

In the this month's edition:

- [Sajid Javid replaces Maria Miller as Culture Secretary](#)
- [Creative Scotland publishes 10 year plan](#)
- [National Portrait Gallery's save Van Dyck campaign reaches target](#)
- [Show me the money: Royal Mint opens to the public after a millennium](#)
- ['50p for culture' campaign launched](#)
- [LSE study quantifies the value of culture and sport](#)
- [Lords report on soft power published](#)
- [Wales visitor survey announces results](#)
- [ACE receives £21m in unused Olympics money](#)

...and much more.

Section headings | [Resignations and appointments](#) | [Cultural bodies' futures](#) | [Members' news](#) | [Angels and glittering prizes](#) | [Tech](#) | [Cuts](#) | [Crowdsourcing cleverness](#) | [Holocaust and refuge](#) | [Events](#) | [Arts and society](#) | [Visitor statistics](#) | [Funding](#) | [Education](#) | [Jobs](#) | [And finally...](#)

Resignations and appointments

Sajid Javid replaces Maria Miller as Culture Secretary

Maria Miller MP has resigned as Culture Secretary, following criticism after she was found to have overclaimed on her mortgage expenses.

She has been replaced by Sajid Javid, a former banker who is now Conservative MP for Bromsgrove. His appointment has been met with a mixture of comment. The Telegraph's opera critic, Rupert Christiansen advises "*don't pretend to like the arts*" and suggests a pragmatic approach: "*make it clear from the start that it isn't your job to go into raptures about Sarah Lucas or Jonas Kaufmann: what you're charged with is ensuring that the Arts Council is properly administered and fully functional*". A number of papers picked up on Javid's comments three years ago, while a backbench MP, that ticket touts are 'entrepreneurs' who should not be restricted. Others have commented on the lack of cultural interests in his CV, however Mr Javid appeared at his first culture questions in the Commons having been on a whirlwind tour of the British Museum's *Vikings*, the Globe Theatre, the new Matisse show and a First World War battlefield. [BBC](#) (Maria Miller resignation), [DCMS](#) (Miller resignation), [Telegraph](#), [Independent](#), [The Stage](#), [Daily Mail](#), [Gov.uk](#)

Two longstanding members of staff are moving on from the Museums Association. Mark Taylor steps down after 23 years as director, and 30 at the MA. He said "*I have had the most extraordinary three decades working for and then leading the MA. It has been a great privilege to serve the world's oldest museums association and to make it fit for purpose in the 21st century.*" Head of policy and communication, Maurice Davies, is also to leave after 25 years [Museums Association](#) (Mark Taylor), [Museums Association](#) (Maurice Davies)

Sally Macdonald has been appointed as the new Director of the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. She is currently the director of public and cultural engagement at University College London and co-Chair of the University Museums Group. [Museums Association](#)

Baroness Blackstone has been reappointed for a second four year term as Chair of the British Library. [British Library](#)

Cultural bodies' futures

Creative Scotland publishes 10 year plan

Creative Scotland has published its ambitions for the cultural sector to 2024. The plan emphasises making being an arts professional a financially viable career saying Creative Scotland wants to "*encourage everyone who is in a position to generate better levels of remuneration for artists and creative people to do so.*" It aims to create a creative scene that is closely tied to the diversity of language and landscape – "*the special intimacy of local creativity in places like Helmsdale, Langholm and Ullapool will be as present in our tapestry as organisations such as the Edinburgh Festivals and National Galleries.*" The five headline areas emphasised in the plan are:

- Excellence and experimentation across the arts

- Access for everyone to cultural experience
- Places and quality of life transformed
- A diverse, skilled, connected leadership and workforce
- Making Scotland a distinctive creative nation connected to the world

Herald Scotland arts correspondent Phil Miller commented “it sees the organisation positioning itself not only in its primary role of funding the arts, but as an advocate for the cultural economy”. [Creative Scotland](#), [Herald Scotland](#)

Also: Sir Kenneth Calman, Chair of National Trust Scotland has urged the Scottish government to invest more in heritage because of the large return in tourism revenues. He said “the historic environment contributed in excess of £2.3 billion (2.6 per cent) to Scotland's national gross value added, and accounted for 2.5 per cent of total employment. This compares to a £758 million contribution from agriculture and £255 million from fisheries”. [The Times](#)(paywall)

