



Association of  
Independent  
Museums

# AIM Bulletin

June 2023

Page 3

AIM Connected  
Communities launched

Page 10

Getting recruitment  
right

Page 19

Surgeons' Hall  
Museum profile



## Facing the Past

New Stories, New Audiences  
exhibition opens in Lancaster

# Welcome to AIM Bulletin!

## NLHF's new strategy

Since the National Lottery Heritage Fund was established in 1994, we have become one of the main investors in independent museums across the UK. Our funding has enabled museums to upgrade buildings, develop their collections, engage with new audiences, and develop brilliant work with young people and community partners.

We're enormously proud of the impact that National Lottery players' funds have had in the sector, and we want to ensure that our investment continues to fund the very best heritage projects in future.

That's why in March we announced the Heritage Fund's new 10-year strategy, Heritage 2033, which clarifies our ambitions and will help us to support a huge range of projects that connect people and communities to the UK's heritage.

The centrepiece of the new strategy is the introduction of four new investment principles: Saving Heritage; Protecting the Environment; Inclusion, Access & Participation; and Organisational Sustainability. From next year, applicants for funding will be asked to show how they will deliver against these principles, as part of a new application process which will make it easier for organisations of all types and sizes to apply.

I think there are huge opportunities for the independent museum sector in this strategy. Every museum will be able to use its collection, staff, and sites to create engaging projects that reflect these principles. They offer organisations the opportunity to better manage and present their collections; to improve their buildings and engage the public with

environmental issues; to increase their reach amongst new audiences and communities; and – vitally – to invest in the financial and operational sustainability of museums that have been through so much uncertainty in the last few years.

There are several other features of the new strategy that are likely to be of interest to AIM members as well, such as our commitment to prioritise restoration, conservation and reuse in construction projects, rather than new build. This will enable us to support more projects that save existing built heritage while also reducing the carbon emissions of the sector.

We will also have a higher threshold for funding. Museums and heritage organisations will now be able to apply for funding of up to £10m, replacing the current £5m limit. This recognises the impact of inflation on large scale projects, as well as the substantial impact that major projects can have. We will also continue to fund much smaller projects which often make a big difference in independent museums, including via partnerships such as our existing small grants programme with AIM, New Stories, New Audiences.

2023 is a year of transition for the Heritage Fund as we put the Heritage 2033 strategy into practice. We'll be publishing more detail in the next few months on what it will mean for applicants and how you can put together a successful project in your museum – and we'll be working closely with AIM to keep you up-to-date.

**Alistair Brown**  
Head of Museums, Libraries and Archives Policy  
National Lottery Heritage Fund



## Front cover

Image by Darren Andrew showing artist Lela Harris looking at her work at the opening of the *Facing the Past* exhibition at Judges' Lodgings Museum, Lancaster run by Lancashire County Council. The exhibition, a New Stories New Audiences project, looks at Black Lancastrians living in the area in the 1700s. A series of portraits have been commissioned from artist Lela Harris depicting historic individuals Thomas Anson, Frances Elizabeth Johnson, John Chance, Isaac Rawlinson, 'Ebo Boy' and Molly. See more on page 5.



# AIM Connected Communities – new grants of up to £100,000 announced

## A new AIM programme recognises how museums can help develop, strengthen, and improve community cohesion.

Museums have a unique ability to bring people together, inspiring them through their collections, their treasured local sites, and the ideas they encourage. Our new programme *AIM Connected Communities* seeks to harness this ability and increase community wellbeing in twenty-seven disadvantaged areas in England.

Director of AIM, Lisa Ollerhead

“Our brand-new scheme, *AIM Connected Communities*, seeks to harness the recognised creativity and ingenuity of museums and their important place at the heart of their communities. We’re looking to support projects that help increase wellbeing in deprived areas and give more people the chance to get involved in their local museum and build the meaningful relationships we know are of such benefit.”

### Eligibility

Grants of between £15,000 – £100,000 are available to museums delivering projects to improve community connections through high-quality volunteering opportunities, and/or reducing loneliness and increasing social bonds in the below eligible areas.

The scheme is open to all museums, not solely AIM members, for projects working in the following areas:

- Barnsley
- Barrow-in-Furness
- Blackpool
- Bolsover
- Burnley
- Cannock Chase
- County Durham
- Doncaster
- Fenland
- Great Yarmouth
- Halton
- Hartlepool
- King’s Lynn and West Norfolk
- Kingston upon Hull
- Knowsley
- Middlesbrough
- Rochdale
- Sandwell
- South Tyneside
- Stoke on Trent
- Sunderland
- Tameside
- Tendring
- Thanet
- Torridge
- Wakefield
- Wolverhampton

### Capacity Building

Alongside the grants, museums will participate in a capacity-building programme that will support and upskill staff and volunteers, offer expert guidance through mentorship, help grant recipients build partnerships with local organisations, and ensure the grant-funded projects have a meaningful organisational and local legacy.

### Funders

*AIM Connected Communities* is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Know Your Neighbourhood Fund through Arts Council England.

Other elements of the Know Your Neighbourhood Fund are being delivered via Arts Council England through Creative Lives UK and Libraries Connected. The other strands of the project encompass Heritage Action Zones, UK Community Foundation projects, and National Lottery Community Fund projects.

### Ideal outcomes

We will fund projects with the following outcomes:

Reduced risk of loneliness and increased levels of social connections for participants.

AND/OR

Improved accessibility of high-quality volunteering opportunities.

AND

Improved organisational relationships with local institutions and other partners engaged in similar work e.g., through increased partnerships between delivery bodies; improved use of local assets for communities; convening processes enabling identification and tackling of systemic barriers.

