

In this month's edition:

- [NPG aiming to buy £50m 'internationally significant' Portrait of Omai](#)
- [NHM and Science Museum host event with Alok Sharma and 50 experts on climate change and ecosystem destruction](#)
- [Eau de Smithfield? Museum of London uncovers historic spring at its new site](#)
- [Museums are earmarked as community warm spaces – but may not afford their own heating bills](#)
- [Invitation to tender – research into admissions pricing policy](#)
- [DCMS funded museums show best visitor footfall since March 2020 – but figures remain well below pre-pandemic visits](#)
- [VisitBritain domestic figures show declining fears about Covid – but growing effects of cost of living](#)
- [Glasgow Life becomes first museum service to repatriate objects to India](#)
- [Reshuffle at DCMS](#)
- [Julie's Bicycle launches We Make Tomorrow 2022](#)
- [Workshops: join Art Fund's Great Escape in 2023, linking children with the environment](#)
- [Brunel Museum launches programme to support young women in engineering](#)
- [Curating for Change launches with 20 museums hosting D/deaf and disabled Fellows and trainees](#)
- [ICOM agrees new museum definition](#)
- [Amgueddfa Cymru acquires woollen mill – helping to secure industry skills for the future](#)
- [Herefordshire Council acquires 9th century Anglo Saxon and Viking hoard](#)
- [Wave of environmental glue protest continues across European museums](#)
- [Rijksmuseum foundations at risk of crumbling due to severe drought](#)

...and much more.

Section headings | [Members' news](#) | [Cost of heating, cost of living](#) | [Employment and opportunities](#) | [Visitor statistics and sentiment](#) | [Restitution](#) | [Appointments and resignations](#) | [Consultations and surveys](#) | [Events](#) | [Diversifying access](#) | [International](#) | [Funding](#) | [Museums opening and closing](#) | [Collections and acquisitions](#) | [Environment – progress and protest](#) | [Jobs](#)

Members' news



'Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium' by Amy Shelton, created from flowers collected on lockdown walks during the pandemic. Recently acquired by the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter through an ACE/ V&A purchase grant. Courtesy of RAMM

NPG aiming to buy £50m 'internationally significant' Portrait of Omai

The National Portrait Gallery is attempting to buy Sir Joshua Reynolds' 'Portrait of Omai' which received an export bar earlier this year. Priced at £50m, if acquired, it would be the joint most expensive painting ever purchased by an UK institution. Omai was one of the earliest Polynesian visitors to Europe, who sailed to Britain with Captain Cook in 1774. Campaigners to retain the picture in the UK have emphasised its uniqueness both as a work of art and in the story it tells. In a letter to Government they write: *"as a 'signal work' in the history of colonialism, scientific exploration and the Pacific, Portrait of Omai is an artwork of the utmost international significance. It is perhaps the greatest work of Britain's greatest portraitist and the first ever grand portrait of a non-white subject. The story of Omai is now of more interest than ever as we seek to examine our past and understand who we are as a nation."* The initial export bar on the portrait ran to July, but an extension has now been applied to March 2023, to give the NPG and its supporters time to see if it can bring together the mix of private donation, funder and potential government support that will be necessary to achieve the purchase. A spokesperson for the gallery said *"The second deferral period will give us the chance to explore a number of fundraising leads and gives potential supporters the opportunity to come forward to help stop this key work of British culture from leaving."* [Art Newspaper](#)

NHM and Science Museum host event with Alok Sharma and 50 experts on climate change and ecosystem destruction

The Natural History Museum and Science Museum hosted a major meeting on 5th September to discuss ecosystem destruction and the climate emergency. There was participation from COP26 President Alok Sharma and around 50 influential people in biodiversity and climate change, including policymakers, industrialists and scientists. Held under Chatham House rules, the event assessed what has been achieved as the UK's COP26 presidency comes to an end and what remains to be done. In an initial address, Sharma told the meeting *"clearly we have to do more, we have to move faster, we need more countries to come forward with updated emission reduction targets, particularly the major emitters."* Topics discussed included growing the public understanding of biodiversity, and how it plays a major role in planetary resilience; resourcing and financing a green economy, including tightening definitions of what counts as sustainable; and data driven technology for a positive future, something NHM is working on through its PREDICTS project. The last discussion addressed the fact that big data has given us more insights than ever into 'tipping points' in ecosystem destruction, but is only useful if the world acts on the information. More positively, big data can help track 'positive tipping points' where effective action also achieves reinforcing feedbacks. The meeting ended with a tour of the Science Museum's 'Our Future Planet: Can Carbon Capture help us Address Climate Change.' [SMG blog](#), [NHM](#) (PREDICTS)

NHM partners with climate justice activists for its 'Generation Hope' programme

The Natural History Museum is running a week long programme 'Generation Hope: Act for the Planet' during September. Developed with climate justice activists, it is aimed to help young people drive positive change for the future. Events will engage young people globally aged 15 – 25 ahead of COP27 in Egypt this November. Sessions include looking at health impacts of climate change, the role of media, and work with Climate Outreach to create a toolkit on engaging with climate science. There will also be a mental health event with Force of Nature, a group addressing eco-anxiety in younger generations. Conor O'Keeffe, Generation Hope's Creative Producer said *"only by connecting to one another, bridging divides and forming communities can we ensure a future where people and planet thrive."* [Blooloop](#), [Force of Nature](#), [Climate Outreach](#)

Eau de Smithfield? Museum of London uncovers historic spring at its new site

A previously undiscovered freshwater spring has been discovered during construction work at the Museum of London's new site at West Smithfield. The source of the spring is still unknown but it is separate from the River Fleet which runs buried under nearby streets, and is safe to drink. Museum Director Sharon Ament is hoping that when the museum reopens in 2026, the spring will be available for visitors to fill their water bottles. She said *"it feels like there will be lots of firsts. We'll be the first museum with a trainline running through it and now we've got this spring. It's that sense of connectedness to the geology of London and the infrastructure of London that's just there below our feet."* [Evening Standard](#)

Images this month: a Florilegium of lockdown flowers - and major new conservation on HMS Victory

Images this month include the Royal Albert Memorial Museum's new acquisition 'Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium' by Exeter-based artist Amy Shelton. It was originally made as RAMM's Covid-19 commission, and consists of pressed plant and wildflower specimens compiled on Shelton's daily lockdown walks around Exeter in spring and summer 2020. It has now been acquired through an ACE/ V&A purchase grant.

