

Section 1: A Vision for Museum Education

Our vision for the new Millennium is of museums inspiring and supporting a learning society as they reach out to the widest possible range of audiences.

England is extremely fortunate in having more than 2,000 museums in cities, towns and villages across the country, a rich resource that is an indication of the breadth, diversity and vitality of our cultural landscape. With collections and exhibitions of outstanding quality covering an extraordinary range of subjects, our museums have a unique capacity to provide us with opportunities for appreciation, reflection and learning. The special circumstance of learning in the presence of real objects inspires curiosity and creative thinking, and gives museums the potential to develop distinctive and meaningful educational experiences.

The Government believes that education is central to the role of museums today and recognises that many museums are already providing learners with an excellent service, sometimes on limited resources. This document applauds the museums that are fostering what the Prime Minister has called 'the learning habit' and aims to encourage others and those in the wider world of education to work together for the broader educational benefit of the communities they serve.

There are numerous examples of museums that are developing innovative learning activities and the case studies in this document describe some inspirational examples of good practice. They demonstrate how, through their education programmes, museums can help to realise the common objectives of the DfEE and the DCMS in promoting social inclusion, fostering

Case Study: 2000 & Counting in

Through its Museums and Galleries Education Programme, the DfEE is supporting 63 initiatives that are promoting better links between museums and schools. The 2000 & Counting project run by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council is led by the Education Department and the Council's Arts and Heritage Service, which consists of the Art Gallery, Local Studies/Archive Service and the Museum Service. The Museum Service has no education staff at present and is run on an outreach and appointment basis, although it operates an extremely successful loans box scheme and school visits to the Local Studies Library and Gallery are actively encouraged. The project is initially targeting the three schools in Rochdale with the greatest need.

This project represents the first step in formulating strategies to address this gap in provision and aims to motivate and enable teachers to use the collections effectively both in the classroom and on visits to the Arts & Heritage Centre outside school hours. Didsbury School of Education and Rochdale Borough Chamber are also involved in the training side of the project and the partnership approach is a crucial element of the project. With no dedicated gallery or museum education service, advocacy and motivation are the key issues in enabling the collections to be used for teaching.

2000 & Counting is an imaginative response to the National Numeracy Strategy in primary education and demonstrates how collections can be used for teaching across the curriculum, not just in history and art. The activities planned as part of the project include: compiling resource packs and loans boxes for

creativity and developing the aptitudes, aspirations and abilities of children and adults.

Many of the case studies also show the imaginative and hands-on activities now undertaken in museums. These activities have immense value in enthusing and motivating those taking part and promoting their self-confidence, knowledge and skills. In doing so, museums demonstrate how they can meet many of the themes described in the report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (*All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*). Increasingly, the workplace requires people to think creatively, to apply creative thinking to complex management and technical problems, and we need to provide the talent base for our creative industries – the media, the performing arts, film and design. Museums are themselves centres of creativity

whose collections and exhibitions are often designed by staff trained in one of the creative industries and whose talents then inspire others working in the creative sphere or who aspire to join.

New types of organisation are evolving to develop the potential of learning in museums. Science centres, children's museums and other such innovative bodies that are attracting new audiences with creative and novel means of communication have inspired thousands of visitors to consider thought-provoking concepts and knowledge. The Government sees a close parallel between the educational impact of these new centres and traditional museums.

The power of museums to inspire learners can operate in many different educational contexts. For example, museums can:

Rochdale

use in the classroom, INSET courses in numeracy and methods of learning from objects, maths assemblies in schools, a family numeracy programme, displays in the Art Gallery and Local Studies Library, maths and activity days at the Arts and Heritage Centre for all schools in the borough. The programme demonstrates the strategic approach of the project, which has, partly through necessity, had to look beyond traditional ways of delivering museum and gallery education.

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- enhance delivery of the National Curriculum by providing new and varied ways of developing literacy, numeracy, PSHE and other subjects;
- make available a rich storehouse of unique objects and interpretative materials that can bring classroom teaching to life;
- offer opportunities for children to learn about their local communities and assist schools in their responsibility to deliver Citizenship from 2002;
- set up innovative and exciting activities for children in particular subjects to develop key skills such as communication and team-working, and foster their creative abilities;
- provide a study resource for students in formal education and adults with special interests engaged in independent learning;
- encourage adults who find formal education intimidating to take the first step on a learning journey;
- give families and individuals an opportunity to take part in informal learning activities in a relaxed environment;
- appeal to previously excluded sectors of society and under-motivated pupils or adult learners through exciting, open-ended learning situations;
- reach out into communities to develop new services and audiences.



Case Study:

In 1997 a local studies group from Benwell in Newcastle visited the Museum of Antiquities. The group was amazed to discover that Benwell had once been an important and cosmopolitan place and that a large number of significant artefacts had survived as evidence of this. As one of them said, 'Benwell really was once the Centre of the Universe.' Inspired by their visitor, the museum staff determined to make the past glories of Benwell more widely known.

The museum decided that it would build on its expertise with the Internet and work with

However, at present the provision of educational services by museums is patchy, ranging from the outstanding to the mediocre. There is no apparent justification for this arbitrary pattern of distribution. Good provision enables teachers to use cultural resources to enrich the curriculum. Sadly, museum education, where it is provided, is too often seen by teachers as an optional extra and is not integrated into the wider learning process. However, there is a will to do more and to do better. Within the world of education, as well as that of museums, there is a strong desire for museums to play a key part in the learning society of this new century.

Harnessing the capacity of museums to enhance learning means developing relevant and interesting programmes that will attract audiences from both the formal educational community and the public at large.

To do this effectively and fully means putting education at the heart of every museum, whatever its size, origin and ethos. This will inevitably have a significant impact on museums' outlook, priorities, planning, presentation and facilities. All these need to reflect the importance of learning, and education needs to feature prominently in mission statements, strategies and forward plans. Stewardship, care and access will continue to be priorities for museums, but this does not mean a choice can be made between stewardship and education. The goal must be stewardship in order to enable present and future generations to appreciate and learn from the objects in museums' care.

The Government has pledged to raise educational standards across the board. The DCMS includes among its objectives the development of the educational

Benwell – Centre of the Universe

local schoolchildren to develop a web exhibition. Children in Class 7H1 from Westgate Community College in Benwell were asked to choose objects for the exhibition and write about their reasons for picking them. They then developed their ICT skills by preparing material about the objects they had chosen for display on the Internet. Three councillors from Newcastle City Council who had been involved from the start wrote an introduction that put the exhibition in its social context. The museum staff produced the final display and, in association with the County Archaeologist, added further information about the sites and objects.

The project has produced a resource that not only is a teaching aid for present and future schoolchildren of the locality, but also brings the history of a small suburb to the attention of a much wider audience. All

the participants gained a sense of connection with the history of their area, and were introduced to ways in which a museum collection can bring the past to life.

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The Benwell Centre of the Universe site is accessible through the Museum of Antiquities website
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/antiquities/>

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potential of the nation's cultural and sporting resources; educational objectives already feature strongly in the funding agreements between DCMS and the museums it directly sponsors. The DfEE aims to ensure that all young people develop the skills, attitudes and personal qualities that will give them a secure foundation in a rapidly changing world; it also wishes to enable people from all age-groups to continue learning in order that they may enhance their lives, contribute to society, improve their employability and develop the skills the economy needs.

With these goals in mind, the Government wants to see every museum give a high priority to their educational work. It believes that all museums, whatever their size and type, can become centres for learning and powerful educational resources. Small museums as well as large ones can and should work

with existing and potential audiences to identify their interests and prepare appropriate activities. The challenge is to ensure that this engagement takes place so that the learning potential of all museums can be enjoyed by the audiences they serve.

For change to be achieved, museums themselves must share this vision. The education sector too needs to play its part by recognising the unique dimension that museums can bring to the experience of learning. Teachers and others in the world of education can help museums shape educational programmes so that they become outward-looking and inclusive centres of knowledge. Realising this vision requires action and initiatives to focus on seven key areas:

objectives –

museums need to embrace education as a core objective in the development of mission

statements, policies and action plans; similar formal recognition of the unique educational role of museums must be reflected in the educational community's policies, plans and mission statements;

standards –

universal standards for the delivery of education services need to be adopted;

partnerships –

museums and users should explore and exploit the benefits of working together;

resources and capability –

core resources should be allocated and prioritised according to capability and demand by museums and educational concerns in order to maintain and develop services;

training –

appropriate training should be provided for those entering the museum and education professions and for those already established in their professions;

information and communication technology –

the vital role that technology can play in enhancing gallery displays, providing remote access, developing new high-quality digitised material and building networks must be exploited; and

research –

evidence of the exciting work already happening needs to be collated and areas where education provision requires development should be identified.

An overview of current activity is given in Section 2 of this document, and a more detailed discussion on each of these seven areas is set out in Section 3.

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Section 2: What Has Happened So Far?

A great deal has already happened as a result of this Government's programmes, the contributions of other bodies and museums' own initiatives.

DCMS has:

- established a new national body, Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, to provide strategic advice on the development of these sectors;
- since April 1999 enabled all children, and from April 2000 all those over 60, to gain free admission to those national museums and galleries it funds that were previously charging for entry;
- set up under the Museums and Galleries Commission two new challenge funds of £1/2 million each to support education and ICT in museums;
- funded educational projects through its £15m designated museums challenge fund;
- contributed £85,000 to the 24 Hour Museum, a website providing easy access to information on all museums and galleries in Britain;
- published two documents to strengthen and encourage the educational work of museums: the second edition of *A Common Wealth: Museums in the Learning Age* by David Anderson, Head of Education at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and *Museums for the Many*, a code of practice on access for national museums and galleries.