### For more information

All eligibility details, guidance notes and details on how to apply are available now at

[aim-museums.co.uk/aim-connected-communities](http://aim-museums.co.uk/aim-connected-communities)

# News in brief

## New report shows success of Culture Recovery Fund

A new report from Ecorys shows the Government's £1.57 billion package of emergency cultural funding during the pandemic – the Culture Recovery Fund – was delivered efficiently, helping support nearly 220,000 jobs and 5,000 organisations. It highlights that the Fund, delivered in partnership with Arts Council England, the British Film Institute, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and Historic England, helped to increase the income of supported cultural organisations by 140% during the pandemic. That support in turn helped not only to ensure their survival, but enabled supported organisations to bring in audiences in new and innovative ways while closed or whilst social distancing restrictions were in place.

Responding to the report, AIM Chair Andrew Lovett OBE said

“CRF was a significant intervention, and a significant moment, in this country's cultural history and this report rightly recognises and praises its impact and effectiveness. Following the cataclysmic financial shock caused by Covid, and despite the jeopardy we all faced, I was energised by the very positive joint working across the sector on its development. That added sense of purpose this created for us all.

Indeed, whilst museums that received the support still face challenges as they work hard to recover and ensure a good return on investment, we should celebrate this report as an example of what can be achieved when we work together.”

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-and-data-report-for-the-culture-recovery-fund/cultural-recovery-fund-data-report](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-and-data-report-for-the-culture-recovery-fund/cultural-recovery-fund-data-report)

## Introducing our new members database

From June AIM is moving to a new and improved membership database. The new system, provided by Glasgow based firm Very Connect, will enable you to update your own contact details online so we always have the very latest information to contact you on. You can also request multiple contacts for your museum, to ensure no one misses out on any of our support and communications.

You will be able to sign up to future events as well as highlight the elements of AIM's work you're most interested in, helping AIM to better understand the many valued parts of our membership and better target our resources to strengthen our support for you and your organisation. The technology also has potential for us to develop bespoke, member only content in the future.

We'll be rolling out the system in coming weeks and, as ever, if you have any queries on your membership you can contact us on [membership@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:membership@aim-museums.co.uk)

## Free online event - D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people thriving in museum careers Wed 14 June 2023 11.00 – 12.30

Hosted by Curating for Change, this event for anyone working within museums, and D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people who are interested in developing a career in the sector, focuses on retaining disabled talent within the museum workforce.

Speakers include Curating for Change Fellows and Mentors, alongside museums and galleries who have development networks and methodologies to support the career pathways of disabled colleagues. It will



examine the benefit of peer-to-peer mentoring and specialist disability workplace networks, and how this enables disabled colleagues to pursue their career goals.

The Curating for Change programme tackles the serious underrepresentation of D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people within our museums. In hosting Curatorial Fellowships and Traineeships in 20 partner museums across the country, it aims to demonstrate that any museum, whatever its size, type or location, can open up access to D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people within their workforce.

Book at <https://curatingforchange.org/2023/05/10/programme-announced-for-our-june-sector-forum>

## National Archives launches latest grant funding programmes

The National Archives is the sector leadership body for archives in England and works with the archives sector, and with other Government departments and cultural bodies, to encourage sustainable, innovative and resilient archives across the UK.

Since 2006, The National Archives has run grant funding programmes for archives, working alongside several charity partners. In 2022 it awarded over £625,000 to 47 different archives across England and the wider UK and has given nearly £3 million since 2017.

In 2022 it undertook a consultation with over 150 archives and other key



stakeholders, as part of a wider refresh of its approach to funding. It has launched a new vision, and new funding programmes for 2023 – 2024.

Read more at  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/grants-and-funding](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/grants-and-funding)

A launch webinar will be held on Wednesday 14 June at which the results of the consultation will be shared alongside details of new programmes.

Sign up at:  
[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-national-archives-our-grant-programmes-for-2023-2024-tickets-634766302097](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-national-archives-our-grant-programmes-for-2023-2024-tickets-634766302097)

### **Cast of *Call The Midwife* open new gallery and official location tour at the Historic Dockyard**

Cast members from the BBC's popular *Call the Midwife* show visited The Historic Dockyard Chatham in April to re-launch its popular *Call The Midwife Official Location Tour* and unveil a brand new gallery featuring Trixie Franklin's wedding dress, sets, costumes, props, and unique artefacts.

Created in partnership with award-winning television production company Neal Street Productions, the Dockyard's *Call The Midwife Official Location Tour* is the only one of its kind.

Set in the East End of London, many of the outside scenes from the BBC series are filmed at The Historic Dockyard Chatham in Kent.



The newly re-vamped tour encourages visitors to walk in the footsteps of Sister Julianne, Nurse Trixie Franklin, Nancy Corrigan and Dr Turner, to explore the cobbled streets and buildings of the Dockyard which double as 'Poplar', plus view the iconic locations of Grosvenor Hotel and 'Chummy's Hill'.

[thedockyard.co.uk](http://thedockyard.co.uk)

### **Stourbridge Glass Museum opens**

The Duke of Gloucester, cousin to the late Queen Elizabeth II, formally opened the Stourbridge Glass Museum in April after 12 years of fundraising by the charity Trustees of British Glass Foundation.

The museum, the result of significant investment transforming a formerly derelict site, is the new home for the world-renowned Stourbridge Glass collection following the closure of Broadfield House Glass Museum.

Ian Harrabin, Managing Director of developers Complex Development Projects who restored the buildings said:

'It has taken many years of partnership effort to restore this historic glass factory and deliver the Museum, but it has all been worth it. The collection and display are exceptional. The museum is a great asset for the community and keeps the rich Stourbridge glass heritage alive.'

### **Turner Prize winning artist opens exhibition at Judges' Lodgings in Lancaster**

British painter and UCLAN professor Lubaina Himid, who won the Turner Prize in 2017, opened the *Facing the Past* exhibition at Judges' Lodgings Museum, which looks at Black Lancastrians living in the area in the 1700s. A series of portraits have been commissioned from artist Lela Harris depicting historic individuals Thomas Anson, Frances Elizabeth Johnson, John Chance, Isaac Rawlinson, 'Ebo Boy' and Molly.