Meanwhile, £35m in conservation work is beginning on HMS Victory, Nelson's flagship based at the National Museum of the Royal Navy. A building is being constructed over the ship for some years, which will also house a new visitor experience, allowing people to ascend scaffolding and see specialist shipwrights at work. The project will allow the ship's rotten outer shell to be removed and replaced with new oak, and for the whole ship to be re-rigged over a period of 10 – 15 years.

[National Historic Ships UK](#), [NMRN](#), [RAMM](#)

Cost of heating, cost of living



Examining the hull of HMS Victory ahead of major conservation work. Courtesy of the University of Southampton

Museums are earmarked as community warm spaces – but may not afford their own heating bills

Several councils are looking at using public buildings, including museums, as part of networks of community warm spaces, as more than one in four adults say they plan to keep their heating off all winter in response to the energy crisis. Birmingham, Bristol, Gateshead and at least nine Scottish councils, including Dundee, Glasgow and Aberdeen are constructing plans. However, museums themselves are at risk of having to reduce opening hours because of sharp increases in energy bills. MA Director Sharon Heal told *The Guardian* that museums including 'big, significant, city-wide institutions' *"can only be safe warm spaces if we have sustainable funding. We are getting concerned calls almost every day from institutions saying their anticipated energy bills are five times what they were last year."* Meanwhile the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions says that some museums are already losing money because of the cost of living crisis in other ways: *"those attractions in rural areas are seeing clear evidence of a fall in the number of visitors coming by car, especially families, due to the rise of fuel prices."*

Some museums have gone public over the extent of the expected impact of direct bills:

- Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery has raised its admission to £15 to cover a £138% increase in its fuel bill.
- Bills have nearly quadrupled at Catalyst Science Discovery Centre and Museum in Widnes, Cheshire from £9.7k to £44k.
- Portsmouth Historic Dockyard is expecting a 230% increase to £484k next year, jeopardising its previous plans for spending on environmental sustainability. [Sky News](#)
- Bills at the Lowry theatre and gallery complex in Manchester will triple to a figure exceeding £1m, or more than its entire ACE grant. [Guardian](#)
- Jewish Museum Director Frances Jeens expects an overall increase of costs of around £120k within the year, exacerbated by the needs of its Victorian building and temperature controls for a Designated Outstanding collection, which requires energy use even when no-one is in the building. [Museums Journal](#)

MA Policy Manager Alistair Brown added *"without additional government intervention, organisations will have to make difficult decisions about whether to close for the winter, cut opening hours, or cut other areas of activity simply in order to afford their energy bills. We want to see concerted action from government – as we saw during the Covid crisis – to help reduce the sudden shock of these huge bills."* [Times](#) (council plans for warm networks), [Guardian](#), [Museums Journal](#)

Heritage Trust Network special event: Dealing with Rising Energy Costs

The Heritage Trust Network is holding an event on 'Dealing with Rising Energy Costs' in historic buildings. It will be led by Paul Clark for HTN in partnership with Citrus Energy, a social enterprising helping businesses and charities obtain energy at the best prices. The event is part of the NLHF funded 'Unlocking the Power of Communities' project. It takes place online on 14th September, with tickets £5 for non-members. [Heritage Trust Network](#)

Employment and opportunities

Invitation to tender – research into admissions pricing policy

A group of museum sector bodies is seeking tenders for research into admissions pricing policy in museums. The work will build on previous research which is now between 5 – 7 years old, and involve looking at policies and pricing strategies across the UK and offering guidance for approaches that work, as museums face significant financial pressure. AIM, NMDC, Arts Council England, Museums Galleries Scotland, the Welsh Government and Art Fund will be funding the work, which should take 4 – 6 months to complete. The closing date for applications is noon on 3rd October. [AIM](#)

Paid internships with Everyday Muslim Heritage as it launches new mapping project

The Aziz Foundation is offering four six month paid internships to early career historians with Everyday Muslim. Those participating will work flexibly three days per week on a new project to map Muslim histories in Britain. The work is part of the larger ambitions of the Everyday Muslim Heritage and Archive Initiative to create a central archive of Muslim lives, arts, education, and cultures from across the UK. Internships can be carried out remotely, and the deadline for applications is 11am on 12th September. [Aziz Foundation](#), [Everyday Muslim](#)

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy callout: paid opportunity to join its the Cost of Living Enquiry

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy is seeking eight fundraisers working in arts, culture or heritage to join its latest Enquiry, which will cover the Cost of Living Crisis. The group will be drawn from organisations of varying sizes, with participants from every career stage. Together they will explore how arts organisations, audiences, donors and funders are adapting to the situation. Participants will be paid for their time, and the process will result in a short publication, to be disseminated to ACE, and used in AF&P's own future work. This Enquiry is the latest in a series which will run until 2024, dealing with challenging issues for the sector. The deadline for applications is noon on 30th September. [AF&P](#)

Black Cultural Archives careers day: seeing ourselves, hearing our voices

Black Cultural Archives is hosting its third arts and heritage early careers conference for those from Black and global majority backgrounds. 'BCA Pathways: seeing ourselves, hearing our voices' will redress under-representation in the sector by sharing routes in, as well as jobs, training and volunteering opportunities. It is particularly aimed at 16 – 25 year olds interested in a career in the sector. The event takes place in person and online on 15th September from the Museum of London. Tickets are free and include a complimentary lunch for those attending in person. The project also encourages those interested to follow it on social media on Instagram: [@bcaheritage](#), Twitter: [@bcaheritage](#), and Facebook: [@bcaheritage](#). [BCA Pathways](#)

Visitor statistics and sentiment

DCMS funded museums show best visitor footfall since March 2020 – but figures remain well below pre-pandemic visits

Although still far from business as usual, the latest statistics for visitor footfall in DCMS funded museums have recovered in the last quarter to a figure not seen since March 2020.

