

In this month's edition:

- [New Government ministerial positions announced](#)
- [Darren Henley gives first speech as Chief Executive of Arts Council England](#)
- [Commentary on new Conservative administration](#)
- [Hull plans £630k investment to improve Ferens Art Gallery to receive Turner](#)
- [Museum and gallery visits up 20% in Scotland](#)
- [HLF awards £95m to nine heritage projects featuring science and industry](#)
- [NMDC produces guidance for museums about the EU PSI Directive](#)
- [Complete the 2015 WIRP survey and win a workshop place and travel bursary](#)
- [Jodi Awards winners announced](#)
- [Libraries could outlast the internet says Roly Keating](#)
- [Campaign for Good Curatorship launched](#)
- [ACE report explores artists working in museums](#)
- [Happy Museum publishes playful museum resources](#)
- [Welsh Government consultation on 'community assets' from libraries to pubs](#)

Section headings:

[New Government](#) | [Members' news](#) | [Funding](#) | [EU Public Sector Information Directive resources](#)
| [Events, surveys and expressions of interest](#) | [Appointments](#) | [Awards](#) | [Creating a new breed of museum](#)
| [International touring exhibitions special](#) | [Tourism](#) | [Oil, controversy and strikes](#) | [Education](#)
| [Toolkits for culture](#) | [International](#) | [Jobs](#) | [And finally...](#)

New Government



New Government ministerial positions announced

Culture posts in the new Conservative Government have been announced. John Whittingdale replaces Sajid Javid as Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Whittingdale has been Chair of the Parliamentary Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee since 2005. He spoke to IPPR [here](#) last month at a debate on the future of DCMS. IPPR summarises: *"[he] argues that the department, having delegated too many of its functions to quangos like Ofcom, needs a stronger voice and greater policymaking expertise. His strong words on reform and ministerial responsibility suggest that he will pursue a more proactive and interventionist approach to the department's work."*

Regarded in some quarters as likely to reduce or abolish the BBC license fee, Whittingdale told journalist Roy Greenslade, *"I support public service broadcasting and am strongly opposed to a fully commercialised media system"*. Arts Professional has also unearthed a tweet in which Whittingdale writes *"I have always supported public subsidy of the arts and will continue to do so."*

Ed Vaizey remains in post as Minister for Culture, and he also has responsibility for the Digital Economy (and is a Ministerial post shared with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills). Also at DCMS, Tracey Crouch becomes Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, with responsibility for heritage (and sport), and DCMS's House of Lords spokesperson is Baroness Neville-Rolfe (she is also Minister for Intellectual Property). [Gov.uk](#), [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only) [Guardian](#), [Evening Standard](#), [Arts Professional](#)

The new Government will be holding a second budget of the year in July, which will outline how the Conservatives intend to cut £13bn from non-protected departmental spending. [Guardian](#)

Peter Bazalgette argues for the growth of the "more popular than football" creative industries

Blogging for Arts Council England, Peter Bazalgette argued that while the creative industries are valued as a soft power intervention abroad, they are undersold in the UK: *"most MPs would rather talk about football than the theatre, though arts and culture attracts a bigger crowd. And civil servants prefer their Ministers to trumpet simple employment deals with large companies in traditional industries to the complexity of a creative sector, spread across different disciplines with thousands of small enterprises."* He said that the UK should now 'turbo-charge' the sector so that it grows from 5% to 10% of the economy. He suggested superfast broadband, a growing trend for arts-university partnerships, supporting the BBC and valuing arts subjects in education will help achieve this. [The Stage](#), [ACE blog](#)

Darren Henley gives first speech as Chief Executive of Arts Council England

Darren Henley has given his first speech as Chief Executive of Arts Council England at the Ferens Art Gallery in Hull. He emphasised the effectiveness of the arts and creative industries in regenerating regions, particularly in the North. He said that ACE would be making the case for the arts ahead of the Spending Review in the autumn, arguing that there should be no further cuts. He committed to spending 75% of arts lottery funding outside of London by the end of 2018.

He used Hull's regeneration and status as City of Culture 2017 as a case study, saying that ACE had 'kept faith with Hull because it kept faith with the arts'. ACE has invested £15m in the city in the first five years of austerity and will be giving £3m to the City of Culture. Businesses had also been attracted to give to the city. He announced further new ACE plans:

- There will be a new Ambition for Excellence fund of £35m to be spent over three years. £31.7m of this will be spent outside London. In some places ACE will take particular care to support quality applications in partnership with local government.
- ACE wants to guarantee every child in England a cultural education and such work is now implicit in the majority of funding agreements with NPOs.
- ACE is now planning a 25 year vision which will be published soon.

Henley said, *"we need the government to continue to make significant commitment to arts and culture"* and hoped for not further cuts to Grant in Aid. He also speculated about what ACE could do with more government investment, including making the M62 into a 'corridor of culture' where Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle and Gateshead led joined up flourishing through culture across the North. [ACE](#), [Taitmail](#), [Guardian](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Bank of England seek visual artist for £20 note

The Bank of England is inviting the public to suggest an artist to appear on the new £20 note, with nominations open until 19th July. *Apollo Magazine* suggest Hogarth is a front runner, with William Blake, Francis Bacon also suggested, and Leonora Carrington as it 'would be nice to have a Surrealist on a bank note'. [Apollo magazine](#)

Commentary on new Conservative administration

Organisations and commentators have speculated about how the arts and cultural sector will fare under the new Conservative administration. Arts Council England's new Chief Executive Darren Henley said that the Conservatives have been more supportive of the arts than many other sectors: *"In the last parliament we saw arts and culture get a more favourable grant-in-aid settlement than many for 2015/16. We've also seen an £18 million increase in the money going to music education hubs."* He said that ACE would continue to advocate for the benefits of arts to health, education and the economy. Dave O'Brien, a senior lecturer in Cultural Policy was less upbeat, saying that cuts across all non-ringfenced departments are inevitable. He suggested that *"an (even further) reduced Arts Council is on the cards. This means that arts organisations will all have to expect funding cuts."* The *Independent* points to two pieces of cultural policy that are certain: tax relief measures for the creative industries, and the freezing of the BBC licence fee until at least the end of 2016. [The Conversation](#), [The Stage](#), [Independent](#), [Evening Standard](#)

Members' news

Hull plans £630k investment to improve Ferens Art Gallery to receive Turner

Hull City Council is hoping to spend £630k on improvements to Ferens Art Gallery before it becomes UK City of Culture in 2017. The work will enhance the gallery environment so that it is capable of accepting national and international art exhibitions. The Gallery has also announced that it will host the 2017 Turner Prize. The Council has already agreed £2.7m investment in programming at the Gallery, and £100k towards a legacy programme in the city's museums. Stephen Brady, the leader of Hull City Council said, *"These plans are already the most fundamental and far-reaching the city has seen in over 70 years and this additional funding will only enhance what we want to achieve."* He added that capital investment in museums and the city's theatres would *"increase visitors, helping to create much-needed jobs for the area."* Hull is raising its fundraising targets from £13.7m to £18m, a target made achievable by national partnerships, including with the British Council. 60% of the funds are already raised or agreed.

Meanwhile in a vlog for the BBC, arts commentator Will Gompertz hears a convincing case for the long term beneficial effect of the City of Culture scheme on the regeneration of cities.

A debate between the previous and current council leader in the *Hull Daily Mail* also reflects on the possibility of reintroducing charging for the city's museums as well as for other services, although there are no immediate plans to charge. [Museums Journal](#), [Hull Daily Mail](#) (museum charges), [Hull Daily Mail](#), [BBC](#), [Arts Professional](#)

Museum and gallery visits up 20% in Scotland

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) has commissioned new research demonstrating the importance of museums and galleries to tourism in the country. Findings include:

- Museums and galleries were the destination in 42% of tourist visits in 2014
- It is estimated that 27.65 million visits were made to 460 museums and galleries in Scotland in 2014
- This represents a rise of 20% when compared to figures from 2012
- The report suggests that the economic impact of museum and galleries in 2014 was an estimated £890.88million, 41% higher than 2012 estimates.

MGS CEO Joanne Orr said, *"the results illustrate a sector which is developing in line with the National Strategy for Scotland's museums and galleries and undertaking inspirational work to develop their visitor experience for local, domestic and international visitors."* [MGS](#)

Cosmonauts to land at the Science Museum

The Science Museum has announced its remarkable temporary exhibition *Cosmonauts: Birth of the Space Age* in the presence of Alexi Leonov, the first man to go on a space walk. The exhibition will open in September 2015, and includes the greatest collection of Soviet spacecraft and artefacts ever assembled in once place. Eight of the objects had to be specially declassified for the show. The exhibition is a major collaboration between the Science Museum, the State Museum Exhibition Centre ROSIZO, the Memorial Museum of Cosmonautics and the Federal Space Agency, Roscosmos. Science Museum Group Director Ian Blatchford said, "*the Russian space programme is one of the great cultural, scientific and engineering achievements of the 20th century.*" [Science Museum blog](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Strong year for the RAF Museum

The RAF Museum has announced annual visitor figures of 724,525 for 2014/15 at its London and Cosford sites, an increase of 29% on the previous year. The rise comes from investing more in marketing and promoting exhibitions on social media, and a new visitor counting system which is the industry standard.

Also: *Guardian* art critic Jonathan Jones has written exploring 15 years since the opening of Tate Modern. Whilst Jones argues against the 'aggressively anti-chronological' hang, and that modern art should also be history, he does say that Tate has also turned its collection from an 'elite cult' to very popular 'mass entertainment'. He ends approvingly: "*this is a museum that can totally take you aback. Seeing its current exhibition of the dark and disturbing painter Marlene Dumas is not like being in a museum, it's like being in someone's nightmares. Once again, a crack opens in the art gallery that leads to who knows where.*" [Guardian](#)

Funding

HLF awards £95m to nine heritage projects featuring science and industry

The Heritage Lottery Fund has announced nine major grants to museum and heritage organisations, totaling £95m, and focusing on industrial and scientific history. New NMDC member Derby Silk Mill will receive an initial grant of £817.3k to progress a bid for £9.38m to turn the mill into a Museum of Making, due to open in 2020. Derby Council is also contributing £4m to the project. The other recipients will also receive development grants to help them bid for major earmarked sums. The other awards are:

- The Science Museum will receive £8m towards a £24m plan to transform its Medicine galleries. The Museum holds one of the most significant medical collections in the world, and the new plans will reflect changes in health and medicine over the last 400 years.
- The Geffrye Museum will receive £11m for work to redesign the space, including a new entrance opposite Hoxton station to attract new visitors, and a learning pavilion in the gardens.
- The Burrell Collection will receive £15m towards the refurbishment of its building.
- Dorset County Museum, which houses geology and palaeontology receives £10.3m for redevelopment.
- The British Library will receive £9.5m towards its Save our Sounds campaign. The money will be used to digitise 500,000 rare recordings including local dialects and accents, oral histories and vanishing wildlife. The results will be published online.
- £10m will be used to create a new railway museum on an existing 'preserved' line between Loughborough and Leicester.
- £12.1m will be used to revitalise the Jodrell Bank Observatory in Cheshire.
- Lincoln Cathedral will receive £12.4m for restoration work.

Culture Secretary John Whittingdale said, "*these grants will not only make a lasting difference to local areas and the UK's wider heritage, but will also use culture to inspire young people to learn more about science and technology for generations to come.*" [HLF](#), [DCMS](#), [Guardian](#), [Geffrye](#), [Derby Council](#), [British Library](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Science Museum](#), [DCMS blog](#)

Auckland Castle receives £9m

Auckland Castle has received £9m from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards a £17m scheme to overhaul the former Bishop's Palace and add a museum. The grant is one of the largest ever made in the North East by HLF. The new museum will echo the design of 6th and 7th century Anglo-Saxon churches. The heritage site will tell a history of faith, with objects ranging from a Viking lead font to stained glass panels created just before the Reformation. Work will be completed by 2018. [Museums Journal](#), [HLF](#)

Export bar on Victorian vase

Ed Vaizey has announced an export bar on a vase designed by William Burges in 1874 as a set of four to decorate a room at the top of Cardiff Clock Tower. Two are now in the V&A, and a third is in private hands. A UK buyer will need to match the £163k before 27th August, with a possible further extension of two months if there is a serious intention to buy. [Gov.uk](#)

No consensus on how to pay artists

The 'Paying Artists' campaign which calls for fees for artists displaying their work as an industry norm, reports that there is no consensus across the sector about how this should be implemented. 85% of respondents from the visual arts sector agree that there should be a way of paying artists, but many think that national guidelines would harm smaller organisations. The consultation continues, and a final set of recommendations will be published in 2016. [Arts Professional](#)

EU Public Sector Information Directive resources

NMDC produces guidance for museums about the EU PSI Directive

The EU PSI Directive has been extended to cover UK "public" museums, and museums will need to be compliant from later this year. To help explain the requirements of the European legislation, NMDC has produced a briefing specifically for museums. We have also produced a Decision Tree, which is designed to help museums work out whether or not they may be subject to the Directive. The National Archives will produce much more detailed guidance on the PSI Directive soon. All the information is on [our website](#).

Events, surveys and expressions of interest

Complete the 2015 WIRP survey and win a workshop place and travel bursary

The Working Internationally Regional Project (WIRP) is led by ICOM-UK in partnership with the British Council, NMDC and Heritage Without Borders, and helps support English museums' international ambitions (as the project is funded by ACE). The project has launched a survey, which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete and will help the Project Co-ordinator understand the motivations that regional and local museums have for working internationally, and the barriers and challenges faced when doing so. The information and feedback provided will be used to develop and deliver the WIRP programme of workshops, travel grants, and online resources to meet the needs of the sector over the next two years.

Complete the survey before Friday 26th June to be entered into a prize draw to win a free place and travel bursary to attend one of the forthcoming WIRP workshops. There is one free place and up to £75 travel bursary available per ACE region.

[SurveyMonkey](#) (complete survey here), [ICOM](#) (sign up here for project updates)

British Museum conference: What does data have to do with me?