Audiences Wales closes

The not for profit audience development agency, Audiences Wales, ceased trading on 31st March having lost its core funding. A Cardiff-based consultant and the England-based Audience Agency will be carrying out legacy work following the closure including networking events, strategic marketing support and training. [Arts Wales](#), [Audiences Wales](#)

PLACE report continues criticism of balance of lottery funding

A second report by the authors of *Rebalancing our Cultural Capital* continues to criticise the geographical distribution of lottery funds for the arts by the Arts Council of England. *The PLACE Report* says that funding received by five major London arts institutions including the Royal Opera House and National Theatre exceeds the amount of money given to the lowest funded 10% of local authorities by £27m. Imbalances include:

- Westminster residents have spent £14.5m on the lottery since it began and the area has received £408m in arts funds
- County Durham residents have spent £34m on the lottery and received £12m of arts benefit locally.

The Arts Council has responded saying that it is confident that its use of Lottery money does not breach the additionality principle, and that since the Lottery began, 28% of the money had been channelled into the 10% most deprived local authority areas. They acknowledged that some areas had a lesser share because there was less arts infrastructure and a smaller audience base.

Sir Peter Bazalgette added “We face a real challenge in making sure National Lottery money gets used in areas where there is not enough great art and culture, so we welcome the debate that this report provokes.” [The Place Report](#), [Arts Industry](#) (subscription only), [Arts Council](#)

Westminster Hall debate on English Heritage split

Jenny Chapman, MP for Darlington and Shadow Minister for Justice called a debate in Westminster Hall on the future of English Heritage, as the arm which sustains historic properties prepares to take a one-off £80m grant to cover a backlog of repairs, before moving towards becoming self-sustaining over the next ten years. Points made in the debate included:

- Jenny Chapman asked what the government would do if English Heritage again faced a repair backlog once independent. She also said that half of English Heritage properties are free at the moment, and therefore not in a position to generate income. Unlike the National Trust, English Heritage is a source of ‘last resort’ help – she asked whether it would be able to continue that role.
- John Whittingdale (Con. Maldon) said that it would be a ‘huge task’ for English Heritage to become self-sustaining and asked what would happen if it failed to do so.
- Tony Baldry (Con. Banbury, second Church Estates Commissioner) said that English Heritage’s role as a heritage advocate to government is ‘invaluable’ and that when it lost its cathedrals team in 2009, there was no national funding for church and cathedral building repairs, leading to a current £87m shortfall.
- Ed Vaizey (Con. Wantage, Culture Minister) said that between English Heritage and the newly created Historic England, the bodies would have exactly the same powers as they do currently. He said the new arrangements would allow English Heritage to grow its income and become more resilient. He added that English Heritage would continue to be ‘a saviour of last resort’ for endangered heritage.

[They Work For You](#) (full Hansard transcript)

Members' news

20,000 Leagues under the sea: RAMM reconstructs Victorian deep sea discoveries

In 1872 an eclectic group of chemists, physicists and biologists set sail on the HMS Challenger. Their 70,000 nautical mile journey of global exploration surveyed the geology, topography, biology and chemistry of the deep sea and laid the foundations of Oceanography. Now with help from a £91k grant from the John Ellerman Regional Museums and Galleries Fund, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter is bringing the thousands of specimens that the voyagers collected together again in a single database. While some objects are in major museums like the Natural History Museum, others are scattered and under-researched in dozens of institutions. Museum manager Camilla Hampshire said *"The voyage of HMS Challenger is of great historical significance and the data from it forms such a rich source of baseline information. With increased scientific monitoring and accelerated environmental change this information has continuing and increasing relevance today."* [RAMM](#)

Horniman hosts Great Animal Orchestra

Nicely blending themes from the museum's musical instrument and natural history collections, the Horniman has launched an innovative new exhibition, the Great Animal Orchestra, featuring four soundscapes from around the world. It gives a unique picture of the whole 'sound ecology' of sites on Borneo, Costa Rica, Sumatra and Zimbabwe and is funded by the Arts Council. [Horniman](#)

National Portrait Gallery's save Van Dyck campaign reaches target

The National Portrait Gallery's campaign to raise £10m to save the last self-portrait of Van Dyck has reached its target. The final £6,343,500 was donated by the Heritage Lottery Fund which has also given £343k for a national tour of the portrait. Multiple five figure donations from an anonymous American donor also boosted the campaign at every stage. The picture will now go on tour for three years from this September to Turner Contemporary, Manchester Art Gallery, Dulwich Picture Gallery, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. Stephen Deuchar of the Art Fund, which also made a substantial contribution described it as *"one of the most successful public appeals of the last 100 years."* [Save Van Dyck](#), [The Art Newspaper](#)