Lancaster was once the fourth largest slave trading port in the country, and slave ships made 125 slaving voyages from the city to West Africa. Some of the furniture and portraits on display at the museum were bought by Lancaster families involved in the slave trade and the West Indies trade in goods produced by enslaved Africans in the Caribbean, such as sugar and rum.

The portraits are accompanied by a young peoples' exhibition. Local school children from Bowerham Primary School, the Cathedral Catholic Primary School and Dallas Road Primary School have created portraits of 'Ebo Boy', a young African man who escaped from slavery in Heysham, Lancashire.

Enslaved Africans were often given new names to strip them of their identity. The children helped give 'Ebo Boy' a new name to reflect his African heritage and life story, Afamefuna, which means 'My name will not be lost' in the Igbo language.

The exhibition runs to November 5 and is supported by Art Fund, the Association of Independent Museums and National Lottery Heritage Fund.

**In this month's Museums Galleries Scotland update**  
**Gillian Simison, Head of Museum Development highlights**  
**why inclusion is a priority for Scotland's museums and galleries.**

# Prioritising inclusion

We know that there are individuals and communities that face barriers to visiting and working in museums and we know that our museums do not yet fully represent the diversity of voices and experiences of all people living in Scotland. Our museums can only remain relevant if they address this and we will all benefit as they do. Inclusion is therefore one of ten priority areas in the recently launched strategy for Scotland's museums and galleries with an outcome that states: "Museums and galleries across Scotland work with a diverse range of people to support them to tell their

stories, creating an environment where all people feel safe, welcome, and engaged."

There are many ways museums can implement inclusion in their organisations and our website has advice guides, blogs, and training programmes to support this work. The following examples show how museums in Scotland are working to become more inclusive organisations and highlight support available for the sector to develop inclusive practice.

*The McManus:* Dundee's Art Gallery and Museum purchased Ellie Diamond's

'Denise The Menace' outfit that Ellie showcased on RuPaul's Drag Race UK. To get the outfit out on permanent display a bespoke mannequin was made, which showcases the make-up and art of drag. Staff underwent LGBTQ+ training on how to talk about the outfit to audiences. Through this project the museum now has better connections with underrepresented communities and is reflecting more diverse voices.

*Glasgow Life Museums* has taken steps to embed autism acceptance into all areas of its work with a wide range of measures, which include improved

## Tredegar Medieval Brooch

**Found by a Metal Detectorist on the mountain side between Rhymney and Tredegar, a tiny Silver Brooch has provided a tantalising glimpse of medieval life in South Wales.**

With its acquisition by the Town's Museum, it will be displayed for visitors to marvel at and ponder over. Just two and a half centimetres in diameter, the Tredegar brooch is believed to be from the late 13th early 14th Century. The item has been identified as an Annualar Stirrup Brooch.

The external face is decorated for half its circumference with engraved transverse grooves inlaid with niello. The stirrup is decorated with transverse grooves, and the facets of the shaft, which has a diamond cross-section, are engraved with diagonal grooves to create a herring-bone pattern from the front. The backs of the frame and pin are plain.





McManus Collections – Ellie Diamond.

Leisure and Culture Dundee

accessibility by creating pre-visit information guides, implementing early autism opening times and quiet zones, making ear defenders and sensory kits available for people to borrow during opening hours, and adapting workshops to suit the needs of autistic people.

*Changemakers – Our Shared Cultural Heritage* (OSCH) is a youth-led group that gives their views and aspirations to make positive institutional changes in the way Glasgow Life Museums represents communities affected by British colonisation. They are currently working on a Museum

Test that will be available from June for all of the sector to use to analyse exhibitions and activities' representation of colonialism, empire and slavery. OSCH is managed by the British Council in partnership with Glasgow Life, Manchester Museum and UK Youth. It is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Kick the Dust programme.

*Delivering Change* is an MGS project currently in a six-month development phase, funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). It aims to support museums from across Scotland to make changes to their

organisations and programming to help all people to access culture.

Using anti-racism and anti-ableism as the guiding principles, Delivering Change will acknowledge the multiple oppressions that people face, and the interconnected nature of all justice movements. The goal is to start the work necessary for all people to have the freedom to explore and claim their place in Scotland's heritage.

For more information about inclusion in Scotland's museums and galleries email [inform@museumsgalleries.scotland.org.uk](mailto:inform@museumsgalleries.scotland.org.uk)

The brooch was used as an attachment to a cloak, it would have belonged to a male or female traveller walking or riding over the hillside on the medieval routes between Cardiff and Brecon, Abergavenny and Neath and lost, only to be discovered 700 years later.

There were very few settlements in the Middle Ages. It was probably lost by someone traveling through, rather than living in the area. It is precious metal, beyond the pockets of most of the general population at the time, in a relatively poor part of Wales.

Several examples of similar origin have been found in Wales, but it's believed that this example kept in the Tredegar Museum is the best example, having kept its shape and has a really good lustre.

[www.TredegarMuseum.co.uk](http://www.TredegarMuseum.co.uk)





**Sponsors and suppliers are key part of a successful AIM Conference and a valuable source of advice and guidance all year round.**

# Meet this year's conference sponsors

## Headline Conference sponsors: Azets



*Kirsty Murray, Partner at AIM Associate Supplier Azets introduces the support they offer museums.*

We are delighted to be sponsoring this year's AIM conference and look forward to meeting you all in Edinburgh. With more than 3,500 specialists across 165 offices in the UK, we offer a personal, local approach to accounting and business advisory services. If you are looking for peace of mind and expert support, we are ready to help.

Culture is one of the most diverse, dynamic, and important sectors in the UK economy. It is also one of the toughest and most unpredictable. We assist museums of all sizes as well as galleries, artists, actors, musicians, theatres, producers and production companies. We provide strategic advice on business structuring and tax planning, together with day-to-day support on VAT and tax compliance.