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Case Study: BBC

BBC Education's History 2000 project is drawing people into lifelong learning by building on their passion for the past. It is not just inspiring programme audiences to embark on a voyage of discovery; it is also giving them the power to create their own maps!

The first step in the learning journey is the wide range of innovative programmes on TV and radio. These cover many aspects of the past, but there is a strong emphasis on local, family and social history. Beyond the programmes is a huge website with further subject material, interactive games, 3D models of long-vanished buildings, comparative timelines and much more. Next comes the network of partnerships that links

DfEE has:

- awarded a grant to the 24 Hour Museum to begin mapping museum provision against the National Curriculum programmes of study;
- funded **engage**, the National Association for Gallery Education, to promote new links between galleries and schools;
- launched its own Museums and Galleries programme, to which it has allocated £2.5m over 3 years to put in place educational programmes and facilities that will benefit curriculum-related learning throughout the country;
- announced additional funding of £650,000 for this programme to enable The Learning Circuit to bring together ICT and museum education in exciting and innovative ways;
- granted £140,000 to fund 17 pathfinder projects for the £180 million Out of School Learning initiative run by the New Opportunities Fund, together with the video *Put Yourself in the Picture* produced by **engage**. These demonstrate how museums can be involved in study support work;
- awarded £80,000 to Kid's Clubs Network to help establish Centres for Curiosity and Imagination, based on the successful children's museums in the United States;
- organised a major conference on lifelong learning for directors of museums and key decision-makers;
- supported BBC Education's History 2000 initiative, which directs viewers of history programmes to museums and heritage sites across the country.

History 2000

the BBC with the work of museums, libraries and heritage organisations all over the country. Over 1,200 partner organisations have created events and activities around the programmes, information about which is publicised on the website and via an automated events phone line.

The launch event in January demonstrated how the project works. The popular BBC2 archaeology series 'Meet the Ancestors' had been covering a dig by the Museum of London at a site in Spitalfields, and was on hand when the exciting and unexpected find of an intact Roman sarcophagus was made. A special programme on the interpretation and conservation of its contents, the well-preserved body of a high-ranking Roman lady, was complemented on the website by insights into her life and times, including a 'virtual tour' of a Roman building. Both the website and the events line provided details of collections and events around the country where people could explore Roman history

further. The final signpost in the journey was the link to **learnirect**, which gave information on local courses and opportunities for study.

Although the project is still in its early days, there is evidence that some local events have been better attended as a result of History 2000. The website is averaging 250,000 hits per week. The important thing is that the project is connecting programme-makers and organisations that share an ambition to bring history to life with the result that a richer and more educational experience has been created.

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020 8752 4684 respectively.

Website address: www.bbc.co.uk/history

The Museums and Galleries Commission¹ has:

- appointed an Education, Access and Audience Development Officer who prepared the MGC's *Guidelines for Good Practice* and other factsheets and publications. The Guidelines are now acknowledged as a point of reference for museums developing education work;
- appointed a second Education and Audience Development Adviser to provide strategic advice to museums and Government;
- undertaken research to provide authoritative data;
- commissioned publications to provide guidance and to support best practice;
- developed training for Area Museum Councils to help them prepare education policies.

The Arts Council of England has:

- developed the Arts Council of England/National Society for Educators in Art and Design *Artist Teacher Scheme*, which works with Higher Education Institutions and arts organisations to pilot professional development for teachers;
- funded **engage** to advance gallery education and co-ordinate Museums and Galleries Month;
- supported through *Arts for Everyone* a range of art education initiatives such as *encompass*, which has established a series of gallery outreach projects;
- produced guidelines on self-evaluation strategies for artists and arts organisations involved in education initiatives;

¹ Now Resource: *The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries*

Case Study: encompass

The National Association for Gallery Education, **engage**, is promoting new links between galleries and schools through its *encompass* programme, which is funded by a two-year Arts for Everyone grant. There are two approaches to building links: for primary schoolchildren, *encompass* involves families in order to nurture a more supportive home environment to art at school; for school-leavers, *encompass* creates peer-group projects that address teenage interests. A rare example of a national programme targeting a specific aspect of gallery education, *encompass* has clear additional benefits in disseminating a body of complementary case material. By June 2000 *encompass* will have worked with over 1,500 schoolchildren and their families in 15 school/gallery 'clusters' across England.