Science Museum Group launches new journal

The Science Museum Group has launched a new open access journal. It is published twice yearly and covers topics including science communication, informal learning, conservation, exhibitions, and history of science. Papers are peer-reviewed and there is an eminent editorial board, but the journal also encourages innovative forms of publication, especially articles which make the most of images, film and multi-media. [Science Museum Journal](#) (issue 1)

Angels and glittering prizes

Shortlist announced for Art Fund's Museum of the Year

The Art Fund's £100k Museum of the Year Award shortlist has been announced. Director Stephen Deuchar described it as a 'bumper year' for museums. The shortlist of six is:

- Ditchling Museum of Art and Craft
- Hayward Gallery
- Mary Rose Museum
- Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts
- Tate Britain
- Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Most were selected after significant rebuilds or renovations, except the Mary Rose Museum which is new and the Hayward which was chosen for its ambitious exhibition programme. The winner will be announced on 9th July. Meanwhile a photography prize is running: members of the public are

invited to take pictures of the shortlisted museums. [Art Fund](#), [Art Fund](#) (photography prize)

English Heritage launches 'Angel' award 2014

Founded by Andrew Lloyd Webber to reward people who have worked hard to save heritage sites, the English Heritage 'Angel' awards are open for 2014. People can enter themselves, or nominate a person or group. Categories include repairs or rescue to a historic place of worship, industrial building, listed building, scheduled monument, registered park garden or battlefield. There is also a prize for best craftsmanship by a trainee or apprentice. The closing date is 1st June. [English Heritage](#)

Heritage Alliance heroes open for applications

Heritage Alliance's 2014 heroes award is now open for applications. The award celebrates the outstanding contribution of heritage volunteers, and is open for nominations by any Heritage Alliance member. The deadline for applications is 15th September. [Heritage Alliance](#)

Show me the money: Royal Mint opens to the public after a millennium

The Royal Mint is to open to the public as a visitor attraction for the first time in its thousand year history. Its HQ in Llantrisant, South Wales is being extended to create a £7.7m visitor centre, expected to attract 200,000 people every year. The Mint manufactures coins and medals for around 60 countries, and hopes that these will also draw an international audience. The Mint moved to Wales in 1967, after several hundred years based in and near the Tower of London. [ALVA](#)

Tech

Digital R&D for 'Past Paths' through Newcastle

The Digital R&D fund for the arts, supported by ACE, Nesta and AHRC has announced a new list of funding recipients. They include £112,565 for 'Past Paths' a web platform and novel search engine to encourage people to explore museum objects in Newcastle. The project will transform online catalogues of collections – mainly used by people who already know what they are looking for – into something more 'playful' and browseable. [The Journal](#), [Nesta](#)

National Museum Wales pilots first 'iBeacon'

National Museum Wales has become the first national museum to trial the Culture and Heritage Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) technology, Apple iBeacon, in partnership with People's Collection Wales and the Locly app and platform. iBeacon connects to visitors' smartphones and tablets feeding information about exhibits as they walk around the museum – even where there is no internet and no phone signal. In the trial, 25 iBeacons were placed around the National Slate Museum for a month, curating content depending on where the visitor is in the museum. [Youtube](#) (iBeacon in action), [National Museum Wales](#), [Info Point](#)

Horniman wins two 'best of the web' awards

The Horniman Museum was among the winners of the 'best of web' awards at the international Museums and the Web conference 2014. The awards were for their [tumblr account](#) in the social media category and for ['best long lived website'](#). The [Collection Wall](#), the largest multi-touch display in North America, won best digital exhibition, and the Tang Museum (New York) won the best small museum project with their ['Classless society'](#) interactive. [Museums and the web](#)

Cuts

Sekhemka statue to go on sale at Christies

The long mooted sale of the statue of Sekhemka, currently owned by Northampton Council, is to go ahead at Christies on July 10th. It is expected to raise between £4m and £6m, which the Council says will part-fund a £14m extension to Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. However Nick Merriman of the Museums Association's ethics committee said that such sales should only go ahead as a 'last resort' after other sources of funding had been explored. He added "We do not feel that the council has done this, and we would urge them to seek alternative sources of capital funding before undertaking the sale of such an important item" [Museums Association](#)

