



SCOTTISH
MUSEUMS
COUNCIL

Moving the goalposts

Collections at the heart of the community

Scottish Museums Council
Summary Annual Report 2005/2006

Introduction

2005/06 has been a fantastic year for SMC and the sector. Together we have achieved a major shift in government policy towards the non-national museums. *Scotland's Culture*, announced in January 2006, puts collections at the centre of cultural policy. For the first time, national government has acknowledged that it can intervene and fund local museums. We now have the challenge of building on this great opportunity.

Joanne Orr
CEO

Graeme Roberts
Chair

Development & change

Cultural Review

"The Executive is committed to the development of its support for collections of national significance in the care of local authorities and other organisations. Future funding for non-national museums, including Scotland's industrial museums, will focus on supporting significant 'national standard' collections."

Scotland's Culture
Scottish Executive,
January 2006

SMC worked with the Scottish Museums Working Group to contribute to the cultural review process. This group brought the sector together, both national and non-national museums, as one voice and produced a comprehensive vision which fed into the review process and influenced the development of *Scotland's Culture*.

Restructure and Relocation

After 25 years at County House, SMC's lease expired in June 2006, giving us the opportunity to search for a new home better suited to its current needs. We explored a number of possibilities and finally decided on *The Stack*; a modern, open plan office in a regeneration area of Edinburgh and located in a grade II listed building.

Along with the relocation, SMC decided on a new organisational structure to take forward the challenges and opportunities over the next five years. The restructure will involve four 'teams', each leading on a key aim of the organisation:

- *Advocacy*
- *Development*
- *Efficiency and effectiveness*
- *Building the evidence base*

All four teams will work to underpin the aim of partnership and reposition SMC to deliver on collections development at the heart of communities.

01 The Stack,
SMC's new offices

02 Figurehead from HMS Prince of Wales (on loan from the Royal Navy), Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine

03 Lights designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Glasgow School of Art

04 Young visitor using the 'audio point', part of the new education facilities, Gordon Highlanders Museum, Aberdeen

01





Collections Development Strategy

Members and stakeholders have played an instrumental role in assisting SMC prepare for the development of *A National Collections Development Strategy for Scotland's Museums*. We are grateful to all who took part in the postal questionnaire and to those who attended the consultation events in Glasgow and Aberdeen this year – your input has helped establish the Strategy's aims and priorities, and to suggest possible actions to take these ideas forward.

Museums, Galleries and Digitisation

In summer 2005, SMC published *Museums, Galleries and Digitisation*. The report followed on from findings in *A National ICT Strategy for Scotland's Museums*, and focuses on the importance of assessing the impact of online digitisation projects. The document recognises Scottish digitisation projects that represent current best practice and identifies the common success factors that characterise them. It also provides a practical checklist designed to help museums measure and demonstrate the impact that their projects have on end users.

Collections

Collections Care and Conservation Support

As part of our continuing support for members' collections care and conservation activities, this year we added a new factsheet to the range available on our website, on *Caring for Paintings and Frames in Museums*.

The first year of our arrangement with the Scottish Conservation Studio to provide members with direct, free access to technical expertise has been a great success. The conservators' extensive experience and understanding of museum collections has seen them advise members on all sorts of enquiries and we look forward to developing this service further in the future.

Significance Scheme

The Scottish Executive's commitment to the Significance Scheme was made official as part of the announcement on *Scotland's Culture*. The scheme aims to recognise collections of national significance in non-national museums and galleries throughout Scotland. Following the announcement, SMC worked hard to produce the guidance and the application process and criteria associated with the scheme.





Research

Following the publication of *Scotland's Culture* and its endorsement of the principle of a cultural entitlement as well as SMC's 2004 study to examine cultural rights and entitlement we undertook two major strands of research this year:

SMC commissioned consultants to carry out an ambitious piece of research, 'Museums and Galleries for Every School', which is to explore the delivery of an entitlement to museums and galleries for primary school children in both a rural and urban context within Scotland. It also aims to propose an appropriate model for future delivery. An external advisory group chaired by SMC board member Nat Edwards, has been formed to guide the project. A report is expected towards the end of 2006.

Towards the end of March 2006 SMC commissioned a consortium of consultants to develop an integrated Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for museums and galleries in Scotland. The framework will link existing accreditation standards to national policy and assist local authorities to plan and monitor provision under Community Planning. A model will be recommended, a business plan developed and the model tested following input from a stakeholder consultation.



People

Cultural Coordinators and Creative Links Officers

SMC has continued to support the work of Cultural Coordinators and Creative Links Officers throughout the country, who can bring their skills in creative learning to a project involving a museum, helping to widen access to collections. The projects have continued to be a huge success, and SMC has awarded over £30,000 of funding during 2004-06, which has successfully supported 45 projects.