- There were 8,330,356 visitors across (largely national) DCMS funded museums in the period April – June 2022. This is a significant rise from the three previous quarters, where audiences of just over 5 million were recorded, including 5,359,393 in the January – March 2022 period.
- Audiences have not been so high since January – March 2020, when 8,875,428 were recorded: however, museums were still shut for the first time in the last fortnight of this period in the first pandemic lockdown. Normal quarterly visits prior to this point fluctuated between 11 – 14 million.

These figures fit with a picture of declining anxiety about Covid-19, but with growing impact of the costs of living crisis and a long term depression on international visits in particular (see Visit Britain sentiment figures below). [Gov.uk](#)

VisitBritain domestic figures show declining fears about Covid – but growing effects of cost of living

VisitBritain's latest visitor sentiment figures based on fieldwork in the first week of August found that:

- There is far less anxiety about Covid 19. Only 21% of the population believe that the 'worst is yet to come'. This has led to growing confidence in activities including shopping in busy places and visiting an indoor visitor attractions. Confidence has shown a steady upward trajectory from around 2 – 2.3 out of 4 in January 2021 to results clustered around 3- 3.3 in August 2022 (with indoor visitor attractions at 3.2) – the highest since the beginning of the pandemic.
- However, 76% think the worst is still to come in relation to the cost of living crisis. 27% said they were better off than previously or not affected, 49% said they had to be careful in the light of rising costs, and 20% have already been badly affected.

- Decisions to take UK trips instead of international holidays still seem to be in place: 31% of adults intend to take more domestic trips compared to pre-pandemic; 30% will take fewer overseas trips. Among the top five reasons for UK trips are avoiding queues at airports (50%), easier planning (67%), and relative cheapness (49%).
- Nevertheless, cost tops the list of reasons not to take UK trips with cost of living cited by 37%, cost of fuel 28% and personal finances 28%.

[VisitBritain](#)

VisitBritain forecasts stronger international visitor recovery by 2023

Visit Britain's forecast for international visitors has been revised upwards in the light of a strong level of return in 2022 so far. It now estimates:

- There will be 26.7m inbound UK visits this year, or 65% of 2019 levels. It is currently estimated that this will rise to 69% by the end of 2022, with spending at 78%.
- These visitors will spend £26.1bn, or 76% of 2019 levels.

At the beginning of the year, there was a sharp downturn due to the omicron variant, rising to around 75% of pre-pandemic levels in April and May but then falling again as a result of disruption at ports and growing cost of living. Proportionate spend is running ahead of visitor numbers because of an increased length of stay for those travelling. Currently short haul markets are recovering faster than long haul: however, this is likely to have equalised by the end of the year. VisitBritain emphasises that its numbers are educated guesses in a still changeable situation and it will revise its inbound forecast again later in 2022. [VisitBritain](#) (twitter graphic), [VisitBritain](#),

Horniman Director discusses footfall and museums earning a living following MOTY win

In an interview with *Studio International* following Horniman's becoming Museum of the Year last month, Director Nick Merriman discusses squaring a focus on museums' core purpose with the need to earn a living in increasingly difficult times – through footfall and commercial enterprise. Although Horniman's pre-pandemic visitor numbers went up fivefold in 30 years, they also became less diverse, with fewer locals and more middle class visitors. Part of the recent work of the museum has been to concentrate on programming to invite people to the site for the first time, including engaging people on their 'home patch' with visits to local housing associations. Merriman acknowledges that Horniman's 70:30 split between public and self-generated funding has been relatively fortunate in the last few years, when commercial income 'fell off a cliff'. However, like most museums, the pandemic caused the Horniman to realise that 'this model of constant growth is not a sustainable one'. In Horniman's context this mean a Board-endorsed plan not to aim to increase visitors each year, but rather widen their diversity. He adds "*that itself doesn't necessarily mean a drop in income, but it might for some museums*". One strand of Horniman's sustainability work is its role as lead partner in the Museums and Galleries Network for Exhibition Touring (Magnet), created by ten institutions in 2020. The group is combining resources to share their collections with diverse national audiences. Although more complex than working individually, initial work has been a success and the group is now seeking ACE funding to develop a sustainable business model long term. [Studio International](#), [Horniman](#), (MAGNET)

Unboxed festival heads for low profile finish after disappointing visitor numbers

The £120m Unboxed festival, which was persistently tagged in the press as 'Festival of Brexit' is drawing to a close with audiences at around 238,000 to date, a fraction of the 'stretch target' of 66 million that the event initially hoped for. Director Martin Green concedes that the moment of Brexit that the event emerged from did not help build positive support for the festival, despite none of the programming being framed around it. He said "*rule one of major events: don't politicise them. And unfortunately a few chose to politicise it from the beginning*". However, the event was slow to acquire its final name, or develop a distinctive identity. DCMS Committee Chair Julian Knight said "*we sounded the alarm months ago that a project with such a vague vision and nebulous name seemed doomed to failure.*" *The House magazine's* Stuart McGurk who experienced much of the programme, points to one or two successful events like the Dandelion Festival, but many others that did not reach wide audiences, or offered experimental programmes with patchy results. Unboxed runs to November, but outcomes seem unlikely to change in its closing months. [Politics Home](#), [Times](#)

Restitution



Examining the deck of HMS Victory. Image courtesy of the University of Southampton

Glasgow Life becomes first museum service to repatriate objects to India

Glasgow Life's museum arm has become the first museum service to repatriate objects to India. A ceremony took place at Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum in late August to mark the transfer to Indian authorities of objects including a ceremonial Indo-Persian tulwar (sword), likely to be 14th century and an 11th century carved stone door jamb taken from a Hindu temple in Kanpur. Many of the returned objects were taken from temples and shrines in Northern India in the late 19th century. The High Commission of India's Sujit Ghosh said *"these artefacts are an integral part of our civilisational heritage and will now be sent back home. We express our appreciation to all the stakeholders who made this possible, especially Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Council."* Glasgow Life's Head of Museums and Collections Duncan Dornan said *"the transfer of ownership of the Indian antiquities symbolises a significant step for Glasgow, with the city continuing its positive repatriation history by ensuring these cultural artefacts are placed back in the hands of their legitimate owners."* [Museums Journal](#), [M + H](#)