Also: the Museums Association has published an update to its Disposals Toolkit. The revisions include additional material in Appendix 4 for staff having difficult ethical conversations about disposals from collections. [MGS](#)

Prospect union survey points to loss of skills in the heritage sector

A survey of heritage sector workers at 25 institutions by the union Prospect has revealed fears that cuts over the last few years are de-skilling the sector. Negotiator Sarah Ward said that 15% cuts in 2010 had 'devastated the sector'. She added "*The functions that have been most severely affected by public spending cuts are: recruitment, professional development, academic or historical research, conservation and the restoration and the upkeep of built heritage sites. The morale of those working in the heritage sector is at an all-time low.*" [Prospect union](#)

'50p for culture' campaign launched

NMDC is among the groups supporting the '50p for culture' campaign, which launched in April 2014 to encourage local councils to aim to spend 50p per person per week on cultural activities.

In a recent poll by Ipsos MORI co-commissioned by the National Campaign for the Arts (NCA) 63% of people said they believed that despite cuts local authorities should be investing at least 50p per person per week in arts, museums and heritage. Only 12% said local authorities should invest nothing.

The NCA says that the average budgeted spend on culture across England in 2013/14 was just 16p. In 2011/12 the figure was 18p and in 2010/11 it was 20p. On average, of every £1 invested by a local authority, less than half a penny (0.5%) goes to support arts, museums and heritage.

The campaign invites people to visit the website at www.50pforculture.org, find out the level of spend in their area and contact the local council with appropriate messages of praise, encouragement or calls for improvement.

Samuel West, Chair of NCA, acknowledged the difficulty faced by local councils but said that because spend in the arts is already so small "cutting them won't balance the books. Instead, it will make independent cultural organisations unsustainable and could make the UK cultural desert spread". [50pforculture](#), [The Stage](#)

City of Culture plans to close children's museum

Hull, which recently won the race to become 2017 City of Culture, has announced that it intends to close its 'Hands on History' museum to the public, leaving it open only for prearranged school trips which it says make up the majority of visits.

Local Hull historian Mike Covell is challenging the plans and has launched a petition which has attracted 2,000 signatures. He said "*A few weeks ago before its possible closure was announced Hull City Council said it was hoping to turn the square into almost a Covent Garden type of attraction. And of course the museum would play a really big part in that.*" One regular visitor said "*it's the only museum that lets the children play with toys from the past, everything is out on show for the children to touch and experience. In fact this is the only museum of its kind in Hull that is aimed specifically at children.*" [Yorkshire Post](#)

Crowdsourcing cleverness

Your Paintings helps broaden knowledge of publicly held paintings

The Public Catalogue Foundation has launched a new project, *Art Detective*, to help discover more about the pictures on the *Your Paintings* website (which lists every painting in public ownership in the UK). There are almost 30,000 images on *Your Paintings* where the artist is not known, 15,000 where the attribution is uncertain and 8,000 where the sitter is unknown. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many pictures are held outside cultural institutions, or in organisations where specialist art knowledge has been lost through funding cuts.

Art Detective will crowdsource knowledge through voluntary contributions from art professionals, academics and members of the public with specialist knowledge. Groups of people with specialist knowledge (such as maritime art or art in particular British regions) will have team leaders. Representatives of several major galleries have helped shape the scheme and *Art Detective* has been built with support from Arts Council England's Renaissance Strategic Support fund. Nicholas

Penny, Director of the National Gallery, said "*Art Detective should provide a central exchange and a podium where expertise can be shared, problems can be aired, and discoveries can be publicised.*" [Art Detective](#)

Cumbria Museums Consortium showcases imaginative cultural partnerships

In March a conference organised by the Cumbria Museums Consortium brought together examples of innovative partnerships across the cultural sector. Short films and presentations from the day are now online. They include Esme Ward of Manchester Museums describing their partnership with Central Manchester University Hospitals, while Director of the V&A Martin Roth gave international examples. Tom Freshwater of the National Trust described an ACE-supported contemporary arts programme over several NT properties, among them a 'House of Bling' at the largely empty Tattershall Castle. Participants in the Tattershall film said "*Numbers have doubled and tripled in some instances...It's a question of how you use these buildings – cotton wool wrap it, or you actually allow it to continue evolving and be used for different things... for a first, it's worked really well.*" [Cumbria Museums](#), [Youtube](#) (National Trust contemporary art films), [Youtube](#) (Manchester hospitals film)

Down to the last snail: putting Natural History collections on the map

A new project from the Natural Sciences Collections Association is seeking to create a complete picture of the Natural History Collections held in the UK. Collections are being added to a map and the public are being invited to report collections not already included. It is being run by Paolo Viscardi, Deputy Keeper of Natural History at the Horniman Museum. [NATSCA](#)

CultureCase puts academic data to work in the cultural sector

The Cultural Institute at King's College London has just launched a free to use website, CultureCase, which makes academic research more available to the cultural sector. There is a growing demand for academic data on the effects and usefulness of culture. CultureCase pulls together relevant research into 300 word summaries, available through a single portal for the first time.