The British Museum is holding a conference on 5th June exploring the relationship between data and museum work. Speakers are from institutions including Google, the BBC, Guardian, Adobe and Dallas Museum of Art. Tickets are free but booking is essential. [British Museum](#)

Museum Town Square – Expressions of interest sought

Museum Town Square is the working title of a new project currently being developed by Culture24 and a consortium of venues for future Museums at Night events. It builds on an idea devised by the artist Alex Hartley and Market Hall Museum in Warwick in 2014 to take collections, community organisations, hobbyists, artists and their stories out into a traditional town square environment. Successfully implemented in Warwick Town Square for Museums at Night in both 2014 and 2015, Culture24 are now working with a number of museums on the preliminary stages of an application for Arts Council funding for a nationwide network of 'Museum Town Squares'. This will be a genuinely collaborative project in both planning and implementation, ambitious in scale and reach. To get involved at this exciting early stage please email Nick Stockman at Culture24.

nick@culture24.org.uk [Museums at Night](#)

Senior PRs meeting at the Museum of London

Andrew Marcus at the Museum of London is arranging for the senior PRs from the museums, galleries and attractions to meet and discuss the key communications issues which affect their organisations. The session is open to PR Managers and Heads/Director of PR. The session will focus on sharing ideas and best practice, it is planned to be relatively informal on a Chatham House Rules basis. Suggestions for agenda items are welcome. The event takes place on 2nd July 11am – 1pm at the Museum of London. RSVP: amarcus@museumoflondon.org.uk / 07725 617865

Free online course: Behind the Scenes at the 21st century museum

The University of Leicester and National Museums Liverpool have collaborated on a free MOOC ('massive open online course') on the future of museums, which opened on 1st June. It seeks to answer questions such as 'who makes the decisions about what to put in them and whose stories they tell? Who are museums for and why are they working to engage new audiences? How do we respond emotionally to museum objects and spaces? And how can museums play a role in the pursuit of social justice, human rights, or health and wellbeing?' [FutureLearn](#)

GEM conference: Measuring the Magic

GEM is running a conference *Measuring the Magic* on 8th – 10th September to explore the impact, value and quality of cultural learning. Speakers include Prof. Lynn Froggett, Professor of Psychosocial Welfare at University of Central Lancashire. Tickets are £135 for each day, or £490 for the whole conference including accommodation, with reductions for GEM members. [GEM](#)

Fundraising from trusts and foundations

Catalyst Cymru is funding a course for heritage organisations in Wales that are interested in exploring trust funding. The programme will focus on how to research trusts that fund heritage projects, what makes a successful application and how to develop relationships with trusts. Tickets are £20. The event takes place at three venues in Wales on 16th, 25th and 30th June. Email training@wcva.org.uk for full details and to book. Other events in the same suite include [creating a fundraising strategy](#). [WCVA](#)

London cultural tourism workshop

The Greater London Authority is offering a one day workshop in cultural tourism. It is aimed at marketing and communications professionals working in cultural or tourism organisations of any size. The programme includes speakers from Time Out, V&A, Airbnb, ALVA, London & Partners, Transport for London and VisitBritain. There will also be networking opportunities, and the chance to begin to forge partnerships. The event takes place on 30th June and tickets are £65 +VAT. [GLA](#)

Create virtual exhibitions in Collections Trust free workshop

The Collections Trust is offering a free workshop aimed at anyone in the cultural sector who would like to learn how to use two new online museum tools. They are MOVIO, which enables users to build online exhibitions and CityQuest, which can be used to create a quest online and publish it to a mobile app. The event will take place on 24th July at the Natural History Museum. [Collections Trust](#)

Connecting collections conference

Culture24 is running an event at the National Maritime Museum for “*anyone interested in connecting children, young people and teachers with cultural collections, using digital tools and channels, to support learning*”. Speakers include Katherine McAlpine, Public Programmes Producer for at the National Maritime Museum, and Ali Hossaini of the Cinema Arts Network. The event takes place on 29th June, and the cheapest remaining tickets are from £100 + VAT. [Connecting Collections](#)

Appointments

Reyahn King has been appointed as the new Chief Executive of York Museums Trust. She will take up the post in November. She is currently Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in the West Midlands. [Museums Journal](#)

Awards

Jodi Awards winners announced

The Jodi Mattes Trust, which celebrates cultural organisations giving better access to disabled people, has announced the winners of its 2015 Jodi Awards. They are:

- The Canadian Museum for Human Rights, which was praised for ‘complete accessibility in every aspect’.
- Edinburgh City Libraries where a project has resulted in 100 new users joining the service, after it prioritised digital services for blind and partially sighted people.
- The Finnish Association of the Deaf (Kuurojen Liitto), which has created a sign language eLibrary.