Tax can be confusing and is often overlooked, however it is one of our most accessed services by the Culture sector. Our specialist team of tax consultants work with museums to provide assurance and proactive support on VAT, MGETR, Employment tax, R&D tax credits and corporation tax. We always consider the wider tax position and make sure that our assistance is understandable and practical.

**“Culture is one of the most diverse, dynamic, and important sectors in the UK economy. It is also one of the toughest and most unpredictable.”**

We work with museums on topics including:

- Maximising MGETR claims –The Chancellor has temporarily extended the increased rates for Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief for 2 years until 1 April 2025. This is a temporary measure to continue to offset current pressures on these industries and boost investment in our cultural sectors.
- Confirming the tax status of income and activities and the need for subsidiary trading companies. Is a subsidiary really required? Is it the most tax efficient and practical arrangement for you?
- Confirming the employment tax status of volunteers and consultants and benefits given to staff.



- Are you correctly accounting for VAT on grant funding and online activities? Are you providing a service, and could this improve your recovery of VAT?
- The impact of tax on free of charge, in kind and barter arrangements – frequently ignored but they can be used to increase VAT recovery.
- VAT and Duty on the import and export of exhibitions – are simplifications or exemptions available?
- Maximising and monitoring the recovery of VAT on construction and renovation works.

- Ensuring the VAT and gift aid position of membership schemes and sponsorship arrangements are effective.
- Fundraising schemes – maximising income by applying the best tax position.

We will provide an update on all taxes at the conference and are here in person to answer any specific questions you may have.

*If you would like more information on any of the points noted above, or would like to arrange a free, one-to-one meeting at the conference please contact Kirsty Murray on 0131 473 3500 or email at [Kirsty.murray@azets.com](mailto:Kirsty.murray@azets.com)*

[www.azets.co.uk](http://www.azets.co.uk)

## Gold sponsor: Minerva

# MINERVA

We provide executive search and leadership services to clients and individuals who are seeking to make positive impact on society. Our clients span the cultural, social impact, education and allied sectors, and our reach is global. We are characterised by a people-focused approach and commitment to quality.

Our recent clients in the broader cultural sector include Dorset Museum, the Royal Society of Sculptors, Dance City, the Museum of London and National Museums of Wales.

Diversity is central to all of our work and, since we started, over 50 per cent of our appointees have been women and over 15% individuals coming from global majority

backgrounds. Our broader services include leadership development and governance review.

Our ethos is central to all we do. Our team is diverse, honest, approachable, supportive and fun, and this informs all our work and enables us to strive for excellence.

As well as our core work, we support the sectors that we serve and are sponsors of the East London Art Prize as well as art residencies at the Van Gogh House in Brixton.

We're delighted to be involved in the AIM conference this year. We will have team members present throughout the conference and look forward to introducing ourselves to you.

[www.minervasearch.com](http://www.minervasearch.com)

## Gold sponsor: Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers



Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers is proud to be a long-term member of AIM and we are delighted to be sponsoring the conference again this year.

We have been supporting the museums sector for over 30 years and in that time have worked with all manner of museums, visitor attractions and galleries as well as heritage buildings and listed properties. From submarines, watermills, bridges, tall ships, country houses, conservations trusts, art galleries and living

museums, there's not much we haven't insured!

We take pride in the service that we provide and can use our extensive knowledge to advise on the best ways to manage risks within your organisation. We would be delighted to catch up with you at the AIM conference and hear all about your organisation, so do come and find us in the exhibition area!

[www.hayesparsons.co.uk](http://www.hayesparsons.co.uk)

[aim-museums.co.uk/aim-national-conference-2023](http://aim-museums.co.uk/aim-national-conference-2023)



Image by Amy Hirschi on Unsplash

# Top tips for getting the right recruitment result

**Sarah Furness,**  
**partner in the specialist**  
**employment law team at**  
**AIM Associate Supplier**  
**Hay & Kilner shares**  
**advice for improving**  
**your recruitment and**  
**retention.**

Anyone who is trying to recruit at the moment will most likely tell you what a long and difficult process finding the right person for their vacancy has been and this certainly is an issue in the leisure and tourism and charity sectors.

With the unemployment rate at historically low levels, a significant number of people deciding to change direction in the wake of the pandemic and work permit issues relating to

Brexit, businesses in pretty much every sector are facing a struggle to find new recruits with the skills they need and at a cost which is affordable to them.

So, if you're in this situation, here are a few ideas that might help you achieve your recruitment objectives while also avoiding any potential problems and staying on the right side of the law:

*1. Consider how attractive your recruitment process is to applicants.*

Is the application process user friendly, is the job role and the pay and benefits it attracts clear, are you presenting your organisation in a professional manner during the process by being responsive, approachable, and professional? First impressions make lasting impressions!

If you regularly demand full-time working in your job adverts, have a think about whether full-time working in particular is essential or desirable. Many care givers prefer to work shorter days or four days per week and often this can be accommodated with a shift in mindset. Demanding full-time working can also lead to a risk of sex discrimination claims being

*7. Failing to provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates can increase the likelihood of claims that they didn't get the job on discriminatory grounds.*

Keep notes of the shortlisting process, interviews and discussions afterwards, along with application forms, adverts and job descriptions, just in case they're required as evidence in any discrimination claim. However, make sure they are destroyed at some stage to ensure you meet your data protection obligations.

*8. When a new employee does start, make sure they are provided with a full induction and training, and that expectations for their performance are set, agreed, and reviewed.*

Detailed job descriptions can assist here. If expectations aren't being met, use the employee's probationary period to conduct regular reviews and clearly outline the improvements that need to be made and by when and provide full support.

Failing an employee's probationary period should be the last resort so invest the time during the probationary period to make sure the time and money you spent investing in the recruitment process is not wasted!

**“ With the unemployment rate at historically low levels, a significant number of people deciding to change direction in the wake of the pandemic and work permit issues relating to Brexit, businesses in pretty much every sector are facing a struggle to find new recruits. ”**

*2. Think about ways to attract candidates to you.*

Of course, pay and benefits are important, but are you clearly advertising your business's approach to training, career development and progression? Your approach to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) and agile ways of working are also important now to many job seekers.