Subjects range from the general value of culture, to its applications in education, health, wellbeing and the economy. Deborah Bull, Director of Cultural Partnerships at King's said "*there is a growing body of academic research into arts and culture but all too often it is written and disseminated in ways that make it hard to access by the artists and organisations that could benefit from it most. The Cultural Institute aims to bridge the divide between academic research and cultural policy, production and practice.*" [CultureCase](#)

Collaborate Don't Clash: Culture Diary launches internationally

Supported by ACE, DCMS and the British Council, *Culture Diary* has moved from being a London-focussed online tool, to one available globally. It will allow UK cultural organisations to find partners, drill down to find out what else is happening at particular locations and dates to avoid clashes, as well as publicising their own events. It will be promoted by GREAT partners across partner websites and social media channels. Organisations are invited to register now to take part. [Arts Council](#)

To catch a thief: ICOM's new website on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods

The International Council of Museums has launched a new website aimed at stemming illicit traffic in cultural goods. It includes practical toolkits, legal and ethical instruments and links to dozens of websites which provide help in preventing illegal trafficking. [ICOM](#)

Holocaust and refuge

Heritage Lottery Fund gives £1.2m for first Huguenot museum

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has agreed £1.2m in funding for a new museum in Rochester remembering the Huguenot refugees who came to England from France at the turn of the 18th century. 95 High Street in Rochester currently houses flats and a tourist information centre: now the top floor will be converted into a museum. An audiodrama will tell the story of persecution, secrecy and flight, and there will be a chance for visitors to discover their Huguenot ancestors and the innovations they brought with them. Stuart McLeod for the HLF said *"This project will provide Rochester with a fascinating historical resource and visitor attraction enabling people to learn about a wave of migration that brought many advantages to British society. Giving people the chance to discover if they have Huguenot ancestry will, I'm certain, be especially popular."* [The French Hospital, HLF](#)

Call for evidence to the Holocaust Commission

The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission, which will report at the end of 2014, has put out a call for evidence. The Commission wants to ensure that there is a permanent memorial to the Holocaust and fitting educational material surrounding it for future generations. To submit evidence, please fill in the online form: [Holocaust Commission](#)

Also: the Jewish Museum is supporting the work of the Commission with a conference on 22nd May, *Should there be a Holocaust Museum in Britain?* The event also asks what role existing museums can play in sharing the history and lessons of the Holocaust. Places are limited, contact Abi.Stacey@jewishmuseum.org.uk for more details.

Planting memories: poppies for every school

An HLF-funded project will send packets of poppy seeds to every school as part of the work to commemorate the First World War. The initiative was the brainchild of the Royal British Legion. Each school will also receive a booklet, and 550 'remembrance ambassadors' will be funded over the next year to help young people understand the period. Prime Minister David Cameron launched the project in the garden at No 10 saying *"The First World War centenary programme is about recognition and remembrance, focusing particularly on young people and helping them make a connection with the events that changed the world a century ago. This poppy initiative is a great idea that will help the next generation understand the significance of what happened during the First World War and commemorate the sacrifice of those who died."* [Heritage Lottery Fund](#)

Events

Sports Heritage Network Conference

The newly formed Sports Heritage Network is holding its first annual conference at the British Library on 19th September. The event focuses on sporting heritage in oral history. The event is still open for presentation proposals until 17th May. Tickets are £30. [Oral History and Sport](#)

Heritage Show + Tell in Leeds

Heritage Show + Tell is a chance for people from Yorkshire who are passionate about heritage to come together and share their projects in three minute presentations. The next event takes place on 12th June at Leeds City Museum. [CCSMGH](#)

