

**JOINT STATEMENT FROM  
NATIONAL MUSEUM  
DIRECTORS' COUNCIL,  
ASSOCIATION OF  
INDEPENDENT MUSEUMS,  
MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION,  
HERITAGE ALLIANCE AND  
NATIONAL TRUST**

**The  
Heritage  
Alliance**

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

COVID-19 is an ongoing public health emergency, and our foremost thoughts are with those who are affected, those who have lost loved ones and those in the healthcare frontline.

As has been acknowledged by the UK Government, the widespread and necessary measures put in place this week to mitigate the spread of the virus meant that organisations would suffer economically, placing jobs and livelihoods at serious risk.

In addition, for the museums and independent heritage sectors, this has also placed irreplaceable indoor and outdoor collections at risk, as well as the highly valued work we do in engaging people in their history; in supporting social cohesion; in providing spaces for learning and encouraging a better understanding of everyone's place in the world.

We welcome the unprecedented steps taken by the UK Government to address these impacts and risks and recognise the challenging task this has presented for colleagues in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.

Whilst there remains considerable uncertainty and tough times lie ahead, we are greatly encouraged by the financial measures announced on Friday 20 March and the positive response they provide to the deep and widespread concerns of the museums and heritage sectors.

We look forward to continuing our work with colleagues in DCMS, and others, to find the right solutions both for museums and heritage and for the UK, in whose recovery, museums and heritage sites have a unique and valued part to play.

Sir Ian Blatchford, Chair, National Museum Directors' Council

Andrew Lovett, Chair, Association of Independent Museums

Maggie Appleton, President, Museums Association

Hilary McGrady, Director General, National Trust

Peter Ainsworth, Chair; Lizzie Glithero-West FSA, Chief Executive, The Heritage Alliance

Notes to editors

Together, NMDC, AIM and the MA represent museums of all types and scale across the UK.

About the National Museum Directors' Council (NMDC)

The National Museum Directors' Council represents the leaders of the UK's national collections and major regional museums. Our members are the national and major regional museums in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, the British Library, the National Library of Scotland, the National Archives and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

NMDC acts as an advocate on behalf of members and their collective priorities and provides them with a valuable forum for discussion and debate and an opportunity to share information and work collaboratively. While our members are funded by government, the NMDC is an independent, non-governmental organisation. For more information about NMDC and our activity see our website: [www.nationalmuseums.org.uk](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk)

About the Association of Independent Museums (AIM)

Established in 1977, the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) connects, strengthens and represents the UK's independent heritage organisations. Through the sharing of expertise, advice and guidance AIM underpins its charitable objectives – to help heritage organisations prosper, ensuring their needs are recognised and addressed by policy makers, funders and other key sector stakeholders. AIM has a current membership of 1240, over 1000 of which are organisational members and it is supported by Arts Council England as a Sector Support Organisation. In 2019, AIM distributed over £500k through programmes, grants and awards, working closely with organisations including The Pilgrim Trust and Biffa Award.

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

About the Museums Association (MA)

The Museums Association is a dynamic membership organisation that campaigns for socially engaged museums and a representative workforce. We advocate for and support museums and everyone who works in and with them so that the value and impact of museums and their collections is realised. Our membership consists of over 16,000 organisations and people. They range from volunteer-run local museums to national institutions and people working across all types of roles and functions. We recognise the differences in context, culture, legislation, policy and practice between the four nations of the UK and we strive for equitable treatment for all our members. We are independent and not-

for-profit and advocate for museums without fear or favour from governments or funding influences. For more information, see our website: [www.museumsassociation.org](http://www.museumsassociation.org)

#### About the National Trust

The National Trust is a conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people, Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Entirely independent of Government, the National Trust looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and hundreds of special places across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The National Trust receives more than 26.9 million visits each year to the places it cares for that have an entry fee, and an estimated 100m visits to the outdoor places looked after by the charity. Together with 5.9 million members and more than 65,000 volunteers, they help to support the conservation charity in its work to care for nature, beauty, history. For everyone, for ever.

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

#### About The Heritage Alliance

The Heritage Alliance is England's largest coalition of heritage interests. It brings together almost 150 independent heritage organisations from English Heritage, the National Trust, The Canal & River Trust and Historic Houses, to specialist bodies representing visitors, owners, volunteers, professional practitioners, museums, mobile heritage, funders and academics. Between them, over 7 million volunteers, trustees, members and staff demonstrate the strength and commitment of the independent heritage movement. The Heritage Alliance is ready to put our resources and expertise at the disposal of decision makers to secure the best future for England, built on its invaluable past.

[www.theheritagealliance.org.uk](http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk)