



Association of Independent Museums

The National Body Connecting, Supporting and Representing Independent Museums

Association of Independent Museums AIM E-News – October 2013 – Number 50 - **EXTRACTS**

Collaboration aims to help save England's industrial past

Support for the preservation of England's industrial heritage is to be enhanced through a new collaboration between the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust (IGMT) and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IME), the fastest growing professional engineering institution in the UK. The collaboration will include delivering relevant training, professional support and advocacy of the value and importance of industrial heritage. Regional events will kick this off, with the first covering the West Midlands and taking place at Ironbridge. The move has been managed through the Industrial Heritage Support Officer (IHSO) project which began a year ago, funded by English Heritage, and managed by IGMT in partnership with AIM and the Association for Industrial Archaeology. IHSO, Ian Bapty, who is tasked with developing a national strategy to improve standards of preserved industrial sites with public access, says industrial heritage sites are complicated and expensive to manage, operate and interpret. "Declining funding and reliance on dwindling numbers of volunteers is further increasing these pressures. Linking up with the IME – whose members combine professional engineering expertise with a long track record of promoting industrial heritage – will significantly enhance the support we can provide to industrial heritage sites." The project is directed by a steering group chaired by AIM president Sir Neil Cossons. Ian Bapty can be reached at ian.bapty@ironbridge.org.uk

Gift Aid online claims reminder

Gift Aid can now only be claimed through HMRC's Charities Online website, and forms will no longer be accepted. Organisations must be registered with Charities Online to make claims. For full guidance see

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/online/index.htm?utm_source=NCVO_CharityOnline_reminder&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NCVO_CharityOnline_reminder

Adult visitors increase

A significant rise in adult visitors to museums is shown in the *Taking Part* figures for the first quarter of 2013/14. From July 2012-June 2013 53% of adults visited a museum, a higher figure than at any point since 2005. Upper socio-economic groups are still more likely to visit than lower groups (61.4% vs 39.9%). Nine per cent of all adults volunteered in the period in arts, museums or galleries, heritage, libraries, archives and sport. Digital engagement is rising rapidly, with 30% of adults visiting a museum or gallery website in the last 12 months, up from 18% in 2005/6. Seventy-two per cent of adults visited a heritage site in the period, up by 3% since 2005, but down 2% compared with 2011/12 figures. <http://us5.campaign-archive2.com/?u=75369368ec98d5e713dae3779&id=f8e4cc1564&e=431076174a>

Collections Skills seminars - for free

Free *Collections Skills* seminars aimed at small and medium-sized museums are being run by the Collections Trust, funded by Arts Council England. They will take place in London (6 November), Norwich (29 January), Bristol (19 February) and York (19 March). Sessions will include Using Museum Standards to Sustain Collections and Building Digital Capacity in Museums. Delegates

will have the chance to discuss their own issues, to network and to receive support materials to take away. <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/skills-seminars>

Experience History is a new web resource aimed at increasing engagement and enjoyment of the UK's cultural sites by bringing together museums, heritage sites and the public. It offers an online platform for UK museums and heritage sites to promote themselves for free, and a place where the public can find out more about cultural events. <http://experiencehistory.co.uk/>

The **PRISM Fund** is now fully subscribed for 2013-14 and applications are no longer accepted. The Fund is expected to reopen early next year for applications for 2014-15. <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/apply-for-funding/prism/>