arts events and festivals, holiday packages and cultural experiences as well as training, audience and visitor research, and familiarisation visits. It is open to consortia made up of at least one cultural organisation and one tourism promoter. These can apply for grants from between £250,000 and £350,000 for projects that will run from March 2014 for a maximum of 3 years. Up to 15 consortia could benefit from the new fund. Arts Council, Visit England

English Heritage report links townscapes and shopping

A new report by English Heritage, *The Changing Face of the High Street: Decline and Revival*, explores how towns with a strong heritage can continue to attract shoppers in the age of online retail and out of town supermarkets. It found that visitors are often seeking a leisure element as well as the opportunity to shop, and that smaller towns can craft their own heritage and shopping niche. English Heritage

Also: Visit England and National Parks England have signed a three year agreement to increase rural tourism. Visit England

Southbank seeks truce with skateboarders as redevelopment plans withdrawn

Since the Spring a potential David v Goliath standoff has been unfolding on London's Southbank. A plan for redevelopment of the cultural complex has threatened the skateboard park in one of the undercrofts with relocation to a smaller area. Skateboarders armed with petitions to Lambeth Council have reminded sympathetic passers-by that their unique space will probably be replaced by Starbucks.

Now the Southbank Centre's Artistic Director Jude Kelly has withdrawn redevelopment plans in favour of further talks with the skateboarders. 'No other cultural organisation in the world wants skateboarders around and actively looks after them,' she argues. 'We provide security, planning for the ramps and help organise events.'

Commercial units may be key to the affordability of the redevelopment, but speaking for the skateboarders Henry Edwards-Wood said "I hope this marks the beginning of a fightback against this drive to have more and more cafés and malls that make Britain into a dreary, bland shopping centre." Taitmail (Arts Industry), Evening Standard, Guardian

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Events

Advertise your courses, conference and training events

The Museums Association is offering a new free system for museum organisations to add their courses, conferences training events for the sector. Simply add them to the website here. Museums Association

Free audience research and evaluation projects in Wales

Museum staff in Wales are invited to apply for one of two free workshops exploring audience research and evaluation, taking place in early September. Choose from event at Brecknock Museum and Art Gallery and Chirk Castle

Grants for places at the Museums Association conference

A number of northern museum bodies are offering free places at the Museums Association's November conference. Grants from Museum Development North West are for first time attendees; those from other listed sources can be used for other major conferences, not just the MA conference. Museums Association, Museum Development North West, Midlands Federation, York Museums Trust, Scottish Museums Federation

Hidden Treasures festival takes visitors behind the scenes in August

The Collections Trust and Independent are running a second year of their 'Hidden Treasures' events, in which the public are taken behind the scenes to see undisplayed objects in museums. The programme this year includes elephant skulls, mummy bandages and meteorites at Leeds Discovery Centre, an LGBT tour of the People's Museum in Manchester and 'folk art and decorated toilets' at Beamish. Events run from 22nd- 27th August. Additions to the programme were still being accepted in late July. Collections Trust, Independent

Also: Heritage Open Days run this year from 12th - 15th September. The database for participants is now open here. Heritage Open Days

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Appointments

The V&A's Design curator Abraham Thomas has been appointed new Director of the Sir John Soane Museum. He will take over the post in early December, and lead the museum as it continues with work to increase the museum's size. Sir John Soane's own apartments will be opened to the public for the first time since 1837. The Art Newspaper, Sir John Soane Museum

Clive Bannister, Chief Executive of Phoenix Group plc, has been appointed Chairman of Trustees of the Museum of London. He will take up the post in October. Museum of London

English Heritage is currently looking for new members for its advisory committee with expertise in either maritime heritage or local government historic environment management. Those interested should contact Stephanie.jenner@english-heritage.org.uk. The call for applications closes on 21st August. English Heritage

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And finally....

A museum in China has been forced to close after most of its exhibits turned out to be fakes. Things began to unravel for the Jibaozhai Museum after experts noticed that allegedly 4,000 year old ceramics were decorated with 20th century character scripts, and that five colour porcelain objects were dated hundreds of years before the invention of the technique.

Showing considerable sang froid, the museum's chief consultant Wei Yinjun pointed out that 'at least eighty' of the museum's 40,000 artefacts are genuine. The *Telegraph* does not mention whether Jibaozhai Museum is now seeking talks with Croydon Council. Telegraph

Jobs

- Content Developer - National Media Museum
- Assistant Conservator of Manuscripts and Printed Books - University of Cambridge Museums
- Database Management Assistant - National Portrait Gallery
- PhD studentship - Imperial War Museum and King's College London
- Ceramics Residency - V&A
- Head of Product Development and Licensing - Natural History Museum

[Read a full list of jobs here](#)

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