Also: Germany's Foundation of Prussian Cultural Heritage has signed a deal to return 512 Benin Bronzes to the ownership of the Nigerian Government. Around two thirds will be repatriated to Nigeria this year, with the rest on long term loan to the Humboldt Forum in Berlin for at least the next decade. [Reuters](#)

Appointments and resignations

Reshuffle at DCMS

Nadine Dorries has resigned as Culture Secretary after a year in post, and will return to the back benches. She is succeeded by Michelle Donelan MP, who was previously Secretary of State for Education in July 2022 and was previously Minister for Higher and Further Education. [Independent](#) (Dorries resignation letter), [Art Newspaper](#), [Museums Journal](#), [Gov.uk](#) (Donelan)

Baroness Deborah Bull has been appointed Chair of the Expert Advisory Panel on the Government's major Cultural Education Plan. [Gov.uk](#)

Restore Trust Director appointed as V&A trustee

Zewditu Gebreyohanes, the Director of pressure group Restore Trust, which is campaigning for changes in direction in the management of the National Trust, has been appointed as one of three new trustees of the V&A. In a recent article for *The Telegraph*, Gebreyohanes criticised NT's "*forays into controversial social activism irrelevant to the trust's charitable objectives*" and called for its members to vote for Restore Trust's resolutions in the National Trust's next AGM on 5th November. Gebreyohanes, who graduated in PPE in 2020, was previously Head of the History Matters unit at the right-leaning thinktank Policy Exchange. The National Trust has published a response to the *Telegraph* article, describing it as 'misleading'.

Gebreyohanes' appointment to the V&A Board has been criticised by Labour Shadow Minister for the Arts and Civil Society Barbara Keeley who said "*public appointments should be based on merit, not how much you've donated to the Conservatives or whether you work at one of their thinktanks. The constant stream of cronyism in public appointments without any public scrutiny or accountability threatens to damage the reputation of many of our great British institutions.*" Commenting on her appointment by Government to the V&A board, a DCMS spokesperson said "*all trustees are appointed through a fair and open competition, run in accordance with the governance code on public appointments, as regulated by the commissioner for public appointments. The Governance Code states that 'political activity should not affect any judgement of merit nor be a bar to appointment'. Zewditu's political activity has been publicly disclosed, as is required by the code.*" In a comment piece on these developments for *The Art Newspaper* Alison Cole called for Government to step back from controversies around the concept of 'wokeness', to allow organisations space for nuance and change. She writes "*'woke' may now be useful in the world of Twitter insults and divisive politics, but it is counter-productive in a world where historical 'truths' and canons should be thoughtfully challenged and refreshed, and where mutual understanding and respect, nuanced debate, imaginative and collaborative solutions, genuine inclusiveness, and, yes, freedom of speech on both sides of the political divide, really matter.*" [Telegraph](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (comment), [Art Newspaper](#) (V&A), [Gov.uk](#), [Civil Society](#), [Guardian](#)

DCMS seeks nominations for Queen's Birthday Honours

DCMS is encouraging nominations to the Queen's Birthday Honours within the culture and heritage sectors. The deadline for this round is 12th September. [Gov.uk](#)

Consultations and surveys



Detail from 'Biophilia: The Exeter Florilegium' by Amy Shelton. Courtesy of RAMM

Welsh Government seeks input as it develops a new Collections Significance Toolkit

The Welsh Government has commissioned new research to review existing collections significance toolkits and to develop a new Collections Significance Toolkit for museums in Wales. It is conducting a survey to understand why some museums use these toolkits and some do not, and gain insights to help create a new version useful to all. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete, and is open until 9th September. [Welsh Government](#) (survey)

CCV opens new research into the Social Role of the Artist

The Centre for Cultural Value is starting new research into the social role of the artist, and how it has broadened in the past decade in response to social, environmental and political issues. It is seeking responses through a survey and also through a related workshop of 14th September from 2pm, online. This is open to artists and curators with experience of socially engaged practice, and will help CCV identify where it should focus its research. [CCV](#) (survey), [CCV](#) (workshop)

UK Information Workforce Survey 2022

The National Archives is among the partners seeking information on the UK information workforce through a new mapping survey. The work in partnership with CILIP and others seeks to update work first begun in 2015. The survey takes 15 minutes to complete, and TNA welcomes the views of all employees and volunteers in the sector. [TNA](#)

ACE survey reviews its Museum Development Programme

ACE is carrying out a review of its Museums Development Programme, and is seeking comment in a survey which will take ten minutes to complete. It welcomes views from those who have not engaged with the programme to date (to understand why) as well as those who have. Insights will help shape the next phase of the programme from 2024. The deadline for submissions is 9th September. [ACE](#)

MGS wants to hear about museum based climate action ahead of COP27

MGS is seeking examples of climate based work in Scottish museums that it can promote during COP27, taking place in Egypt this November. Examples could range from exhibitions to workshops or installing renewable energy and better insulation – or making more sustainable choices in work patterns. Email responses to climate@museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk.

Events

Julie's Bicycle launches We Make Tomorrow 2022

Julie's Bicycle is holding a one day conference, We Make Tomorrow 2022, building on the landmark 2020 event which mobilised the cultural community to act on the climate emergency. The day will again look at social and justice issues alongside environment and consist of a mix of performance, conversation and workshops. Topics covered will include community-led practice and place-making, funding climate justice, mitigation beyond net zero, creative responses and health, wellbeing and resilience. A full programme of speakers is being announced, including Civic Square on its doughnut city models and MAIA, an artist-led social justice organisation. Birmingham Museums, Happy Museum and NMDC are among a number of Friends of this event. It takes place in person and online on 13th October, with live elements at Birmingham Rep & Library. Tickets are from £22 - £117. [Julie's Bicycle](#)

TEG professional development workshop autumn series on touring skills

The Touring Exhibitions Group is offering three online professional development workshops this autumn, each taking place over two half days:

- Beginning to Tour – 14th and 21st September, from 9.30am. This grounding in the basics from feasibility to funding and practicalities may also be useful to students and volunteers. [TEG](#),
- Strategic Interpretation Planning for Engaging Exhibitions - 13th and 20th October from 1pm. It covers topics including storytelling, developing an interpretative strategy and case studies. [TEG](#)
- Economics of Touring Exhibitions – 23rd and 30th November from 9.30am. Looks at building consortia, budgeting, fundraising and sustainable touring. [TEG](#)