GEM/SMC Grass Roots Project

This project, aimed at increasing and enhancing learning services that museums and galleries offer, is funded by SMC and run in partnership with the Group for Education in Museums (GEM). Through the year, Grass Roots ran four training events in six different venues, attended by 189 people. Towards the end of the 2005/06 financial year, an independent evaluation was carried out which surmised that there had been an overall increase in confidence of delivery, benefits to work, ability to

contribute and ability to work in partnership as well as attendees enjoying the training events. As a consequence of this, the project is to be funded for a further year (through 2006/07).

Learning and Access Strategy

SMC's *A National Learning and Access Strategy for Museums and Galleries in Scotland* was published in April 2005, laying the foundations for action to help museums widen access, enhance the learning opportunities they offer and celebrate diversity. In order to achieve an equality of access, the strategy laid out a three year action plan, outlining five objectives towards which museums, their partners and other key organisations can work.



Tourism

Over the past year, SMC has been strengthening links and developing new partnerships between museums and galleries and the tourism sector. We have made new relationships with key agencies forming the Museums, Galleries and Tourism Focus Group. Following our one day conference 'Realising the Potential of Museums and Galleries in Tourism' in March 2005, we have gone on to:

- *Publish an economic impact study 'Realising the True Impact of Museums and Galleries on Tourism'*
- *Back the development of a new Ancestral Tourism Training Course and support an industrial museums mapping exercise*
- *Devise and create Show Scotland (see below)*

Show Scotland

Throughout 2005, SMC worked with a steering group comprising representatives from national and non-national agencies on a brand new creative cultural events weekend to celebrate Scotland's museums and galleries and named 'Show Scotland'. SMC made available £20,000 of grants to members wanting to take part, and support was given through marketing toolkits and workshops for participating museums. 50 museums country-wide signed up for the weekend. The event aims to attract 25,000 visitors in its first year, with this increasing in years to come.



Their Past Your Future Scotland

In 2004, SMC received £500,000 from the BIG Lottery Fund (with an additional £55,000 being awarded in 2005) to deliver 'Their Past Your Future (TPYF) Scotland.' This ran throughout 2005 and commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. SMC worked with Learning and Teaching Scotland, the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and six regional partners to deliver the programme. The evaluation of TPYF Scotland surmised that:

- *There were 64,765 exhibition visits or engagement in projects and events in total*
- *Partners delivered 59 different projects or events between them in which over 16,000 people participated*
- *76% of visitors said TPYF increased their knowledge or understanding with 57% changing their attitudes or values as a result of the project*

Evaluation of the event exceeded all expectations and the success of TPYF UK-wide was overwhelming.

Workforce Development Strategy

Wide consultation and research was undertaken for the third of SMC's four strategies, *A National Workforce Development Strategy for Scotland's Museums*. Steered by an advisory group comprising representatives from throughout the sector and the Scottish Executive, the strategy will lay out clear priorities for the development of knowledge for staff and volunteers working in museums. A three-year action plan will be included to guide future workforce development activity and to help the sector and partner organisations achieve the priorities outlined within the strategy.



Positive Action Traineeships

In June 2005, two 'Positive Action Trainees' began their traineeships with Glasgow City Council and the City of Edinburgh Council. The two-year traineeships, run with the help of the Black Environment Network (BEN) and the University of St Andrews, are aimed at creating a more diverse workforce within the sector by increasing representation of people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Trainees gain on-the-job experience whilst undertaking a post-graduate certificate in museum and gallery studies. The traineeships have proved a great success with both the museums and trainees.

"(The traineeship) arms the trainee with the experience and knowledge required to work in what is a vibrant, exciting and highly competitive sector."

Robin Patel

Positive Action Trainee

07 Billy Connolly's 'Big Banana Boots', People's Palace, Glasgow

08 'Pixie Hats and Wet Duffels' a TPYF educational event in West Dunbartonshire

09 Stormtrooper, Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, Nitshill

10 Children taking part in a school educational activity, Clydebank Museum

11 Positive Action Trainee Robin Patel at the Scotland Street School open day.

Our role, vision & mission

Our role We are the lead strategic agency and membership body for the non-national museums sector in Scotland, representing over 340 museums and galleries.

Our vision is of a welcoming museums and galleries sector that opens doors and celebrates collections, inspiring creativity, learning and enjoyment for all.

Our mission is to provide a strategic lead and support the development of the sector to unlock the potential of museums and galleries in Scotland.



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