Museums Get Mobile

The Museums Computer Group, whose members pool technical expertise from across the sector, are holding a one day conference *Museums Get Mobile* in Bristol on 16th May. They modestly promise *"this year's most important museum event for technology development, exhibition innovation, mobile expertise, multiple platform projects and audience engagement"*. Speakers include representatives of leading agencies as well as V&A, British Museum and the Natural History Museum. Tickets are £45 for members and £90 for non-members of the MCG. [Eventbrite](#)

Taste after Bourdieu

A two day conference, *Taste after Bourdieu*, includes a day on 15th May focusing on Taste and the Museum. It features a panel of influential museum directors, cultural managers and curatorial professionals who will look at the current state of national and international museum design and narratives, curatorial practice and visitor experiences, and discuss the future of the museum as an institution. The event takes place at Chelsea College of Art and tickets are £60 for two days/ £30 for students. [University of the Arts](#)

Derby Silk Mill to host Museomix 2014

Museomix has announced that it will be hosted at Derby Silk Mill from 7th–9th November. The event brings together 100 participants to brainstorm innovative museum projects with an emphasis on digital and design. Participants work in groups over three days to create new museum installations and projects, and compare notes with simultaneous events from France to Quebec. At last year's UK event, seven prototypes were created, four of which are being made into museum products. The event is free to participants, except for a small charge to cover food. Applications open soon on the Museomix website, and interested people can already sign up for the event newsletter. [Museomix](#)

Free tickets for event linking Creative Industries to academia

The Arts Council is offering 20 free tickets and a number of £50 reduced rate tickets to their event *Culture Creativity and the Academy - Building a new 'Grand Partnership'*. It will look at how creative industries and universities can work together. It takes place at Guildhall School of Music and Drama on 24th June. [Arts Council England](#)

Transformers: course for mid career museum professionals

The Museums Association is offering a course for mid-career museum professionals which promises to help participants think in a new way and become change agents in their institutions. The course will run from July 2014 – March 2015 and include a core programme, residentials, a project coach and a personalised programme. Places are limited but participation is free. The closing date for applications is 5pm on 14th May. [Museums Association](#)

Museums invited to register to showcase hidden gems in September

The Welsh initiative 'Open Doors' is running again throughout September to reveal 'hidden gems' to the public. It is part of a Europe wide initiative running in more than 50 countries, with 700 event taking place in Wales last year. Sites like museums which are regularly open all year are encouraged to join but create special events for visitors. Participating venues should register online before 1st June. [Open Doors](#)

Arts and Health event

A day long symposium *Creativity, health and wellbeing: Exploring art as a therapeutic tool within museums and galleries* is taking place in Llandudno on 26th June. It offers artists and museum professionals the chance to explore working with vulnerable constituencies and how culture can engender wellbeing. Tickets are free but booking is essential. [Eventbrite](#)

Arts and society

Hospital Mental Health museum hosts 'Vivify'

South West Yorkshire NHS Trust is reopening its Mental Health Museum on 13th May with a new display created in a project at Yorkshire Sculpture Park by older people who have experienced mental health difficulties. Gary Cromack for Yorkshire Sculpture Park said "*We tackle issues of isolation and wellbeing and encourage people to express their thoughts and feelings creatively – using the art and landscape at the Park as their inspiration.*" [South West Yorkshire NHS, Yorkshire Sculpture Park](#)

There is such a thing as society, says Peter Bazalgette, and the arts are good for it

Writing for the *Observer*, ACE Chair Peter Bazalgette has emphasised the social utility of the arts, inviting readers to imagine life without it: *"Imagine society without the civilising influence of the arts and you'll have to strip out what is most pleasurable in life – and much that is educationally vital. Take the collective memory from our museums; remove the bands from our schools and choirs from our communities; lose the empathetic plays and dance from our theatres or the books from our libraries; expunge our festivals, literature and painting, and you're left with a society bereft of a national conversation ... about its identity or anything else."* He goes on to highlight work funded by the Arts Council which dovetails with health provision – from the Royal Philharmonic's work with dementia sufferers to the Books on Prescription scheme in GP surgeries. [Observer](#)

LSE study quantifies the value of culture and sport

LSE Economist Daniel Fujiwara's study *Quantifying the social value of culture and sport* has been published by DCMS. The report looks at the effects of engagement on health, education, economic productivity and civic participation. Top line findings include:

- Arts audience members were 5.4% more likely to report good health (interestingly arts audiences, but not arts participants, showed a positive health correlation).
- Arts participants are 14.1% more likely to express the intention to go on to higher education.
- Unemployed people who engage with the arts are 12% more likely to have looked for a job in the previous 4 weeks.
- Arts audiences gave £50 more than average to charity last year.
- Audience members are 6% more likely to have volunteered at least once a fortnight.

