

Association of Independent Museums

AIM E-News – February 2015 – Number 66 – **EXTRACTS**

AIM - Helping Heritage Organisations Prosper

AIM 2015 NATIONAL CONFERENCE - The Hallmarks of Prospering Museums

18-20 June 2015 at Brunel's ss Great Britain, Bristol

Sponsored by Development Partners

1. Overview

Overcoming issues affecting independent museums today can sometimes feel like a tough challenge! What may seem easy for larger and well-funded museums can feel daunting for smaller and volunteer-supported independents. But many of the characteristics of prospering museums can and do apply to all, whatever their size or level of resource. This year's AIM National Conference has an **exciting new format** which will develop the new AIM Hallmarks through three themes: Leadership, Purpose and Governance; Innovation in Visitor Experience and Entrepreneurialism and Income Generation. The conference will feature **30 guest speakers, 12 breakout sessions, new surgery sessions and keynote speeches** from some of the UK's leading cultural experts including chairs, directors or CEOs of: ss Great Britain; London Transport Museum; ALVA; HLF; Battersea Arts Centre; Development Partners; Imperial War Museum; Derby Silk Museum; Creative United; Tiverton Museum; Museum of Dartmoor Life; Gordon Highlanders Museum; Royal West of England Academy; Bexley Heritage Trust; Birmingham Conservation Trust; Association of Cultural Enterprises; Luton Museums and National Football Museum.

2. What else?

New for this year will be a '**Question Time Debate**' chaired by Matthew Tanner with a guest panel including: Richard Evans (director, Beamish, The Living Museum of the North); Diane Lees (director-general, Imperial War Museum); Judy Niner (director of Development Partners and chair of Cogges Manor Farm) and John Orna-Ornstein (director of Museums, Arts Council England). **Evening social events, sector exhibitors** and a Saturday **study tour** visiting three historic locations in Bristol, plus plenty of **networking and idea-sharing opportunities**, all contribute to what promises to be a rewarding and informative conference ideal for anyone connected to the UK's heritage sector. You will come away with a range of practical approaches to help your museum or heritage organisation prosper.

3. Booking

Our special **Early Bird booking rate** starts at just £45 per day for AIM members and runs until 17 April. Download the AIM National Conference Brochure at [conference 2015 booklet WEB](#). For how to book, prices and a conference schedule, visit the AIM website and view 'Events' at: [AIM website and events](#). Follow all conference updates on Twitter [@AIMuseums](#) #2015AIM.

NEW - *Donation Boxes in Museums: your ultimate Quick Guide*

Following AIM's new Success Guides, we have launched a range of shorter [Quick Guides](#). The first has just been published. *Donation Boxes in Museums* is written by Judy Niner and Amy Richards of Development Partners, fundraising specialists and AIM National Conference sponsor. ... There are dos and don'ts associated with good donation box practice – and this paper provides you with all that helpful practical advice. It covers box design; positioning; management; communications; suggested donation levels; Gift Aid and the Small Donation Scheme; volunteer/staff engagement, and other on-site donation practices.

AIM responds to Museums Association's Code of Ethics consultation

A renewed Code of Ethics for museums should be concerned with ethical principles only, not policy aspirations, AIM says in its submission to the Museums Association's (MA) consultation for changes to its Code of Ethics. "Museums are extremely diverse and the code should identify matters of principle, but not be restrictive about how those principles should be applied by individual museums." The code should be short and accessible to all kinds of museum governing bodies, to lay people (such as trustees) as well as to museum professionals, using non-technical language. AIM suggests three key ethical principles - **Stewardship** (care of collections and knowledge, conservation, long-term responsibilities, sustainability etc; **Access** (accessibility for all and the resulting public benefit), and **Integrity** (staying true to the organisation's values, publicly and internally). AIM says the code needs to be a document that the whole sector endorses and can unite behind, to ensure its effectiveness in helping to meet current challenges, such as the unethical sale of collections. AIM says it needs to be drawn up with a clear understanding of who it is for - all decision-makers in museums (including lay people such as trustees) - and museum organisations should sign up to it through the Accreditation process. AIM believes the new code should be linked to Accreditation as the framework for national standards in museums and galleries. The code should be robust, to withstand quasi-legal challenge, and clear enough that a simple independent arbitration process can elucidate what is considered ethical behaviour from the unethical: the Accreditation panel could act as arbiter for judgements of this kind. Read the full submission [here](#) or in the April issue **AIM Bulletin**.