The clusters include projects like that of Huddersfield Art Gallery, which invited local primary schoolchildren to meet exhibiting artists the Singh twins, and to bring their families for weekend storytelling sessions. This has resulted in a successful bid to fund a long-term family project. Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery made 'spin' paintings à la Damien Hirst with excluded teenagers from Carlisle's Raffles Estate who had never visited the gallery before. Remarkably, the participants have continued to be involved, and are now designing a website project on golf hero, Tiger Woods. Other *encompass* projects include teenage activities for an Ikon Gallery touring exhibition visit to the Midlands village of Atherstone; an artists' trail bringing together galleries, primary schools and families in Colchester; and collaboration between the Chisenhale Gallery and the British Library for school-leavers in Tower Hamlets.

- supported the Institute of International Visual Arts and Middlesex University in developing the *Digital Arts Resource for Education*, an interactive on-line resource of contemporary art for educators;
- set up the *Education and Research and Development Initiative* to enable arts organisations to explore and enhance links between the education programmes and other aspects of their work;
- published *Crossing the Line*, which looks at young people's access to cultural venues, with the Gulbenkian Foundation;
- with Regional Arts Boards, published *Partnerships for Learning*, a guide to evaluating arts education projects, to help arts organisations evaluate and learn from the best examples of good practice;

- with the QCA, published *From Policy to Partnership: developing the arts in schools*, to help schools develop an arts policy and establish partnerships during and out of school hours.

The Government, working with key partners such as the Arts Council of England and the QCA, will introduce a new national arts award for schools. *Artsmark* will recognise, promote and disseminate good practice in the arts in schools; encourage improvements in standards and the expansion of arts education opportunities; raise the profile of arts education nationally – within schools, arts organisations and communities; and encourage effective partnership between schools and arts and other organisations.

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Evaluation (which is being undertaken by the University of Leicester) and the dissemination of good practice are critical to the success of *encompass*. New networks have been instigated so that participants can support and share in each other's development through publications and seminars. Participating galleries are encouraged to use opportunities to promote gallery education in their organisations and areas. Professional training benefits are extended by mentoring collaborations for artists and INSET for local schools. A six-month follow-up of the first participants demonstrates lasting benefits, with a clear majority remarking on their new-found confidence in exploring their culture, and in visiting and talking about galleries and art.

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The professional bodies for those working in the field of museum education, the Group for Education in Museums and **engage**, have played a key role in developing standards and practice among their members since the publication in 1997 of *A Common Wealth*, David Anderson's report on museum education. Other national bodies such as the Museums Association, the Association of Independent Museums, the Visual Arts and Galleries Association as well as regional organisations such as Area Museums Councils and Regional Arts Boards have also made significant contributions to promoting

learning in museums. The Campaign for Learning through Museums and Galleries was formed to follow through the report's recommendations and raise awareness of museum education among decision-makers. This initiative has brought together groups and organisations across the profession, enabling museums to identify common goals and strategic priorities, and become more effective advocates for museum education.

Several charitable foundations have also responded enthusiastically to the challenge of advancing museum education, most notably the Clore and Vivien Duffield Foundations. In October 1998 they announced a generous package of £7 million to support national and regional museums and more recently they launched *Artworks*, a UK-wide award scheme to promote innovative teaching and learning in art, including visits by schools to museums.

Case Study:

The 17 study support pilot projects funded by the DfEE in 1998/99 demonstrated ways in which museums and galleries can undertake activities in association with schools but outside school hours. South Somerset Museum used their collection of toys and games to bring history to life in a novel way. Museum staff, supported by a playground games

specialist, created lunchtime clubs in the playgrounds of four local primary schools in order to encourage pupils to learn something of the history of traditional games and to have fun in the process. They visited schools to explain the project and get to know the children and playground supervisors. The games included five stones, hoops, trap ball, hop-scotch, hand-clapping games and group skipping.

Section 3: The Way Forward

The Government believes that action should focus on the seven key areas identified in Section 1 of this document.

1. Objectives

The importance of education should be acknowledged in the mission statements, aims and objectives of every museum. Formal recognition needs to be underpinned by an education policy that follows the MGC Guidelines and is based on:

- an educational audit of the collection and/or exhibitions programme, services, resources, staffing and current levels of activity;
- analysis of the potential links between the collection/exhibitions, staff expertise and the curriculum (at all levels) to identify audiences;

- a survey of the learning requirements of potential users that considers both targeted groups and more general visitors;
- preparation of appropriate services in the light of these findings.

The DCMS/Resource Museums Education Challenge Fund provides resources to enable AMCs to offer advice and training to museums that develop educational work along these lines.

The learning power of museums needs also to be acknowledged by the educational community and reflected in its own policies, plans and mission statements. By recognising the contribution that museums can make to learning, Local Education Authorities can encourage the development of

South Somerset

The lunchtime clubs were immensely popular. Attendance at the clubs became a status symbol and places were 'swapped' so that as many children as possible could benefit. Pupils' behaviour and attitude at the clubs were very good.