[Jodi Awards, M + H](#)

Ironbridge wins gold

Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust has won the top Gold Award in the Large Visitor Attraction of the Year category of the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2015. It was judged on overall quality of experience at attractions drawing more than 50,000 people each year. Chief Executive Anna Brennand said, “*it was a great achievement to once again reach the finals of these prestigious awards, as this positions us amongst the best tourist attractions in the country.*” Eureka! The National Children’s Museum won gold in the Access for All section of the awards. [VisitEngland](#)

Kids in Museums publishes longlist

Kids in Museums has published a longlist of 20 museums for its annual Family Friendly Award in partnership with the *Telegraph*. Those on the longlist include Tullie House, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Beamish, the Science Museum, Black Country Living Museum, William Morris Gallery and Compton Verney. A full list is available here: [Jack Shoulder](#)

Creating a new breed of museum



Are we building too many museums?

In a debate on the Royal Academy website, author and founder of Fun Palaces Stella Duffy and V&A curator Kieron Long ask whether we should stop building museums. Although framed as a yes/no debate, both Duffy and Long have overlapping concerns about how museums need to evolve. Duffy argues that new builds are still restricted to cities, and institutions may still be forbidding: *“the RA is over the road from Fortnum & Mason: how many of their staff regularly use the courtyard, let alone the gallery?”* She advocates an approach to arts production where existing buildings are better used, with galleries as theatre spaces, or out of hours offices as workshops for writers.

Long argues that the National Lottery building boom of the 1990s and 2000s had *“many successes, but also plenty of institutions without a mission, with no clear sense of public duty, and with an offer pitched somewhere between didactic educational experience and theme park. Also, too many museums are obsessed with contemporary fine art, and not enough with the crossovers between artistic production and design, digital, architecture, technology, science, anthropology and history.”* He offers Grizedale Arts, built on a small farm in Cumbria, as one model for the future: a curatorial space which also ‘helps the public to make things’ and even helps them to make money from their work. He also argues that the new V&A outpost in East London will re-frame the idea of a museum for the digital age and create a ‘generational shift in aspiration, education and culture’. [Royal Academy](#)

Battersea Arts Centre describes its new mission and museum partnerships

Two months after the fire which devastated much of Battersea Arts Centre (BAC), its Director, David Jubb, reveals the organisation's new mission in a blog far from short on good news. The venue has just received a further £46k following a fundraiser at the Royal Festival Hall, and has been able to continue with more than 100 shows at alternative sites in London. BAC will be working with Wandsworth Museum and five other museums on the ACE-funded Creative Museums project. This is part of a plan to use the theatre-making core of BAC for broader social aims, including *"to develop social enterprises; to kick-start regeneration projects; to deliver the school curriculum; to develop our building; to explore heritage; to reshape our organisation's structure"*. In the meantime, organisations from Historic Royal Palaces to the business DECONSTRUCT are helping BAC deal with the fire damage for free or at cost. [BAC blog](#)

Libraries could outlast the internet says Roly Keating

Speaking at the Hay Festival, British Library Chief Executive Roly Keating said that libraries were well placed to flourish in the digital age, and that he is surprised by 'smart people' who fear they may wither in favour of the internet. He said that widespread public trust and the strength of global networks dedicated to preserving information were protecting factors. *"When we talk about libraries, I'm told about the old values, the traditional values of these institutions. Some believe they are being replaced by new ones about being more open and connected and virtual. And of course our belief, passionately, at the British Library is that it's about both. And that's the great richness of what a library is and can be."*

Elsewhere at Hay, Keating briefly terrified curators in the audience by claiming that he had popped the British Library's best preserved Magna Carta in his car and driven it to the festival. It seems likely though that it was a copy gracing the stage as Stephen Fry and Sandi Tokvig discussed what a modern version of Magna Carta should contain, and the document's continuing importance to UK law. [Telegraph](#), [BBC iPlayer](#) (Magna Carta debate, whole broadcast)

Campaign for Good Curatorship launched

A new campaign supported by the Collections Trust is calling for the role of curators to be valued in museums, and for more promotion of best curatorial practice. Campaigners says that as well as having an excellent knowledge of their collections, good curators must make sure they continue to evolve and are relevant to the communities they serve. They are specifically calling for:

- Museum professionals to sign up to their manifesto
- ACE to promote curatorship as a tool in engaging with the Museum Accreditation Scheme
- Curatorship highlighted in Museums Association documents, such as the Code of Ethics
- AHRC research into the public benefit of curatorship

[Campaign for Good Curatorship](#)