The workshops are live, interactive and designed to build confidence and knowledge, with a limit of 20 people per workshop to facilitate learning and networking. Tickets are £59 for TEG members and £89 for non-members. [TEG](#) (events overview), [TEG](#), (booking links)

UN Climate Week webinar

UN Climate Week webinar: Looking Ahead: 17 Museums x 17 SDGs — Innovations in Austrian Museums

An international event for UN Climate Week looks at how 17 Austrian museum have addressed 17 Sustainable Development Goals in their activities. A panel of speakers includes Bettina Leidl, President of ICOM Austria, and Director of MuseumsQuartier Vienna. The event is run by the Environment and Climate Network on 23rd September from 4 - 5.30pm and is free. [Alliance of American Museums](#),

Workshops: join Art Fund's Great Escape in 2023, linking children with the environment

The Art Fund is creating a mass participation art project, The Great Escape, which will encourage children to connect with their native wildlife through objects found in museums. Museums, galleries and historic houses will be involved in work that will culminate on Earth Day on 22nd – 23rd April 2023. Art Fund is now running a series of online workshops for museums signing up to the scheme to connect with others and also discuss linking with local school curriculums. The first is on 27th September from 1pm (register interest to attend), with further dates to be announced later in the year. [AIM](#), [Art Fund](#)

AIM offers grounding in 'mobilising museums for climate action'

AIM is offering a new course on 'mobilising museums for climate change'. Led by Curating Tomorrow's Henry McGhie, it aims to break down the 'big and abstract' scale of the challenge, looking at the structural problem and using the Museum for Climate Action toolbox to make practical change. The event takes place online on 21st September from 11 -12.30pm. 10 places are available, exclusively to AIM museums. [AIM](#)

Family Learning Festival

The Family Learning Festival is taking place from 15th – 30th October this year, organised by the Campaign for Learning. Museums are encouraged to contribute events on the theme of 'inspiring curiosity' and to make use of marketing and branding materials. The site also lists event funding options, including small community grants. [Family Learning Festival](#)

Museums+Tech 2022 – Turning it off and on again

The Museums Computer Group annual conference is this year on the theme of 'Turning it on and off again' – that is, looking at how users' technology needs have changed since the pandemic and how museums have responded. The conference will look at varying situations and strategies across institutions, sharing best practices for digital futures, telling cautionary tales, and situating digital cultural heritage within the wider political and financial landscape. The event takes place on 11th November at One Birdcage Walk, London, with tickets from £0 - £129. MCG has also restarted its Corporate member programme - tickets for four members of staff are available on joining for £350. [MCG](#)

Rural Museums Network 2022 Autumn Seminar Series: from Scottish longhouses to sustainable development

The Rural Museums Network has announced its online autumn seminar series. Events include:

- A discussion of conservation problems faced by rural museums with George Monger ACR, 9th September 3 – 4.30pm. [RMN](#)
- 'Wretched Huts and Despicable Hovels'; pre-Improvement farmhouses in Scotland – a look at the longhouse in Scotland, 7th October, 3 – 4.30pm [RMN](#)
- Rural museums as catalysts for sustainable development, with Henry McGhie of Curating Tomorrow, 4th November 3 – 4.30pm. [RMN](#)

The Rural Museums Network also encourages museums and individuals to join, with subscriptions beginning at a very modest £10 per year for smaller venues. [Rural Museums Network](#)

Heritage Crime Conference

Lancashire Constabulary is holding its first ever heritage conference, looking at how to work collectively to protect historic homes, churches, buildings and property. The event takes place at Samlesbury Hall, Preston on 28th September and is free. [Lancashire Police](#)

NEMO webinar: Sustainability in the museum: holistic, credible and future-oriented

The Network of European Museums is holding a webinar on sustainability in museums, looking at essential measures, with Tabea Leukhardt of the Collective for future culture, describing how museums can make the most of their role and contribute to positive change. The webinar takes place on 22nd September from 11am - 12 CET (one hour ahead of British Summer Time) and is free, regardless of whether your museum is a NEMO member. [NEMO](#) (registration), [NEMO](#) (programme)

Also: NEMO's annual conference is on the topic 'Innovation begins within – resilient museums at a time of disruption' and takes place in Loulé, Portugal on 9th – 11th October. Tickets are 150 euros, and non NEMO members are welcome. [NEMO](#)

Culture24 digital leadership series: heritage, digital and the climate crisis

The latest event in Culture24's NLHF supported series on digital and leadership focuses on the climate emergency. Speakers include environmental specialist Claire Buckley from Julie's Bicycle, cultural consultant Bridget McKenzie and Ruchir Shah, Director of External Affairs at the Scottish Wildlife Trust. They will explore issues including measuring digital carbon footprints, and the role audience facing activity might play. The event is free and all are welcome, but the webinar is particularly designed for senior leaders of medium and large heritage organisations. It takes place on 20th September, from 10am – 11.30am. [Culture24](#)

National Sporting Heritage Day 2022

National Sporting Heritage Day 2022 takes place on 30th September, co-ordinated by the Sporting Heritage subject specialist network. Participants can download a resources pack, and take part through events, exhibitions or social media with the hashtag #NSHD2022. [Sporting Heritage](#)

Sporting Heritage Conference 2022

Sporting Heritage is holding its first in person conference since the pandemic. It will look at how to share the impact of sport and heritage, gain greater momentum behind the topic and support grassroots projects and collections. A wide group of people are welcome from academics to museum staff, sports clubs representatives and community groups. Tickets are £30 – £100. The event takes place at Trent Bridge Cricket Ground, home of Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club, on 17th November. [Sporting Heritage](#)

Culture Geek conference returns to live event in London (plus post event recorded options)

The Culture Geek conference is returning to a live format in London, covering the intersect between cultural and digital worlds. The programme is to be announced, but speakers include Nanet Beumer of Rijksmuseum, Laurence Chiles from The National Gallery, Haydn Corrods, ACE, Tim Powell, an Independent Producer, Kirsty Jennings, Anagram, Anna Lowe, Smartify and Maurice Seleký of Amsterdam Museum. The event takes place on 7th November at The Royal Institution. Tickets of £199 in person for one or £399 for three, with a £120 option to watch a recording online post event. [Culture Geek](#) (speakers), [Culture Geek](#) (booking),