*3. Make sure you fully understand and act on your recruitment and equal opportunities policies and shape your recruitment process within their boundaries.*

Job applicants can pursue discrimination claims if they are unsuccessful. Particular attention should be paid to the need to make reasonable adjustments for disabled candidates with questions about a candidate's health or attendance record usually being prohibited. All employees involved in the recruitment process should have undergone equal opportunities training and getting a legal opinion on any issues about which they're not sure makes great sense.

*4. Most job adverts/descriptions ask for very specific qualifications, experience and personal qualities, which some candidates might find too prescriptive.*

Make sure to distinguish between what's essential and what's desirable.

pursued as employment tribunals readily accept more women than men provide caring responsibilities in their personal lives.

*5. Having an equitable and rigid assessment process, where candidates are asked the same questions which are testing and relevant to the job, is essential, while involving two or more people in the assessment process will help ensure objective decisions are reached at its end.*

Consider giving the questions to candidates in advance as this is often beneficial for candidates who are neurodiverse or whose mental health may mean they find interviews problematic. Asking people to think on the spot is rarely a good test of their true abilities.

*6. However impressive a candidate is, and however keen you are for them to start work, make sure that you follow up on their references to confirm they are everything they say they are.*

Job offers should be conditional until references are verified along with other mandatory checks such as right to work checks and often, DBS checks. If job offers aren't conditional and you withdraw a job offer, you will probably have to pay the notice period referred to in the offer letter.

Our clients are increasingly seeking advice on recruitment and retention alongside a range of other HR and employment law issues that our team specialise in and provide training for.

As an AIM member, you are entitled to 30 minutes of free advice from a member of our employment team so if you do have any queries, please head to our dedicated members page –

[www.hay-kilner.co.uk/aim-members-hr-assistance](http://www.hay-kilner.co.uk/aim-members-hr-assistance)



**AIM administers grants including AIM Arts Scholars Brighter Day Grant funded by the Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars Charitable Trust and AIM's Conservation and Collections Care and Collection Audit Schemes, funded by the Pilgrim Trust.**

# AIM grants case studies

## AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Audit

### Ushaw Historic House, Chapels & Gardens

Ushaw Historic House, Chapels & Gardens holds a significant mixed collection of religious artefacts, textiles, fine art, furniture, a library and archive. From 1808-2011 it operated as a Roman Catholic Seminary, the former St Cuthbert's College, but on the seminary's closure the trust has re-invigorated the site into a multipurpose heritage attraction. Thus, it has only started to organise its historic collections to museum standards in this past decade. Much has been achieved in this time, but the opportunity presented by the AIM Pilgrim Trust grants to fund a collections audit has significantly helped Ushaw plan the next stages of our collections care.

The process of applying was straightforward and staff from AIM could not be more helpful. The results of the audit have helped us confirm what our successes are and identify the priorities for collections care going forward. In particular, it has helped form a strategic plan for the set-up of our permanent collections' stores.

The audit definitely achieved the expected outcomes. It provided specific advice about different areas of our collections such as store layouts, storage options, cleaning, preventative conservation and emergency planning, and subsequent information about where to source the materials required to achieve the desired standard of collections care.

The conservator Victoria Stevens was a pleasure to work with and provided excellent advice for Ushaw's unique challenges. We will continue to maintain contact with Victoria. Her knowledge and experience was of huge benefit to the organisation, her previous experience of working with religious artefacts in collections meant that she had a grasp of the complications surrounding the care of such complex items.

**Claire Marsland, Curator**



Chapel Holy Family at Ushaw Historic House.

## AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Care Audit



Expert conservation advice at The Stained Glass Museum.

### The Stained Glass Museum

The audit was invaluable – in the history of the museum's existence we have never had a specialist conservator look at the collection in such a sustained and holistic way. The time spent with the conservator, Sarah Jarron, looking at concerns, and the clear and comprehensive report provided has given us a clear overview of the state of the collection, and specific structural and environmental concerns, with recommendations for improvements we can make in the short-term and some longer-term objectives. The audit will directly feed into a review of our collections care policies and practice. Our experience of working with Sarah was excellent. She was clear and thorough and her prior experience working with stained glass in both cathedral and museum contexts meant that she had a special understanding of our collection and the issues it faces in its current environmental context.

We are especially grateful to AIM and the Pilgrim Trust for making these grants available, and for enabling us to access an ICON accredited conservator who specialises in stained glass conservation, as this has meant the grant has had a greater impact and relevance.

**Jasmine Allen, Director/Curator**

## AIM Pilgrim Trust Remedial Conservation Grant

### Chiddingstone Castle £3,372

#### *Conservation of Charles I leather bottle*

Included in the Castle's Stuart and Jacobite collection is a large bottle in the shape of Charles I, constructed from various tanned and decorated leather materials. His hat is removable, revealing the neck of the bottle. The remedial conservation scheme has enabled us to conserve, stabilise, and repair the leather bottle so that it can be displayed to the public. The bottle has been cleaned, treated for red rot, stabilised, and strengthened using Japanese paper and archival board. The arms have been re-attached and splits and tears to the leather have been repaired.

The project has achieved everything we expected. A key factor in the success of this project was the opportunity to work with the Leather Conservation Centre. Their specialism

in historic leather has made it possible to transform the condition and appearance of the bottle. The Leather Conservation Centre also built a bespoke storage box that the bottle will be stored in after it has been on display.

The box opens on either side so that the bottle can be accessed safely. Recommendations for display, handling, and storage were included in the treatment report.

The appearance of the bottle has been transformed and its condition improved significantly so that it can now be displayed for members of the public to view and enjoy. The project has been important for the mission of the Denys Eyre Bower Bequest – to preserve Bower's collections in his home. We know that he lived at the castle, he displayed the bottle to visitors as an important object from his Stuart and Jacobite collection. This grant has enabled us to bring the bottle back out on display once more.