ACE report explores artists working in museums

Arts Council England has published a very broad group of case studies of artists working in or with museums in *Animating Museums – working with artists, engaging audiences*. ACE sees this as part of its remit to promote innovative cross-artform work allowing all involved to rethink their practice and enchant their audiences. Case studies include Grayson Perry's *Tomb of the Unknown Craftsman* at the British Museum, *Thresholds* at the University of Cambridge Museums curated by Carol Ann Duffy, the Transform project at Snibston Discovery Centre and Claire Twomey's *Exchange: 1000 Good Deeds* at the Foundling Museum. Each is used to highlight a particular benefit of cross-artform working, from creating an event with a sense of excitement, bridging cultural divides, and 'breaking the rules' with an external voice in institutions where this is unexpected. A participating curator, Sarah Punshon writes that what changes is *"the way visitors feel and behave in those kinds of spaces, something about power and passivity and the possibility of [the right] art to democratise, to make meaningful and equal connections between non-experts and specialist areas"*. [ACE](#)

Happy Museum publishes playful museum resources

The Happy Museum has been experimenting with ideas of 'play' at Manchester Museum, and has just published *The Rules of the Playful Museum*, stylishly produced on recycled paper with soya inks, in keeping with its wider principles. The Happy Museum believes that children should be allowed to play, and describes how a 'relaxed' museum can create an atmosphere where that is possible. More structured interventions include a hopscotch pitch taped out on the gallery floor, and a game of 'pass the dinosaur egg' (really a blown goose egg) played out between gallery assistants and young visitors. [Happy Museum](#)

...and a five year plan

The Happy Museum has also published its five year plan to 2020. It intends to make sure that sustainability and wellbeing are as familiar to all museum workers as learning and participation. It also hopes to increase the resilience of museums, their staff and wider society in the context of climate change, as traditional measures of 'growth' being equivalent with a healthy society come under pressure. Their plans include training for mid-career professionals, a longitudinal study, toolkits and eventually a kitemark and an advocacy event. The Happy Museum has also been approached by publishers and a book of best practice is planned for 2017. [Happy Museum](#)

'Better than the Barbican' HOME opens in Manchester

The multi-artform space HOME has been opened in Manchester by film director Danny Boyle. In a speech he said that regional centres should stop regarding themselves as merely keeping up with London and instead offer their own distinctive offer. *"You've got to stop thinking about rivalling London, that's one of the things I feel very strongly. People were saying to me [Home] is like the Barbican. It's not like the Barbican at all. It's much better than the Barbican. If you look at some European countries, they invest equally in multiple cities. There's lots of talk about the country splitting apart. The way you make the country cohesive is you have these cities which are huge beacons for the whole country, and it means we can all share in our country equally."* [BBC](#)

International touring exhibitions special

Turkish ministry seeks partners for Gallipoli touring exhibition

The Turkish Foreign Ministry has created a touring exhibition to commemorate the centenary of Gallipoli which will be showing in various European capitals. It will particularly focus on the Battle of Çanakkale. The Ministry is seeking partners in London who may be interested in hosting the exhibition which would take up an area of approximately 80-100m². Contact guler.altunhan@mfa.gov.tr for further information and to see the full content.

China Rediscovered: Collecting Chinese Art in London before the war

SOAS is seeking interest in a touring exhibition of Chinese artefacts with a forgotten story. The years between the 1911 collapse of the Qing dynasty and the 1949 establishment of the People's Republic marked an 'opening up' of China to the rest of the world and coincided with the first archaeological excavations. A circle of London collectors, dealers and scholars acquired previously-unseen objects and constructed a new narrative on Chinese art and culture. Greek-origin businessman George Eumofopoulos (1863-1939) amassed one of the most comprehensive Chinese art collections the world has ever seen. Between 1927 and 1939 he donated 800 Chinese ceramics 'to the Greek people,' a collection today kept at the Benaki Museum in Athens, a unique 'time capsule' of his 'Chinese vision.' Only recently has this 'vision' been reassessed in the scholarly record but never before in an exhibition. A touring exhibition of 85 objects from the collection explores a junction in the history of cultural encounters between East and West.

A UK museum would be the ideal starting point for the exhibition's journey, especially if its collections feature British crafts from the early 20th century. Contact: George Manginis, SOAS, University of London, g.manginis@hotmail.co.uk

Tourism

Commission for underperforming towns and cities suggests culture

The report, *A Brighter Future for our Towns and Cities*, from the Commission for Underperforming Towns and Cities suggests culture as one route back to prosperity. In his introduction the Chair, Chris Burge, writes, *"in an era of austerity, the inevitability of further public expenditure reductions is understood, if not universally agreed with. Nevertheless, there is an important distinction to be drawn between expenditure and investment – and well considered investment in people and the places in which they live and work can generate significant economic and social returns."* The report argues that iconic buildings can attract the public to a region even if not all of them step inside, citing the Sage Gateshead and Brighton Pavilion as an example. It suggests developing areas as 'destinations' based on an 'experience economy' where the previous economy which sustained a town has collapsed. It adds that *"bright young businesses tend to be developed by bright young people in places where they choose to live for practical, emotional or lifestyle reasons"* and argues that an attractive cultural and leisure offer is part of the formula encouraging them to stay. [Arts Professional](#), [RTPI](#) (full report)

ONS announces 2014 tourism statistics

The Office for National Statistics has published overseas visitor figures for 2014.