The project had sound educational benefits beyond that of introducing pupils to the history of games. Some underachieving pupils found that they were top at certain games, which helped their self-esteem and improved their status among their peers. Mental arithmetic was required for many of the games and many other basic numeracy skills were supported, such as the use of sequencing patterns and scoring systems. The clubs also developed use of language, promoted co-operative behaviour and team work, developed memory and hand-eye co-ordination,

stimulated children's imaginations and enthused them about their own and their community's history. In addition, children's visits to museums increased following the project.

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creative educational programmes at the local level. Individual schools too should state in their own plans how they intend to use museums to augment learning by their pupils. The use that schools make of museums is monitored and reported on by OFSTED.

2. Standards

We need clear benchmarks against which museums' performance can be measured and monitored. With the aim of providing uniformity and assurance of a minimum level of service, MGC has been preparing a standard for education and other public services for the next phase of the Museums Registration Scheme. Resource will take this work forward when it comes into being in April 2000. Resource will also look at other ways of identifying good practice within museum education services and examine how to

disseminate this information. By September 2000 OFSTED inspectors will have received new guidance on monitoring how schools use museums.

3. Partnerships

The creation of effective partnerships is vital if museums are to gain a greater appreciation of their audiences' educational needs and offer services that are effective, relevant and value for money. Regional organisations such as Area Museum Councils and Regional Arts Boards are well placed to advise on and stimulate partnerships through their work as enablers, facilitators and promoters of museum development at a local level. Some examples of collaborative working which might be considered are:

Case Study: Ware

In 1996 Hertfordshire Museums commissioned South Eastern Museums Education Unit to work with a group of museums to conduct a survey of local schools. The objective was to establish the services and resources teachers wanted from local museums. Direct teaching, objects for children to handle and resource materials came top of the list. Ware Museum, a small volunteer-run museum with very little space for schools to work in the present galleries, is one of those that have built on this survey to develop its educational work.

The museum had funding from Glaxo Wellcome to develop educational resources to support the teaching of the Romans at Key Stage 2. Working in partnership with the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust, the East Herts District Curator, the

Partnerships between museums.

There are excellent examples of national and regional institutions working with smaller museums to share exhibitions and expertise. The DfEE and DCMS/Resource Challenge Funds encourage museums to work together.

Partnerships with educational institutions.

A close alliance between museums and educational bodies is essential if museums are to become aware of pupils' and students' needs and develop museum services that can respond to them. The DfEE Museums and Galleries Education Programme is designed to initiate such creative partnerships which, it is anticipated, will be sustained and developed. Evaluation of the programme will provide valuable lessons for the future and set examples for others to follow.

Lifelong Learning Partnerships.

As important local providers of lifelong learning, museums should engage in the establishment of Lifelong Learning Partnerships in each local authority area, and with the local Learning and Skills Councils that are being set up to plan and fund the delivery of post-16 education.

Partnerships beyond formal education.

Meeting the needs of adult learners requires consultation outside the formal education sector. By developing partnerships with organisations that provide local information, advice and guidance including the new local Learning and Skills Councils, and becoming involved in promotional activities such as Adult Learners' Week and Family Learning Weekends, museums can reach out to new audiences. *A Common Wealth* points to the valuable links that

Museum

Hertfordshire Museums Development Officer and Glaxo Wellcome, the museum employed the South Eastern Museums Education Unit to undertake two projects.

The first project was a teachers' resource pack on the Romans, which provided information on a range of subjects, photographs of objects excavated at the Glaxo Wellcome site in Ware and activity sheets for children to use in class. The second project involved developing boxes of handling materials from the collections of the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust for use in schools. Teaching materials and activity sheets were prepared to support these. Due to the limited staff resources available to the museum, the handling collection was designed to be used in schools by volunteers or teachers. All the materials were piloted by teachers at seven local schools. They were excited by having handling material and photographs in their classrooms and appreciated the activities that

helped them to make effective use of these resources in their teaching.

Since the launch of the resource pack and handling collection in October 1999, the materials have been used by seven local schools. Although no formal evaluation has yet been carried out, volunteers have reported that they have been highly successful. They have improved the quality of Ware Museum's educational service to schools, raised the profile of the museum in the local community and stimulated interest in local history. They have enabled the museum and the Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust to provide greater public access to their collections.

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can be forged with voluntary associations of self-directed learners.

Partnerships with other cultural bodies.

Museums need to build links with libraries, the built heritage, arts organisations, sports clubs, archaeological societies, historical societies and other cultural bodies. By sharing resources and working together these bodies are able to transcend distinctions that the public finds irrelevant. The BBC History 2000 project is an example of partnership that has seen museums working with broadcasters, heritage and arts bodies to develop follow-on activities and material designed to engage new audiences initially attracted by the television coverage.