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy autumn events, from application writing to corporate fundraising

Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy has announced its autumn course series, covering topics including application writing, fundraising, digital strategy, legacy giving and Trusteeship with both virtual and face-to-face workshops planned. Sessions are typically £50 - £75 + VAT. There are also two FutureLearn courses – Essentials in Arts Fundraising and Leadership in Arts Fundraising, both free if completed by 23rd October. [Arts Fundraising](#)

Digital Marketing Day 2022 — less < IS > more

The Arts Marketing Association is holding its annual Digital Marketing Day with the theme of 'less is more'. It will offer focused and distraction free training away from screens, in person at the British Museum. It offers 'hacks, tips and tricks to help you align your activity, focus your marketing, and get the results you need'. The event takes place on 30th November, with tickets at £175 + VAT for early bird members and £120 + VAT for freelancers. There are also 15 bursaries available, covering the full delegate cost. [AMA](#)

Diversifying access



The Victory Live scaffolding tent envelopes parts of the HMS Victory at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Courtesy of the National Museum of the Royal Navy

Brunel Museum launches programme to support young women in engineering

Brunel Museum has announced a new education programme to support young women to pursue careers in engineering. It is named 'Sophia's story' after the older sister of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, herself a promising engineer, described by a contemporary as 'Brunel in petticoats'. The programme will especially engage with girls under 15 in Key Stages 1 - 3 as well as developing a Women in Engineering film with Bacon's College, a co-educational secondary school. The film will eventually become part of a permanent exhibition at the museum. The work is funded through the latest round of the MA administered Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund. Other successful projects in the round include a co-curation project at the Foundling Museum, intergenerational botanical exchange at Manchester Museum and an embroidery based project by New Forest Heritage with Romani and LGBTQ+ communities. [M + H](#)

Curating for Change launches with 20 museums hosting D/deaf and disabled Fellows and trainees

The NLHF funded Curating for Change project has launched, with 20 museums of varying sizes across the UK hosting d/Deaf, disabled and neurodiverse Fellows and trainees, for periods of either six weeks or 18 months. Partners range from the Museum of Liverpool and National Railway Museum to Kettle's Yard in Cambridge and North Hertfordshire Museum. Participants will carry out research in museum collections on disabled people's histories, which are often overlooked, and help create related blogs, events and exhibitions during their placement. Meanwhile, their experience of museum work will help identify the working practices that give better access for disabled people to the sector. Accentuate at Screen South, which runs the programme, hopes that this will redress a situation where 22% of working age people are disabled, but only 4% work in museums. As a first step, the Curating for Change team ran the recruitment process for the museums involved. Project lead Esther Fox writes *"pretty much all of the museums also said how helpful they found it, that it was unlike any other recruitment process they'd done before. One museum said to me: 'we would never have got this diversity of applicants using our own recruitment practices'."* The project will be publishing findings and toolkits across the life of the project - email CFCEditor@accentuateuk.org to join its mailing list. [Curating for Change](#), [NLHF](#)

New Forest Heritage Centre applies new technologies to a late 20th century embroidery to reach wider audiences

The New Forest Embroidery is a 6m long artwork created in 1979 to mark the 900th anniversary of the original creation of the forest by William the Conqueror. Now with support from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund, New Forest Heritage Centre is using cutting edge digital innovation to bring an interactive 3D version alive for new and wider audiences. The work is a partnership with digital heritage experts from the Centre for Print Research, University of the West of England, and digital engagement specialists Mnemoscene. Together they will create a 3D digital version available within and beyond the museum, plus a 3D-printed tactile sensory model of sections of the Embroidery. This will feature embedded touch sensors to enable visitors to access audio descriptions, film clips and links to information and interpretation 'hotspots' via their mobile devices, making it accessible to visually impaired visitors in particular for the first time. The approach will also allow layering of new stories on the original tapestry, including those of young people from Romani and LGBTQ+ communities who will be working closely with the project. Chair of NFHC Mary Montagu-Scott commented on how these connected projects across 40 years have encouraged multiple generations to engage with local history. She said *"my mother spent four years creating this community artwork and I was one of over 60 volunteers who sewed a canvas work feature into the panel when I was a grumpy teenager. It helped me to develop my love of the New Forest and understand its history. I am delighted that the innovative digitisation and 3D modelling will make it accessible to new audiences bringing different insights to the narrative."* [New Forest Heritage Centre](#), [NFHC](#)

International

ICOM agrees new museum definition

The International Council of Museums has published its revised definition of what a museum is, after an often contentious seven year process. The new version adds 13 more words, and reads: *"A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing."*

The new definition is the result of work to bring ICOM members together after a previous version was rejected by many at the body's 2019 conference. A new 15 person ICOM Define committee, including many of those who had rejected the previous version, worked together over 18 months. The new definition, accepted by 92% of delegates at the recent Prague conference, satisfies more traditional opinion, but is also seen as a move from passive to active compared to the 2007 definition, and includes some new and relatively progressive concepts such as diversity, accessibility and sustainability. ICOM President Alberto Garlandi said *"this is the culmination of a long, long process that started in 2015. This definition is maybe not perfect... but it is seen as a great step forward for the museum community."* [Artnet](#), [ICOM](#), [Museums Journal](#), [blooloo](#), [Art Newspaper](#)

Funding

New round of CCV Collaborate fund supports work between academia and culture

The Centre for Cultural Value is launching the second round of its Collaborate fund, which brings together the cultural sector and academics to develop collaborative research projects. Funding of between £5k - £20k is available for work which opens up new ways of thinking, builds networks and develops skills in collaborative research. The new round opens on 12th September. National Museums Liverpool was one of five bids successful in the first round. It has been working with Sophie Oliver, Lecturer in English at the University of Liverpool on the theme of 'Gender stories', looking at how objects from the past can address the complexities of gender today. [CCV](#) (Collaborate), [CCV](#) (previous funded projects), [CCV](#), (how to develop a research question)