- Overseas residents made 34.4 million visits to the UK, 5.2% higher than in 2013.
- They spent a record sum of £21.8 billion, £0.6 billion (2.8%) higher than in 2013.
- Over a third of visitors, or 13.6m visited as a holiday, up 7.2% on 2013
- Overnight visits to Scotland are up 11.5% and Wales 7.3%, a faster rate than the 5.1% increase in England
- Visits from North America and Europe increased in 2014 by 3.3% and 6.6%, but visits from other countries declined by 2.9%

[ONS](#)

You've seen Wolf Hall - now excavate the cast

Following the tourism impact of the discovery of Richard III in Leicester, the city is now hunting for the whereabouts of another famous figure, Cardinal Wolsey. Wolsey died in Leicester Abbey after falling out of favour with Henry VIII and the location of his grave is unknown. Jo Storey from the University of Leicester said, *"The Abbey is a bit of the city that needs attention. If things go well with the city, with Richard III, then Leicester Abbey is ripe for development as a heritage attraction, for which Wolsey could be the hook."* However, the difficulty in making a positive identification, given a lack of known living descendants, could make success unlikely. [Culture24](#)

Welsh Government consultation on 'community assets' from libraries to pubs

The Welsh Government is inviting people to respond to a consultation on how to protect 'community assets' across the country. The definition is very wide and may include everything from a library service to a local pub threat from competition, as well as museums. The government hopes that the consultation will identify how valued services can be saved at a time of cuts, and the role that community involvement can play in achieving this. The survey will be open until 11th September 2015. [Wales.gov](#)

Oil, controversy and strikes

PCS members vote to oppose oil sponsorship of museum exhibitions

The cultural group of the PCS union has voted to oppose oil sponsorship of museum exhibitions. PCS represents 5,000 people working in museums, galleries and arts centres. The union will now oppose sponsorship at venues where its members work, including Tate, the British Museum, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Science Museum and Natural History Museum. PCS has also joined the Art not Oil Coalition. Clara Palliard of PCS Culture Sector said, *"we believe these sponsorship deals and privatisation are two sides of the same coin: a capitalist model for arts and culture which we reject. Access to culture is a human right, and we will defend it."* [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only) [BP or not BP](#)

Ten day strike at the National Gallery

The PCS union is holding a ten day strike at the National Gallery, which began on 26th May and will end on 4th June. The strike is against privatisation of visitor services and security staff, and also about the alleged sacking of Candy Udwin, a union representative. Figures including John McDonnell MP, writer and journalist Owen Jones and Russell Brand have written to the *Guardian* opposing her dismissal. The National Gallery said that it could not comment on an ongoing staff dispute. Many areas are staying open during the strike, although some school visits have been cancelled. The National Gallery has also announced that it will be paying the London Living Wage of £9.15 as a minimum from 1st July. [Museums Journal](#)

Shell and Science Museums emails published under Freedom of Information

Emails between the Science Museum and Shell, have been published under the Freedom of Information Act. Shell is a sponsor of the Museum's Atmosphere gallery and ongoing programme exploring climate change. The *Guardian* reports on an email exchange in which Shell asks the museum whether a symposium will be invite only as "*we do not proactively open up a debate on the topic [of Shell's operations]*". Chris Garrard of the group BP or not BP said "*These emails reveal that the Science Museum is a significant cog in Shell's propaganda machine*". However, Science Museum Group Director Ian Blatchford said, "*I can confirm that not a single change to an exhibition resulted from these email exchanges.*" [Guardian](#)

Historic Environment Wales Bill to be debated

The Welsh Government has introduced the first Wales-only Historic Environment Bill, which it hopes will make it easier to prosecute those who damage heritage sites. It will also stop historic buildings from falling into disrepair and offer new ways to finance urgent work. Local authorities will be required to maintain Historic Environment records, and there will be a comprehensive national register of parks and gardens in Wales. In recent years damage to monuments has included the bulldozing of parts of 1,200-year-old Offa's Dyke and damage to 2,000 year old hill forts. [Welsh Government](#)

Education

University of Sussex Baby Lab says send your nipper to a museum

The Museums + Heritage blog has been exploring the benefits of museum activity for babies. They cite recent research by the University of Sussex Baby Lab which says, "*they can sense and perceive, respond to beauty, recognise things, reason about objects and learn and remember*" – and are learning at an incredible rate compared to adults. The article cites inspirational resources including some from Manchester Museums and the Towner Gallery's 'Tiny Towner' project aimed at the under fives. [M+H](#)