We were very grateful to be able to request further funding from AIM Pilgrim Trust after the assessment of the bottle revealed further issues that were not previously apparent.

**Naomi Collick, Curator**



Charles I bottle back on display at Chiddingstone Castle.



## AIM Pilgrim Trust Collections Care Grant

### The David Livingstone Birthplace Museum

**£2,575**

#### *Supporting collections care during refurbishment and reinterpretation*

The AIM collection care grant has allowed the David Livingstone Birthplace to purchase necessary equipment and develop a sustainable approach to the conservation and management of their collections. Despite setbacks caused by Covid-19, the grant enabled the procurement of various materials such as storage containers, packing materials, a conservation Hoover, brushes, PPE, pest traps, and dehumidifiers. These materials have helped to move the collection back on site and maintain its care, as well as facilitate an object rotation and cleaning program for volunteers since October 2022.

When thinking about the collections move specifically, we wanted to try and obtain materials that could be reused. Rather than cardboard boxes we selected crates. These have now been used on multiple occasions: the move and installation of display items, the move of reference library, the move of the remaining collection back to site, the move of items on display for rotation and conservation. We also bought removal blankets that have

been used a number of times rather than dispose jiffy or bubble wrap each time.

Long-term and new volunteers have also benefited from the fund, gaining skills development, and multiple intergenerational projects have been facilitated. Although changes in staff and social distancing restrictions created gaps in managing the fund and its aims, the purchased materials have been instrumental in maintaining the collections' care to a high standard. Overall, the grant has had a significant benefit and legacy for the museum, enabling us to improve collections' care and provide opportunities for volunteers to gain valuable skills.

**Rachael Smith, Collections Manager**



Object cleaning at David Livingstone Birthplace Museum.

## AIM Arts Scholars Brighter Day Grant

### Bassetlaw Museum

**£6,083.60**

#### *Conservation of the textile collection*

Thanks to the funding from AIM and Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars Charitable Trust, this project has enabled us to kick start an important textile conservation programme which had stalled due to Covid.

This project gave us dedicated staff time to work on the collection and to recruit, train and support a team of volunteers to carry out the work so desperately needed. 11 volunteers signed up before we had

formally advertised the opportunity. Current volunteers were present and previous colleagues as well as those who had expressed an interest in volunteering in general and left their details. Others came via word of mouth or learning about the project when they visited the museum.

The grant also heavily supplemented our budget and helped us purchase materials needed to undertake the work such as archival boxes, acid free tissue, plastic sheeting, vacuum cleaners and a freezer. The number of participants meant we were not going to have enough equipment, but we found instructions on how to customise a conventional vacuum cleaner!

"Having time to look in depth at one aspect of the collection has been very beneficial. I have learnt a lot about freezing textiles to different temperatures, particularly when they have parts of other organic materials. I also studied various ways of packing. I have gained more experience of organising and working with volunteers as well as practical skills such as adapting ordinary vacuum cleaners for use with textiles." Katarzyna Wosiak, Collections Officer.

"The project has inspired me to learn

more about the changing fashions of Victorian Britain as well as becoming more aware of the social and political history associated with textile production. I have also discovered that YouTube is a very useful resource in terms of content related to conservation created by the V&A and Royal Palaces and also in the reconstruction and wearing of garments by Prior Attire and others." Samantha Glasswell, Curator.

"Vacuuming textiles was a little daunting at first but we are becoming more confident with time and practice. I have also enjoyed the conservation videos on YouTube." L. Rimmington, volunteer.

The next phase is for costume exhibitions to begin again, and the volunteers will play a crucial part.

In addition to the original outcomes, we have created a small temporary exhibition about museum conservation including a "Bugs and Bunnies" children's trail for the Easter holidays. We are looking at opportunities to link in with SPUR, which will involve giving wider physical access to the collections and attracting funding for remedial conservation of some garments.

**Samantha Glasswell, Curator**



Volunteers at Bassetlaw working on a pom jacket.



# Spark! leadership programme reopens this Autumn

## Strengthen your professional and personal resilience with our programme of support and development for independent museum leaders.

AIM's Spark! programme enables you to share your challenges and opportunities with a small peer group of museum directors and senior leaders. It is perfect if you are looking to reignite your creativity, re-energise your teams and face the future for your organisation with confidence.

### Who is the Spark programme for?

This is a programme for those who are motivating and leading the overall team in their museum. We particularly welcome people with a significant leadership role, including individual museum directors and other senior leaders.

As the programme is funded by Arts Council England, priority will be given to applicants in England.

### What benefits does the programme offer?

The pandemic, swiftly followed by a cost-of-living crisis, has challenged the sector, and had a marked impact on our organisations, our teams and ourselves. As a museum leader you will have been under particular pressures and stresses over the last 18 months.

Guided by experienced consultants, this targeted programme of support and professional development is designed to enable you to pause, reflect and plan. Participants are expected to continue reflecting on their practice between sessions. It is also designed to be a safe space to raise difficult issues and gain ongoing support from a network of peers – which will be part of the legacy of participating.

### Delivery features

The programme is delivered online to a cohort of around 12 participants and includes:

- 3 x 3 hour Action Learning Sets (two groups of six)
- 2 x 2 hour workshops to cover topics selected by you. We will work with you to shape the workshop content and adjust the programme to fit the varied needs, roles, and backgrounds of participants.

You will also be offered two, individual, hour-long coaching sessions.

### When is it?

The first sessions will take place in September 2023.

### What next

To register your interest and find out more email Margaret Harrison, Head of Programmes at AIM on [margaret@aim-museums.co.uk](mailto:margaret@aim-museums.co.uk) with:

- Your name, role, and organisation
- What you think will be the key challenges of the next 6 – 12 months
- What you hope to get out of the programme, both personally and for your organisation
- What the most challenging situation for you and your organisation has been in the last 18 months
- How many staff your museum has
- Whether your funding been cut, grown or stabilized in the last 18 months

Participants are asked to make £100 contribution towards the programme, which will be invoiced once their place has been confirmed.