Museums encouraged to apply to VAT Refund Scheme when it reopens in the autumn

Eligible museums are being encouraged to apply to the Government's VAT Refund Scheme, when it reopens to new applicants in the autumn. Museums open free to the public for over 30 hours per week can apply. The scheme has been running since 2001 and is estimated to have refunded more than £1bn to museums over its life, with 159 currently benefitting. This reopening of applications is the first opportunity since 2018 – 19 for new entrants. Queries should be sent to vat33a@dcms.gov.uk, [Gov.uk](#), [Twitter](#) (launch at Science Museum), [AIM](#)

The big picture: falling arts funding risks 'levelling down' in new ACE round

As ACE prepares its decisions on National Portfolio funding for the 2023 - 26 round, likely to be issued in October, *The Guardian's* chief culture writer Charlotte Higgins considers the bigger picture of the squeeze on cultural funding. On the one hand, she highlights the positive case of Bolsover, which 'has essentially no cultural infrastructure' and is now earmarked as one of 54 priority places likely to get more support as a result of the levelling up agenda. Local community arts organisation Junction Arts, which runs a local lantern festival, is hopeful of getting a higher level of funding as a result. However, there is no larger pot of money overall, and ACE's grant budget is going up by only 2% from its current £341m per year, "in real terms somewhere between 30% and 50% of its value in 2010". Meanwhile in the aftermath of the pandemic 1,730 organisations are jointly requesting £2bn, imposing difficult decisions on ACE, with cuts certain in London. Higgins contrasts the relatively tiny sums being allocated to culture with the £849m spent in one month for the Eat Out To Help Out scheme. [Guardian](#)

Museums opening and closing

Amgueddfa Cymru acquires woollen mill – helping to secure industry skills for the future

Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales has acquired a working Welsh commercial woollen mill, ahead of its closure next year due to the retirement of its owners. Melin Teifi was established in the early 80s and has operated for most of the period on the site of the older Cambrian Mills, already home to the National Wool Museum. The Wool Museum will now maintain Melin Teifi's equipment, which it will use to train craftspeople, maintain sector skills and produce high quality Welsh woollen blankets. Melin Teifi co-owner Raymond Jones told the BBC "the Welsh woollen industry has been building up over the last 20 years. There is plenty of work around, work comes to us. I think there is a rosy future now for the Welsh woollen industry and I am hoping the museum taking over this mill will help." [M + H](#), [BBC](#)

New Yorkshire Natural History Museum attracts large crowds to its opening in Sheffield

The Yorkshire Natural History Museum has opened in Sheffield. The small site, which can accommodate 60 people in its single gallery, features fossils from the collection of 23 year old James Hogg, who also directs Neo Jurassic, a company specialising in dinosaur skeleton reconstruction. The idea for the venue evolved from a conversation with Richard Forrest, a leading plesiosaur expert, who is now on its board. The museum itself is based in the Edwardian office of a former steelworks building, which had no floors or ceilings at the beginning of the renovation process. The museum also offers a meat free café and three laboratories on site. Hogg says that the crowded opening during August produced a 'fair few hundred more people than I expected' forcing the venue to operate a one in one out system. Hogg told *The Yorkshire Post* "*It's mind-blowing that we don't already have a natural history museum up here. It's one of the injustices I want to balance. There is nothing wrong with the beautiful museums down South, but I wanted to bring one here.*" He now aims for the museum to gain accreditation so that its collection is available for research. [M + H, Yorkshire Natural History Museum, Yorkshire Post](#)

Cornwall Aviation Heritage Centre to close with collections at risk

Cornwall Aviation Heritage Centre is due to close this month at its site at Newquay airport, with the risk that its aircraft will have to be scrapped. The venue has existed since 2015, when organisers took over collections including model planes and decommissioned aircraft from a previous aviation museum project. Now Cornwall Council says it will not continue the museum's lease, and CAHC says that the 'prohibitive cost of road transport' and lack of an alternative space make it hard to move elsewhere. In a post on Facebook, organisers said "*CAHC was created by local people, is privately funded, pays commercial rents to Cornwall Council and is becoming nationally recognised as an aerospace site of excellence, yet Cornwall Council have failed to recognise the cultural & heritage value of our museum.*" In a statement Cornwall Council said it was reviewing airport use 'to ensure the taxpayer is getting the maximum value for money from it'. It added "*Cornwall Council has made it clear to CAHC that we will consider assisting them to move to a new location when a credible, costed and deliverable proposal has been developed. However, this remains the responsibility of the centre.*" [M + H, Cornwall Live, Cornwall Live](#), (local petition)

Mapping Museums project tracks 19 museums closed and 29 opened in the past two years

The Mapping Museums project has tracked museum openings and closings for the period during and immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 - 22. These are typically very small museums, so changes do not extrapolate into a wider picture of the sector. It found that:

- Of 19 museums closed, at least three were local authority museums: The Museum at the Mill in Newtonabbey, Baysgarth House in Newton upon Humber (which may be temporary) and Eastleigh Museum in Hampshire.
- Meanwhile, 29 museums opened from 2020 - 22, all of them independent, and three private. These include the New Coracle Shed in Coalbrookdale plus Redditch Local History Museum and Somers Town Museum, with the latter two focusing on local history.

[Mapping Museums](#)

Collections and acquisitions



Samantha Hambrook sets up 70 degree tensile pull test on a caulking sample. Courtesy of the University of Southampton.