Civil Engineers back more arts training in schools

The Creative Industries Federation and Institute of Civil Engineers have produced a joint report arguing that creative subjects should receive the same status as sciences in schools, and that no school should be judged as outstanding unless they offer a wide range of cultural experiences. The report also suggests that universities should be more open to students with a mix of arts and science qualifications at GCSE and A level. [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only)

Toolkits for culture

Museum retail toolbox now online

Museums Development North West has launched a museum shop toolbox, giving simple advice from the retail sector, to maximise the success of museum shops. Subjects include online research, weighing up the competition, analysing bestsellers, and walking through the museum and shop as if a customer. [Museums Development North West](#)

Collections Trust publishes toolkits for young people and CPD

A number of toolkits and resources for collections and audiences work have been published this month on the Collections Trust website. They include:

- National Museums Scotland's 'Toolkit for working with young people in museums' created as a result of their 'Sense of Place' project [Collections Trust](#)
- Also from NMS, the resource 'Pacific collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their Knowledge and Potential' [Collections Trust](#)
- A good practice guide for Forward Planning in Collections Management [Collections Trust](#)
- A guide to CPD for Collections Management [Collections Trust](#),

Culture Action Europe publishes toolkit on the sharing economy

Culture Action Europe has produced a toolkit called *The shift, the networked economy, the cultural sector and beyond*. The group suggests that European cultural projects can be more sustainable with a new approach to cultural organising and new economic models. They publish the findings of a recent pan-European group meeting in Newcastle. [CAE](#)

International

NMDC members participate in Year of Cultural Exchange with China

In late March NMDC members took part in a round-table panel in Beijing, as part of the 2015 UK-China Year of Cultural Exchange. They were Manchester Museums, the V&A, National Museums Wales and the British Museum. Coordinated with the Ministry of Culture, it was set up to explore and advocate for longer-term partnerships between the UK and China in this strategically important sector. Chinese representatives attended from the National Art Museum, Tianjin Museum, National Museum, the Palace Museum and Art Exhibitions China. The discussion was followed by a two day Senior Museums Management Workshop with 80 representatives from over 30 regions of China.

Commentators warn against overemphasising heritage as ISIS takes Palmyra

As Islamic State take an area in central Syria including the ancient Roman ruins of Palmyra, some commentators are warning against an emphasis in the Western press on historical monuments rather than the humanitarian crisis, arguing that it may encourage destruction which would not otherwise take place. Professor Eleanor Robson of UCL says "*the more we obsess about [ISIS destroying relics], the more likely it is to happen*," As the former Roman city is not a religious site, there are no overt ideological reasons for IS to destroy it. [New York Times](#), [Atlantic](#), [BBC](#)

Rijksmuseum is European Museum of the Year

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has won the European Museum of the Year award 2015. EMYA notes that the museum has achieved a 'stunning restoration' after being closed for almost a decade. They add that the museum has the 'achievable' aim of reaching every child in the Netherlands by the age of twelve, concluding "*this is a great museum, at the height of its powers, providing a rich experience to the public, and a socially aware outreach programme for visitors of all ages*." The one UK win this year is a special commendation for the Mary Rose Museum for its sector leading work in maritime archaeology and for setting 'a new standard for museums of its kind' with its exceptional presentation to the public. [Museums Journal](#), [EMYA](#)

Also: The Europa Nostra annual award for heritage is now open and entries are welcome until 1st October 2015. Areas covered include buildings and building alterations, intangible heritage and works of art and collections. [Europa Nostra](#)

Greek Government decides against litigation over Parthenon Marbles

The Greek Government has decided against pursuing a case in the international courts to attempt to recover the Parthenon Marbles from the British Museum. The Greek Cultural Minister Nikos Xydakis told a Greek TV station that they would be pursuing diplomatic and political avenues instead. The British Museum said the decision would enable it to 'develop existing good relations' with curatorial colleagues in Greece. [Museums Journal](#)

Jobs

Current vacancies on the NMDC website include:

- [Future Curators and Museum Pathways Programme Co-ordinator - British Museum](#)

- [Client Project Manager - V&A](#)
- [Application Support Engineer - Natural History Museum](#)
- [Seasonal Museum Assistants - Royal Armouries](#)
- [Director - Tate Britain](#)
- [Visitor Services Assistant \(Long Day\) - Ashmolean](#)

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

And finally...

At the end of a piece about looting in the Middle East, *New York Times* writer Patrick Symmes tells a more positive story of how artifacts can resurface despite destruction. He argues for hope that some may be saved through less conventional routes:

The Druse leader Walid Jumblatt once proudly showed me his collection of Roman antiquities from around Lebanon, which included nearly perfect mosaic floors pulled from old villas, and the sarcophagus of a Roman ship captain. When I asked how he had gotten them, he told me he paid cash during the war. He'd kept the sarcophagus — it guards his front door, along with bomb-sniffing dogs — but opened a museum for the mosaics. It was the only time I've ever wanted to hug an ex-warlord.

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