Partnerships within cultural strategies.

Museums can make a valuable contribution to cultural strategies within local authorities and to the strategies produced by Regional Cultural Consortia, which in turn will influence the work of Regional Development Agencies.

Partnerships for outreach work.

Museums can offer valuable outreach services to, for example, people in hospital, youth services, those being assisted by social services departments and people in prison. Working with local industries can offer the opportunity for museums to reach new audiences as well as useful sponsorship.

Case Study: Collaborations in Patt

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As part of its outreach programme, Worcester City Museum and Art Gallery has been working alongside a group of women who were originally brought together by a sewing and textiles class outside the gallery. The women were invited to participate in an art and design project that introduced printmaking skills through patterns within the collection. What distinguishes the project from previous schemes is that the women are from culturally diverse backgrounds (Bangladesh, China, Thailand and Japan), from different age-groups and have varying educational experiences.

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In the past these women found it difficult to engage in museum and gallery activities, partly because of language barriers. A practical hands-on project therefore enabled greater

4. Resources and Capability

The level and quality of the educational services that museums provide will be greatly influenced by the amount of resources dedicated to them. Even though many of our small museums are not able to employ a professional educator, they should consider:

- nominating one person to take responsibility for educational work and seek external advice;
- encouraging trustees and members of museum governing bodies to take an interest in specific areas of the museum's operation, such as education.

Developing an effective education policy requires careful analysis both of the collections and exhibition

programme and of the requirements, including the learning needs, of target audiences. Given that resources are always finite, a museum needs to consider how to marry the strengths of its collection with the needs of audiences. All museums want to appeal to a wide range of visitors, but it is necessary to set priorities rather than try to meet the needs of all simultaneously. AMCs are well placed to assist with helping museums develop an education strategy.

As part of the DCMS/Resource Education Challenge Fund, Resource and AMCs have been asked to begin work on mapping current levels of education provision and measuring the impact that provision of professional educational support has had on the development of educational services. This will be taken forward by Resource.

Pattern and Print

access and freedom, as well as appreciation of creative and skill-building techniques. Specialist support for the project came from an artist and a designer/maker, and appropriate resources and equipment for workshops were provided.

The project has flourished. The level of individual success and commitment has increased and this has benefited all members of the group. The women have gained an aesthetic appreciation of printed pattern and an understanding of how it is applied to fabric. The project has created a social meeting place for the women and increased their confidence, sense of ownership and belonging. Friendships have been formed with gallery staff as well as with each other, and word-of-mouth recommendations have encouraged other women to observe, and possibly participate in the future.

The gallery feels fortunate to have worked alongside such a diverse group of personalities and cultures and has learned much from the attitudes and approaches employed by the women in using collections and practical skills. Since the workshop space is accessible by the public, it also demonstrates the museum and gallery's support for adults engaging in creative activities. An exhibition at the City Museum & Art Gallery is planned for spring 2000 and plans are already under way to continue this initiative by creating new opportunities for women who have been excluded through language or educational experience from accessing cultural and artistic resources. Collaborations in Pattern and Print has been financially supported by the West Midlands Regional Museums Council, as part of its Access Scheme.

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Funding agreements between DCMS and the museums it directly funds already contain objectives for educational work. This practice will be continued. The funding agreements between Resource and AMCs will also contain objectives for educational activity.

5. Training

Training of both the education and museum communities is key to developing the programmes and services of the future. Senior management, as well as the people actually delivering education services in museums, need to be committed to developing skills that will enable them to exploit the learning power of museums.

The MGC Guidelines point to the training of museum staff as the key to improved standards of museum education. Specific training for museum educators, or

for curators who are responsible for delivering education services, is scarce. Apart from the existing general professional courses, training is unevenly distributed and is unaccredited. However, some new initiatives are being undertaken. Leicester University has recently established a Centre for Museum and Gallery Education. CHNTO is currently undertaking a skills forecasting and benchmarking analysis, which should produce detailed information on the training available and what needs to be done. Both **engage** and Resource are discussing with the Institute of Education the development of a modular course for museum educators and Resource is having talks with the City University and the Sainsbury Centre at the University of East Anglia about the development of a modular course for museum educators. **Engage** is working with Metier to develop new vocational standards in a pilot national training programme. The

Case Study: Telling Tales in the

Tiverton Museum's storytelling project was created to address a lack of provision for pre-school children in museums. The idea was to use museum objects to encourage literacy in the under-5s and involve parents in using objects to create stories and develop children's vocabulary. A successful application to the BT Reading Challenge Fund provided £500, which enabled a storyteller to be employed to hold museum sessions with a pre-school playgroup and at a Family Literacy Fun Day (part of Family Learning Weekend).