### Feedback from previous participants

*"I would unreservedly recommend the Spark! programme. The programme leaders were excellent and the opportunity to network with peers was inspiring."*

*"The programme exceeded my expectations. I cannot thank AIM enough for giving me the opportunity to take part. I was dealing with difficult issues and the support given through the programme helped me to believe that I could come out the other side."*

*"I think many leaders of museums/heritage would benefit."*

*"It was extremely useful, relevant and well led."*

## Consultancy

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Susanna Denniston, Chairman, Salisbury Museum

*"Hilary was great to work with as her focus was on pragmatic structured solutions"*



Ian Walker, then Chairman  
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## Did you know . . .

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**Martin Howard** from **Associate Suppliers Hayes Parsons Insurance Brokers** responds to the upcoming conference theme.

# The Power of Possibility

Whilst chatting to a new museum client recently, we were heartened that they could see how insurance brokers are able to bring a genuine “can do” attitude to solving the varied issues surrounding museum buildings, collections, staff, volunteers, and general activities. With the theme of the 2023 AIM Conference in mind it’s good to articulate some of these possibilities.

## We can help you network

Firstly, you are rarely alone in an issue you face. If we know you have a specific challenge or task, we can often link you up to other clients in similar situations.

## We can create better insurer outcomes for you

Not all brokers are equal. Those, including Hayes Parsons, that operate in the museum sector are often well thought of by insurers because they know we are not dealing with just one or two museums, but that this area is a key specialism.

## We help larger clients with insurer benefits

It’s often possible for larger museums to be helped by their broker when it comes to three key areas. Firstly, fixed rate agreements normally over three years typically help keep premium rises to a minimum at renewal. Secondly, some insurers will add low claim rebates into their agreements, so if you have no claims or low claims, the museum may well be refunded some premium following the next renewal. Finally, it’s worth mentioning risk bursaries. Insurers may be open to giving you a sum towards a key risk improvement that will in their mind improve your risk rating, and thereby lower your chance of claiming.

## We help prevent claims, and support you when you do claim

No matter what size of museum you are, we help clients with matters that they themselves can review to prevent common claims. And if a claim does happen, our in-house claims specialist team will support you throughout the process.

## We signpost on key issues

Sometimes there are professional services that you may wish to be signposted to. We do this a lot on the rebuild

values of buildings, and we also point the way to risk management consultants for those that wish to explore this further.

*For a review of your own museum’s insurance arrangements please do get in touch using the below contact details, or come and catch up with us at the AIM Conference in Edinburgh!*

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## Leadership and board recruitment

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When it comes to allowing pet dogs in museums, it can be tricky to strike a balance between being welcoming to four-legged visitors and the potential disruption that small animals will bring.

# Dogs in museums?

To help AIM members considering their dog policy, we asked the AIM Twitter network for their input, raising the below points to consider when forming your own policy. This feedback won't tell you what to do, but should help the decision making in your organisation.

And to note – this isn't about support dogs, which are allowed by law, but about pet dogs.

- Consider the nature of your venue and collection. Museums with outside space are more likely to be suited to being dog friendly, for example.
- Your audience should be key to the museum's policy; what will help you improve access and inclusion for under-represented groups? Audience analysis and a SWOT analysis will show the potential of being dog-friendly for your museum.
- Have you considered the views of those that really don't like dogs, as well as those that really do?

- Think about the potential impact on staff and volunteers; are they supportive of dogs in the museum? Or not?
- Consider a weekly dog day so that those with phobias and allergies can avoid it.
- Consider allowing dogs in just certain areas of the venue, if some areas are more suited to four-legged visitors than others.
- Make sure the policy is clearly communicated to visitors so they can plan their visit. This can be trickier where your museum is part of an outdoor site where dogs are allowed outside but not inside, but make sure that front of house colleagues are confident to explain the policy if questioned.
- Think about how you and the front of house team would deal with any poorly behaved dogs (or the owners who don't have an acceptable level of control over their dog). Consider the small print of any policy so you are clearly welcoming well behaved dogs under control.

## Examples of dog friendly museums

Those AIM members that do allow dogs tend to be outdoor venues, or venues with outside space, and there are often areas where dogs are not permitted.

**West Highland Museum** – We are situated in the heart of the Outdoor Capital of the UK in Fort William with lots of furry visitors, so are definitely dog friendly!

**Wheal Martyn** – We are totally dog friendly in every part of the museum. As we have lots of outdoor space and it never gets too congested – it works for us. We keep treats by the desk for the pooches too.

**Stained Glass Museum** – It's a no brainer for us. Dog owners are so happy to be able to visit with their four-legged friends and we count them too!

**Museum of the Broads** – Dogs are very welcome – we are on one level plus they can go on the boat trips with our special lifejackets. We have dog parking rings on our benches and provide water for them. We want to be inclusive & many visitors have dogs plus we have a great picnic area.

**Beamish Museum** – allow dogs on to site, but grounds only. They're not allowed in period exhibits or catering outlets. It's always a very tough balance trying to be dog friendly!





**Introducing our venue for AIM National Conference 2023.**

# Surgeons' Hall Museums

Surgeons' Hall Museums are owned by The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) and consist of the Wohl Pathology Museum, the History of Surgery Museum, The Dental Collection and the Body Voyager galleries.

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh was founded in 1505, with the Museums' collections growing significantly from 1699 after 'natural and artificial curiosities' were publicly sought. In the 1800s, the original museum expanded to include the remarkable collections of the surgeon Sir Charles Bell and anatomist, John Barclay. The museum has been in its current home in the A-Listed building designed by William Playfair on Nicolson Street since 1832.