These figures include the effect of visiting museums and heritage sites, but those stats were not presented separately. [Gov.uk](#)

Also: the Cultural Learning Alliance has written a handy roundup of recent material on the social effects of the arts, including a New Scientist piece on the effects of dance, which is reported to increase happiness as much as a £1.6k pay rise, as well as having a positive effect on autism. [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

Lords report on soft power published

A House of Lords committee has reported on the effects of soft power in a world where the balance of influence is shifting away from the West. The report argues *"soft power may be difficult to measure and control, but it is nonetheless essential for protecting the UK's interests. The mindset of those who shape the UK's foreign policy must reflect this."* They also acknowledged that soft power requires work beyond government, and emphasised the importance of public support for investment in soft power.

NMDC was among the bodies giving evidence on cultural activity to the committee. The report warns that cuts may leave institutions with less money for ambitious international work, and argues for seed money to *"fund cultural activities such as loans, academic study, acquisitions, peer support, special exhibitions, research, staff exchanges and maintenance of the permanent galleries"*. The report also quotes Foreign Secretary William Hague's comment that the UK *"remains a modern day cultural superpower"* and is ranked third in the world for cultural resources. [Parliament](#)

Visitor statistics

Taking Part shows growing museum visits

The Taking Part stats for the third quarter of 2013/14 have been published. Simultaneously official stats have been published showing the number of visits to DCMS-sponsored museums in March 2014. The stats show:

- Looking at the data across the full year for DCMS sponsored museums, there were 48.8m visits in 2013/14 – an increase of 3.9% compared to the previous year.
- In March 2014 there were 4.1m visits to DCMS sponsored galleries – down 9% on the previous year, but this is probably due to the later date of Easter in 2014.
- In 2013 54% of adults visited a museum, part of an ongoing upward trend since 2008/9 when 43% visited.

- Libraries continue on a downward trend, with 36% saying they had used one in the last 12 months, compared with 48% in 2005/06 and 39% in 2011/12.

[Gov.uk](#) (stats from DCMS sponsored museums), [Gov.uk](#) (Taking Part stats) [DCMS](#) (Taking Part headline figures)

Wales visitor survey announces results

The Welsh government have published their biennial visitor survey, based on more than 3,000 face to face interviews, and 750 follow up telephone interviews. The report found that:

- Visiting a castle or historic attraction is by far the most frequently mentioned reason for a trip by overseas visitors, featuring in 3 in 5 journeys overall. Visitors from countries that do not have castles are particularly drawn to the historic environment.
- 73% of visitors from outside Wales say they will 'definitely return' in the next few years with 22% saying they will 'probably return'.
- 96% say they would recommend Wales to a friend or relative.
- For 46% of UK visitors, the beach was a reason for visiting Wales.

[Wales.gov](#)

Funding

New round of China-UK development grants

The British Council has announced the latest round of its 'Connections through Culture' development grants to help create links with China. They include grants to individuals of up to £1.2k to cover visits between the two countries for up to ten days. The programme also organises study tours and networking events. Deadline for applications is 8th June 2014 for visits taking place between August 2014 and January 2015. [British Council](#)

HLF seeks more natural heritage applications

The HLF is actively seeking more strong applications for grants to support natural heritage. The fund has awarded over £400m since 1994 to natural heritage, but this is a fraction of the £6bn spent by HLF in the period. Natural heritage organisations tend to be smaller and less able to deliver larger projects. HLF says "*we think that applicants need to look at more joint working to common goals if larger projects are to be successful.*" [HLF](#)

Small grants fund now open to Welsh Museums

The small grants fund of the Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales is now open for the first of two application rounds this year. Up to £5k per applicant is available and the deadline is 16th May. Smaller projects and those targeting the aims of the Museums Strategy for Wales will be given priority. [Welsh Museums Federation](#)

ACE receives £21m in unused Olympics money

Following the dissolution of the Olympics Lottery Distributor, which managed funds for the 2012 Olympics, Arts Council England has received £21m. Of this, £18m will be used to create a fund to tour English arts and culture overseas. Arts Council Chair Peter Bazalgette said "*Artists and arts organisations will have the opportunity to work with leading artists worldwide and we'll all see the benefits of an arts and cultural sector that is encouraging international investment and increasing revenue streams, collaborating with partners overseas.*" [Museums Journal](#)