Government Art Collection launches X-UK, a five year acquisitions project

The DCMS managed Government Art Collection is launching a new five year acquisitions project aimed at collecting work from a new generation of British artists, known as the X-UK project. A pilot run in 2020 -21 acquired more than 90 pieces by 45 artists; now an expanded programme will seek excellent examples of contemporary art to display in 125 countries at embassies and residencies as well as at 10 Downing Street. Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said *“this fantastic new scheme will shine a light on the UK’s brilliant up-and-coming artists and promote our cutting-edge creative industries on the world stage.”* [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Export bars in brief: an arctic flag, a gift to Elizabeth I and a Morazzone painting

- A manuscript formed of nine connected roundels, given by Archbishop Matthew Parker to Elizabeth I in the 1550s, has received an export bar. The asking price is £9,450 + VAT with a deferral until 1st December 2022.
- A flag from Captain Henry Kellett's early 20th century arctic expeditions has received an export bar. The asking price is £120k + VAT, with a deferral period to 1st
- The painting 'Self-Portrait as a Knight, with a horse, an easel with painter's palette and a page' by Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli also known as 'il Morazzone' has received an export bar. The asking price is £2m with an initial deferral period to 8th

[Gov.uk](#) (Elizabeth I manuscript), [Gov.uk](#), (flag), [Gov.uk](#) (Morazzone)

Herefordshire Council acquires 9th century Anglo Saxon and Viking hoard

Herefordshire Council has successfully raised the £776,250 needed to acquire the Herefordshire Hoard, found in a field near Leominster in 2015. The treasure consists of both Anglo Saxon and Viking items from the late 9th century, including coins, a gold arm bangle featuring a beast head clasp and a pendant made from rock crystal encased in gold. The objects will be temporarily on show at Hereford's Museum Resource and Learning Centre until the £18m redevelopment of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery is complete. Councillor Gemma Davis thanked NLHF, Art Fund, Garfield Weston and the Headley Trust saying *"I feel genuinely emotional about this...I want to say a massive thanks to the organisations that looked so favourably on our applications and awarded us funding to secure the hoard for the people of Herefordshire."* The hoard itself was found by metal detectorists working illegally, who then attempted to sell the hoard on the black market; they received prison sentences in 2019. [Museums Journal](#), [Herefordshire Hoard](#), [Archaeology](#), [Hereford Times](#)

Environment – progress and protest



Amy Shelton in her studio. Courtesy of RAMM

Kew's Wakehurst country garden creates American prairie grassland as futureproofing against climate change

Wakehurst, Kew Gardens' 'wild garden' in the Sussex countryside has been working towards creating an American prairie grassland across six of its 535 acres as a way of futureproofing against climate change. Work began last year, including planting 12 million seeds, 110 plant species and 50,000 live plants. Head of Landscape and Horticulture Iain Patterson told *The Guardian* that it intends to "move away from the conventional form of gardening, which requires lots of irrigation, weeding and mulching, to developing landscapes which are more resilient to the changing climate... rather than just survive in summers like this, [these plants] will actually thrive because those are the conditions they are more used to." He added that this may be the future of the UK garden: "we think this is how everyone will have to garden in the UK moving forward. We can't rely on irrigating everything to keep it alive." [Guardian](#), [Kew Gardens](#) (Wakehurst)

Case study: Chichester Festival Theatre calculating and mitigating audience travel

Audience travel is an element of a venue's carbon footprint that can be the hardest to calculate and to mitigate for places reliant on footfall and tourism to earn a living. When Chichester theatre ran figures in 2019 – 20, it found that across two venues audiences accounted for 90% of its total carbon output. This was compounded by large audience numbers from rural areas, with thin public transport becoming non-existent late at night when performances ended. In a case study for Culture Hive, the theatre describes how it has worked with audiences to offset their carbon footprint – while being mindful that it is not the whole answer. To date, 7% of bookers have offset their journey by contributing £1, planting 23,000 trees. However, the bigger effect may be less around the offsetting itself, but in getting audiences to become more engaged with issues of carbon consumption. [Culture Hive](#)

Wave of environmental glue protest continues across European museums

Environmental protesters have continued to glue – and occasionally chain – themselves to significant artworks in museums and heritage sites across Europe during August. They include members of the group Uprising of the Last Generation at four sites in Germany, plus protesters targeting a statue of Laocöon in the Vatican. Disapproving of their tactics, Apollo columnist Rakewell nevertheless highlights how many of the chosen pictures are themselves symbolic, from the encyclopaedic range of botanical life recorded in Botticelli's 'Primavera', targeted at the Uffizi in July, to Laocöon whose warnings were ignored in Greek myth. *"While not condoning – in any way – the potential damage to some of the most important works in the Western canon, we can't help pointing out that the protesters are rather good at, well, protesting."* Rakewell also points to the growing number of exhibitions highlighting climate change in museums and galleries, from 'Our Time on Earth' at the Barbican, 'Back to Earth' at the Serpentine, 'Green Modernism: The New View of Plants' at the Museum Ludwig. Meanwhile the German Cultural Council has been among those condemning the protesters. Its Managing Director Olaf Zimmerman said *"as much as I can understand the despair of the climate activists, I say clearly that the act of glueing themselves to the frames of famous works of art is clearly wrong. The risk of damaging the artworks is very high. The works put in danger are part of world cultural heritage and deserve to be protected as well as our climate."* [Art Newspaper](#) (Scrovegni Chapel), [Apollo magazine](#), [Art Newspaper](#) (four German museums), [Observer](#) (Vatican), [Art Newspaper](#) (Vatican), [Independent](#) (German Cultural Council)

Rijksmuseum foundations at risk of crumbling due to severe drought

The Rijksmuseum's foundations are being seriously affected by climate change, and before a recent intervention, had sunk by 15cm on one side. The damage was caused because, like many buildings in the country, it is built on a foundation of wooden poles in marshy soil. These are now rotting as they dry out and become exposed to fungi. Specialist hydrologists have now intervened, redirecting water from a nearby pond to keep the area moist. However, it is estimated that it may cost 100bn euros to address the risk to all the other Dutch buildings with the same type of foundations as Rijksmuseum. [Bloomberg](#)

Jobs

Posts being advertised on the NMDC jobs board this month include:

- [Thriving Communities Carlisle Project Development Coordinator](#) - Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery
- [Digital Services Specialist](#) - British Library
- [Senior Conservator, Type Archive](#) - Science Museum Group, Wroughton
- [Visitor Experience Manager](#) - National Portrait Gallery
- [Head of Buildings and Security](#) - The Wallace Collection
- [Development Officer x 2](#) - National Museums Scotland
- [Project Manager, Rail Moves](#) - Science Museum Group, York or Shildon

A complete list is available on our website [here](#).

Also: ACE is seeking a new [Chair for its Acceptance in Lieu Panel](#).

Subscribe

If you were forwarded this by someone else, and would like to sign up to receive the NMDC newsletter monthly in your inbox, [visit our website here](#) and drop your email address in the box to the right of the page.

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