Originally developed as a teaching museum for students of medicine, Surgeons' Hall Museum's fascinating collections, including bone and tissue specimens, surgical instruments and works of art, have been open to the public since 1832, making Surgeons' Hall one of Scotland's oldest museums. The Wohl Pathology Museum is also home to one of the largest and most historic collections of surgical pathology in the world.

With support from the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2014, the Museums underwent a major redevelopment called The Lister Project. The Lister Project was an initiative by RCSEd that focused on the College's heritage and helped create a new and enhanced public space within the Museums to inform and share with

visitors the historical journey of surgery and its advances.

The History of Surgery Museum explores Edinburgh's unique contribution to surgical practice. It also highlights the College's connection with Joseph Bell, the man credited as the inspiration for Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, as well as tracing the history of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh from its inception in 1505 to the present day. Visitors also learn about the notorious murderers Burke and Hare and discover how dissection was used as a punishment.

In 2021 the museum underwent further expansion when it opened its Body Voyager galleries. Body Voyager explores the rise in robotic and computer-assisted surgery. Surgeons' Hall have worked with several surgical companies including Intuitive Surgical Inc, Freehand Surgical, Stryker and B, Braun to showcase the advancement in equipment used by surgeons, from the first pieces of robotic equipment used in the operating theatre to some of the most up-to-date, high tech instruments in use today. Body Voyager gives visitors the opportunity to use one of the most advanced pieces of robotic equipment in the surgical world for themselves. Intuitive Surgical Inc have kindly

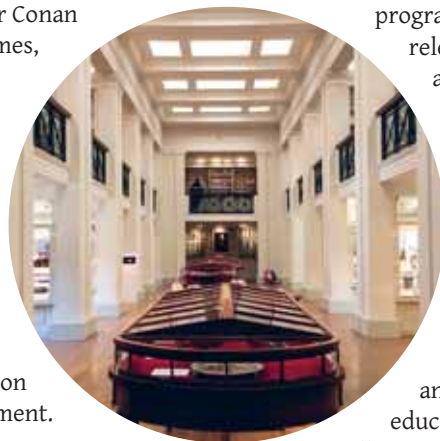
donated a da Vinci Surgeon Console with a bespoke programme that will allow users to experience what it is like to use the equipment.

The core team at Surgeons' Hall is fairly small, with 15 members of staff. The museum has a successful events programme which is released quarterly and includes lectures, art workshops, dissections, performances and walking tours. The learning team offers several workshops for both primary and secondary schools and welcomes education groups from all over the world! As an

independent museum we rely on admission charges from tickets for our income. In 2013, the last full year before the refurbishment, the museum had 35,785 visitors. However, the visitor numbers have boomed since the refurbishment – 2022 was the busiest year ever with 88,105 visitors! The start of 2023 has seen more record-breaking visitor numbers and, if this rise continues, 2023 will be the busiest year to date!

[museum.rcsed.ac.uk](http://museum.rcsed.ac.uk)

**Pictured top:** History of Surgery Museum – A section of the History of Surgery Museum. **Above:** Lower Pathology – A view of the lower level of the Wohl Pathology gallery.



**Dr Clare Mills, Charity Finance Group, explains how, despite its rise, AI hasn't yet replaced human intelligence when it comes to preventing cyber-attacks, and shares tips on what you can do to improve resilience.**



# Human intelligence is your best defence against cyber-attack

Image by Franck on Unsplash

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has published the latest Cyber Security Breaches Survey which shows some reduction over the past year in the number of identified cyber-attacks against charities. However, cyber-attacks – whether or not these lead to data and/or financial loss, and other business interruption – remain a significant concern, and should still be firmly on any organisation's risk radar.

According to the survey report, "24% of charities overall recall any breaches or attacks from the last 12 months" but in larger organisations, with annual income of £500,000 or more, the figure rises to 56%. The overall percentage has fallen (from 30% last year to 24% this year) but for those higher income organisations the level has remained the same.

Of the charities aware they had been targeted, around one third had experienced a successful attack and suffered a loss. Most successful attacks came through phishing (85%) with unauthorised access or online takeovers (hacking) and malware attacks both at around 7%. Ransomware was behind 4% of attacks and Denial of Service (DoS) at 1% – so they do happen.

At CFG, we have a 'report and remind' approach to phishing emails, with staff regularly passing on suspicious emails to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and then reminding everyone to be alert, using our Teams channels. In the last year, more than 7.1 million emails have been reported using this address and, as a result, the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has removed over 220,000 scam URLs (as of March 2023).

The common features we find in scam emails are authority and urgency. Almost all purport to be from our chief executive – authority – and ask for an immediate response by a reply to the email – urgency. Our human intelligence helps us spot, think and challenge the authenticity of these messages.

It's human intelligence, too, that helped us stay safe when we had a couple of emails to our HR department, allegedly from members of staff asking for their bank account details to be changed ahead of the next payroll run. So, what can we do to maintain our human alertness? NCSC's Exercise in a Box tools can help your people find out how resilient your organisation is to cyber-attacks and practise your response in a safe environment. There's a range of scenarios focused on different potential areas for attack.

Some of the exercises can be completed in under half an hour, and you can choose different scenarios for different teams of people. The report generated at the end of each exercise helps identify areas where you are potentially vulnerable, and the discussions also reveal how well-informed your people are about what protection is already in place.

CFG and AIM have a unique partnership, meaning AIM members can enjoy all of CFG's member benefits. Register your organisation with CFG and explore the Knowledge Hub, which is packed with useful articles, guides and resources. For cybersecurity, take a look at Act now to plug digital capability gaps, with useful tips and thought-provoking questions to help you plan how to stay safe.

And you can join CFG's network of arts charities and museums at our next webinar on Information and Cyber Security, where we will hear from Adapta Consulting on best practice and practical tips and guidance around risks in relation to staff, volunteers, sub-contractors and suppliers – as well as time to discuss your issues with people from other arts and culture organisations who are likely to be facing the same challenges as yourself.

[cfg.org.uk/aim](https://cfg.org.uk/aim)

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