The playgroup children spent a morning in the museum, accompanied by parents and adult helpers and baby brothers and sisters. They were split into groups and took turns to look around the whole museum, take part in object-handling sessions that stimulated curiosity, imagination and vocabulary, and work with the storyteller, who used museum objects to inspire the children to make their own stories. During the afternoon the storyteller was based at the

playgroup and the children began to turn their stories into 'big books', which were developed throughout the week. They took a selection of the museum's handling objects back to the playgroup and children enjoyed the opportunity to explore these through creative play.

The big books were a great success and are still in demand for reading in the playgroup sessions. They were on display at the Family Literacy Fun Day, accompanied by the objects that had inspired them. The day included object-based activities such as feely bags and mystery objects, an alphabet trail and other trails, and sessions with the storyteller throughout the day. A leaflet on using objects to create stories was made available to parents.

The project had great benefits for everyone who was involved. The playgroup leaders gained valuable support in working towards 'desirable learning outcomes' and were particularly pleased with amount of parental involvement, especially the high level of interest from fathers. The sessions attracted a whole new audience to

consultation document issued by Resource in January 2000 on their future work points to a review of the present CHNTO and ISNTO, which, when completed, will set the framework for more detailed analysis of the skills needed by museum educators.

Teachers do not always get training on how to make best use of museums. The Teacher Training Agency's recently announced review of Circular 4/98, which sets out the requirements for initial teacher training courses and the award of qualified teacher status, provides an important opportunity to see whether the potential for museums to support and enhance classroom teaching can be harnessed and exploited more effectively. There is considerable overlap between teaching and museum education work, scope for developing courses that benefit both professions, and a pathway between the two. Teachers could

enhance their skills by working in museums and museum educators could usefully learn from working in schools.

In-service training days for teachers can provide opportunities for each profession to learn more about the other, which can lead to sustained contact and the creation of new services. Museums, individual schools and Local Education Authorities need to take the initiative in establishing contacts and ensuring that this practical and fundamental opportunity is taken. 'Whole school' INSETs can be useful for focusing on extra-curricular opportunities.

Other encouraging developments are forthcoming:

- DfEE intend to host a seminar for museum and gallery educators to provide training on the new

Museum

the museum, culminating in a very successful Family Literacy Fun Day attended by 80 parents and 120 children, many of whom lived locally but were visiting the museum for the first time.

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National Curriculum and initiatives such as Maths Year 2000 and the national literacy strategy. It is likely that subject specialists will also be invited to participate. This initiative, which has Ministerial endorsement, is designed to reach a wide audience.

- The Victoria and Albert Museum and the Institute of Education's joint project, funded through DfEE's Museums and Galleries Education Programme, will focus on teachers' professional development. The project aims to improve teachers' confidence and skill in using museum and gallery resources through in-service and modular courses.
- The Key Stages 1 and 2 Art and Design Scheme of Work was published by QCA in March 2000 and contains a unit on working with museums and galleries.

6. Use of Information and Communication Technology

Museums are responsible for unique collections of objects, images, documents and information that have the power to enrich the curriculum, promote cultural development and inculcate the habit of learning. It is the Government's aim that as many people as possible from every walk of life should have access to these resources. At the moment there are significant geographical, social, economic and attitudinal barriers to access. Digital means of communication bring into view the prospect of removing these barriers.

ICT has a vital role to play within museums, not only in interactive displays. New technology can allow information about the collections to be tailored to specific audiences and permit virtual access to materials held in museum stores. Museums will be

Case Study: The Learning Curve

The Public Record Office created The Learning Curve website in order to be able to place the national archives at the heart of the National Grid for Learning. At the launch of the National Grid for Learning in November 1998, primary school pupils in the Prime Minister's constituency examined original papers relating to the 1882 Trimdon Grange mining disaster, documents previously available only at the PRO.

In partnership with museums and other archives, and with the advice of teachers, the PRO is producing 15 'exhibitions' linked to National Curriculum topics and a number of 'snapshots' related to particular events or documents. These give schoolchildren and their teachers access to a rich array of documentary material, which can be printed out or viewed on-line and linked to interactive features and suggestions for classroom use. The webpages can be projected using a litepro for whole-class study and discussion.

The material is designed for students of history from KS2 to A Level, with topics ranging from medieval cartoons to a plan to assassinate Hitler. For example, in the 'Twentieth-Century Heroes and Villains' exhibition students view a range of documents, photographs, maps and film in order to determine why and how Mussolini invaded Abyssinia and to consider the handling of the crisis by the League of Nations. They are then asked to assess whether Mussolini was an Italian hero or an international villain. Teachers can ask pupils to work through the whole gallery or concentrate on specific elements in order to focus on particular aspects.