Also: ACE have announced a relaunch of their Random Acts partnership with Channel 4, which showcases the creative work of 16–24 year olds. They have invested £3m in the scheme. [IFACCA](#)

Creative Employment programme offers 100k for apprenticeships

The Creative Employment programme is a £15m fund to create jobs for unemployed young people aged 16-23. £100k of that fund will be used to help create 50 apprenticeships in the cultural sector. Part-wage grants will be given to both commercial and subsidised employers including galleries, museums and libraries. Costs per apprentice are offset up to £5,500 and the programme will also advertise the job and offer shortlisting services. [Apprentices for hire](#)

Oil Vikings invade the British Museum

A group of environmental protestors dressed as Vikings invaded the British Museum's *Viking* exhibition, in protest at its sponsorship by BP. The 'Reclaim Shakespeare Company' gave an impromptu performance including a choir singing the Ride of the Valkyries. They said "*The British Museum should sever all ties with BP because this sponsorship deal is giving the company a veneer of respectability that it does not deserve.*" In response the British Museum issued a statement thanking BP for its long association with and support of the museum. Since 2010 The Tate has also been subject to a series of protests about its continuing relationship with BP. [Museums Association](#), [BP or not BP](#)

Education

Arts subjects part of the first wave of reformed GCSEs

Arts Council England has welcomed a statement by Education Secretary Michael Gove that arts will join the first round of reformed GCSE subjects to be launched in 2016. Michael Gove has also withdrawn a 'discount code' which would have made Dance and Drama GCSEs count as only one qualification in school league tables. Writing for the Guardian, ACE Chief Executive Alan Davey said:

"Some will point out that the arts subjects have not been formally included in the Ebacc measure of core GCSE subjects. There is a fear that take-up of these subjects will continue to come under pressure. So those of us who believe in the arts will have to argue strongly as to why they matter. But our case has been made easier by the announcement today. At the Arts Council we will continue to talk to Ofsted to urge that greater weight be given to arts subjects in their inspection framework." [Guardian](#), [Arts Council](#), [Cultural Learning Alliance](#)

My culture, my London: ethnographic research among young Londoners

Last year, London cultural education group A New Direction carried out a wide ranging survey on how young Londoners consume culture, and the barriers to participation. Now more detailed interviews with twenty individual young people give a far more complex and nuanced picture. For instance:

"Our Young Londoners' survey suggested that perceptions of cost, time commitment, lack of awareness of opportunities and travel are among the most likely factors to be putting off young people from engaging with arts and culture. [However these may] be a way of post-rationalising the decision to not engage. What truly lies underneath the surface is the emotional reaction associated with the activity (how will this make me feel?) and a sense of identity (is this for me?)."

The survey revealed lively cultural lives full of unexpected cause and effect, and interests ranging from tattoo design to street dancing, political demonstrations and computer animation. The report also looks at the influence of friends and 'vacuum points' – life stages where young people are more likely to drop out of the cultural world. [A New Direction](#)

Creative Scotland to invest £5m in youth arts

As part of its 'Time to Shine' initiative, Creative Scotland will be investing £5m in youth arts over the next two years. £3.1m will be allocated to nine hubs across Scotland. The emphasis will be on a range of performing arts. [The Stage](#)

Jobs

Current vacancies on the NMDC jobs website include:

- [Assistant Conservators - National Museums Scotland](#)
- [Interpreter - Imperial War Museums](#)
- [Senior Development Managers - Science Museum Group](#)
- [Projects Manager - National Railway Museum](#)
- [European Campaign Co-ordinator - British Library](#)
- [Visitor Experience Manager - Tate](#)
- [Management and Planning Accountant - National Portrait Gallery](#)

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

And finally...beware of the carnivorous Ghost Slug

New research from National Museum Wales has alerted society to a stealth invasion of foreign slugs. The study, undertaken by museum scientist Dr Ben Rowson in partnership with the Conchological Society and Cardiff University, shows that there are more than 20% more species of slug than previously thought, and new arrivals from abroad are quietly establishing themselves in the nation's potatoes and lettuce. The Museum says: "*British slugs have been in the news in recent years, with species such as the carnivorous Ghost Slug, the Spanish Stealth Slug (Arion flagellus) and the notorious Spanish Slug (Arion vulgaris) making headlines.*" New finds include a root eating slug from Bulgaria, and an 'enormous' slug from Italy which can grow up to 15cm long. [National Museum Wales](#)

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