



## Association of Independent Museums

The National Body Connecting, Supporting and Representing Independent Museums

### Association of Independent Museums AIM E-News – May 2012 – Number 33 – Extracts

AIM Annual Report & Accounts 2011-2012 is now available via the website – [www.aim-museums.co.uk](http://www.aim-museums.co.uk)

**Arts Council England (ACE) has announced the nine successful applicants to the Museum Development Fund.** Part of the Renaissance programme, the awards totalling just over £8 million, are for a 'nearly' three-year period (actually two years nine months). Museum development funding targets increased resilience and sustainability of mostly smaller museums, providing a national network of professional advice. Programmes will include business planning, workforce development, attracting new audiences and organisational improvement.

Hedley Swain, director of Museums & Renaissance at ACE, says these awards ensure there is a museum development provider in each of the nine English regions, ensuring nationwide coverage. ACE funding decisions have been based on close consultation with museums and their stakeholders, and the museum development funding, in particular "recognises the high value that the sector puts on museum development and the essential role it plays in supporting the sector." ACE will be investing a total of £129 million in regional museums through Renaissance between 2012 and 2015.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/news/arts-council-news/museum-development-providers-announced-subject-spe/>

#### **New campaign begins to cut VAT for attractions**

A new survey shows overwhelming support for a campaign to reduce VAT to 5% on visitor attractions and accommodation. The British Hospitality Association (BHA) has also introduced new pages on its website, [www.bha.org.uk](http://www.bha.org.uk), to provide the industry with continuous updates on the campaign, and will shortly launch a Facebook site. Research highlights the benefits such a reduction would bring to the industry including improving the UK's competitiveness – the UK is one of only four out of the 27 EU member states which does not impose a lower rate of VAT on hospitality services. The BHA says a reduction in VAT will boost customer demand, leading to the creation of more jobs and greater revenues to the Treasury. The BHA is urging others in the industry to back its campaign, pressing home the benefits to central Government, local MPs and councillors. "The argument is powerful. Let's get the message across so the whole industry – and the UK economy – can benefit" says Ufi Ibrahim, BHA chief executive.

#### **Training for retail staff**

For the past 20 years Retail Matters has been running in-house training courses for museum retail staff, especially where they have set up new shops for clients. Now, by popular demand, three of its most requested courses are available to everyone who works in museums. AIM members are offered a special price of £89 per delegate, per course (plus VAT). The courses are: Retail management, Visual merchandising & display and Exceptional customer service & selling skills. The courses will be run in major cities around the UK, with the first series beginning next month in Birmingham, Glasgow and Manchester and ending in London in the first week in July. More locations will be added in the autumn. John Prescott of Retail Matters will be at the AIM Conference in Swindon if you would like to discuss your particular training needs. Or call 01666 880444, email [john.prescott@retailmatters.com](mailto:john.prescott@retailmatters.com)

#### **It's an honour!**

Anyone can be put forward for an honour and anyone can nominate a person they think truly deserves this recognition, says the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), which is

looking for more nominations from within the sector. Many people working behind the scenes (often, but not always, volunteers) have given huge amounts of time and energy over many years, their dedication crucial to the development of an important aspect of UK culture. The efforts of these unsung heroes may be known only to a small number of people, but should be rewarded and celebrated: nominating someone for an honour need not be complicated as the DCMS honours team can help you through the process. Download a nomination form at <http://www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/NominationForm.doc>, or to discuss the process contact Pat Le-Bruin on 020 7211 2313 or email [pat.le-bruin@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:pat.le-bruin@culture.gsi.gov.uk). There is more about the honours process at [http://www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/honours/default.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/honours/default.aspx)