AIM Training Grants

AIM's [Training Grants](#) help members all over the UK develop the skills and expertise of staff and volunteers, promoting best practice through supporting course fees and travel costs. Priority is given to smaller museums receiving less than 50,000 visitors per year. Awarded year-round in batches, in 2014 nearly £3,500 was distributed: £300 is the maximum award. Museums have benefited from the grants to attend training courses covering oral history, first aid, youth work, maritime heritage, Indesign and career development as well as for the AIM National Conference. Next closing dates are: 10 March for courses between 1 April-30 June; 10 June for courses 1 July-30 September, 10 September for courses 1 October-31 December and 1 December for courses 1 January-31 March.

Money for miles

The Art Fund has launched [Art Miles](#), a new fundraising initiative to get members of the public walking to raise money for their local museum. On 22 March three museums in London, Chiswick House & Gardens, Dulwich Picture Gallery and William Morris Gallery, will host a three mile walk around their surroundings with cultural activities along the way. "With museums under more pressure than ever before, community fundraising has become a vitally important ingredient to ensure that local museums continue to survive and flourish," a spokesman said. Many independents have been involved in sponsored walks for many years of course, but this new venture may offer some fresh ideas.

Discounts for AIM members on ACE Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy courses

AIM members can benefit from a range of discounted training courses created to help museums and arts organisations become more effective in their fundraising. The Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy training programme has been funded through Catalyst by Arts Council England (ACE) to enable people involved in fundraising to become more confident in 'making the ask'. The programme provides useful training opportunities for all levels of expertise from fundraising novices to seasoned professionals. AIM has negotiated discounted rates for AIM members – simply use the promotional code AIMfundraiser when booking. Discounts include money off course fees and free places when booking for four places. An updated programme of workshops and events can be downloaded [here](#).

The [Museums & Resilient Leadership Programme \(MRL\)](#) is a unique course designed to develop new kinds of leading museum professionals. Funded by Arts Council England (ACE) through the West Midlands Museum partnership Major Partner Museum programme, MRL starts in May this year and concludes in March 2016. Led by Black Country Living Museum, it uses an innovative workshop format, including two residentials, site visits and an overseas study visit. Fourteen places are available, with five selected from the East Midlands, five from the West Midlands and four from elsewhere in England. Applications are now open and close on 31 March.

Plans to reduce the term of copyright for **unpublished works** have been dropped by the Government. Parliament had approved the proposal in 2013 but a consultation brought a number of concerns on their potential negative impact on owners of copyright works. Naomi Korn of the Libraries & Archives Copyright Alliance is "deeply disappointed" and says that an important opportunity has been missed. The UK is the only European country with such "restrictive" copyright rules.

[#MuseumWeek](#) is being held for the second year, and worldwide for the first time, on 23-29 March, when museums have the chance to celebrate culture on Twitter. Sign up and encourage others to do the same by retweeting @MuseumWeek.

English Heritage (EH) has named the two chief executives who will take over when the organisation splits into two bodies later this year. Kate Mavor (currently chief executive of the National Trust for Scotland) is to head English Heritage, a new independent charitable trust, which will care for more than 400 historic sites including

Stonehenge, while Duncan Wilson (head of Alexandra Palace & Park, London) will be the first chief executive of Historic England. This will remain a government service, championing England's wider heritage and providing expert advice. Current EH chief executive Simon Thurley is to take up a senior research fellowship at the Institute of Historical Research