The Learning Curve is designed to cater for lifelong learners too. It will enhance the PRO's existing services and attract a wider geographical and social range of users. The new Millennium exhibition includes features on Domesday Book, Shakespeare's will and

able to work together 'virtually' and enable users to have access to the vast repositories of museums, libraries, arts and heritage institutions through a single enquiry. Technology also allows members of the public to contribute to museums' own knowledge through the development of interactive services and feedback facilities. The sharing of good practice is also made easier.

The Government recognises the unique contribution the cultural sector can make to the creative development of digitised content. These are some of the initiatives already in development:

- The National Grid for Learning exists to provide web-based learning for a growing audience. Museums are eligible to bid for funds to develop content from

the New Opportunities Fund £50m digitisation programme.

- The £1/2m DCMS/Resource Museums ICT Challenge Fund is designed to encourage small museums working in partnership with other museums, lifelong learners and community groups to develop a range of ICT services.
- Government has asked for more work to be carried out on the broad vision for museums in the Information Age set out in the publication *A Netful of Jewels*, produced by the National Museums' Directors Conference. It will consider further action when the work is completed.

the x-ray of Hitler's skull. The Learning Curve is seeking support from the New Opportunities Fund to extend an exhibition on key documents for family and local history in order to provide practical advice to people with an interest in this popular area of research. Interactive services such as ordering copies of documents on-line are also being developed.

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The Learning Curve is accessible at
<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk>



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- DCMS will support the 24 Hour Museum in its second year of operation. DfEE has asked the 24 Hour Museum to map museum provision against the National Curriculum programmes of study in all subjects to enable teachers to identify centres in which learning relevant to each key stage in any subject can take place.
- Resource is developing 'Cornucopia', a database of information about UK museums and their collections that will complement the 24 Hour Museum. A pilot has already been made available and the entire website is due to go live in 2000.
- 'The Learning Circuit' is working with DfEE to bring together ICT and museum education in exciting and innovative ways.

7. Research

There is a need for more comprehensive research to complement the educational activities that many museums are undertaking and to give clear evidence of the benefits that flow when museums contribute to learning. DfEE will be evaluating the work of all museums funded through their Museums and Galleries programme against DfEE criteria that include effects on literacy and numeracy, use of ICT, relevance to the National Curriculum, contribution to employability and social inclusion.

Government recognises the need for:

- targeted research at regional and national levels to provide a clearer picture of museums' education provision, including staffing, resources, facilities, visitor figures and audience development goals;

Case Study: Xperiment!

The Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester sees science as an integral part of the situations in which it is applied. The Power Hall, the Air and Space Gallery, the Electricity Gallery, the Gas Gallery, Measuring Up!, the Futures Gallery and the Fibres, Fabric and Fashion Gallery all have interactive and working exhibits to help interpret science and technology and explain their impact on our lives. Xperiment!, which opened in late 1988, focuses on the scientific principles behind the technologies and serves to introduce the visitors to the themes in other galleries of the museum.

Xperiment! has 70 interactive exhibits, a reading corner and a puzzle desk. The gallery is designed to give an understanding of science in an enjoyable and safe environment and engage visitors of all abilities and backgrounds in a constructive dialogue with the exhibits, staff and each other. It attracts a large proportion of the 300,000 visitors who visit the

museum each year. School groups and family groups find Xperiment! particularly attractive and it has been consistently cited as the museum's most favoured gallery in market surveys.

The main themes of the gallery are light, energy and the senses, and the exhibits are linked with everyday life and other areas in the museum. The display is supported by educational materials produced in conjunction with the education department for school groups and adults in family groups. The hands-on approach used in Xperiment! has been incorporated into other galleries and is now an integral aspect of the new gallery projects of the museum. There are plans to add interactive displays in the Power Hall and the Air and Space gallery in the near future.

Xperiment! has been the focus of the British Association for the Advancement of Science's Young Scientist Days and visitor activity programmes. It has

- research on how people learn in museums, including the impact of museum-based education on skills, knowledge and experience for individuals as well as the impact of interactive, hands-on, object-based learning on the long-term viability of collections;
- recognised universal standards, particularly in the areas of measuring, describing and segmenting museum audiences. Resource is considering its research priorities. In arriving at these priorities, Resource will take account of the Government's vision for museums education.

Conclusion

Achievement of the vision requires recognition of its potential and action by many parties including individual museums and educators. Much is already happening but more needs to take place. The benefits for society as a whole and museums themselves will be enormous. The Government is committed to seeing the learning power of museums fully exploited and will continue to play its part to help bring that about.

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become a tool for establishing and maintaining relationships with the local universities, colleges, schools and other bodies promoting understanding of science, like the British Association.

The museum is now developing a new interactive gallery to replace Xperiment! This will build on the experience of the past 11 years and use latest technologies and approaches to give visitors access to modern science and technology. The new gallery will be a place where visitors will encounter novel exhibits, participate in a broad range of activities and be engaged by gallery demonstrations that are both fun and informative.

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