



**Culture, Media and Sport Committee inquiry:
Protecting, preserving and making accessible our nation's heritage.**

A joint response by Museums, Libraries and Archives Councils¹

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), together with its nine Regional Agencies work in partnership to provide strategic direction and leadership to museums, libraries and archives across England. Our common purpose is to improve people's lives through access to the collections and resources of museums, libraries and archives – building knowledge, supporting learning, inspiring creativity and celebrating identity. The partners act collectively for the benefit of the sector and the public, leading the transformation of museums, libraries and archives for the future.
- 1.2 We are grateful for this opportunity to respond to the Committee's inquiry. This response focuses on the contribution museums, libraries and archives make to our nation's heritage and highlights the opportunities and challenges facing the sector. We have therefore responded in the following fashion:
- The role of museums, libraries and archives in the heritage landscape
 - Making the case for museums, libraries and archives
 - The balance between heritage and development needs in planning policy
 - Access to heritage and the position of heritage as a cultural asset in the community
 - Funding for the sector
 - Our priorities for the sector
 - The supply of professionals with conservation skills and workforce issues
 - Concluding remarks.

2. The role of museums, libraries and archives in the heritage landscape

- 2.1 Museums and archives (and to some extent libraries) are in almost a unique position in that they not only help to conserve material culture, but work with and through individuals, groups and communities to explore and interpret the full range of heritage assets and their relationship to the built, physical, social and cultural environments. By undertaking this work, the museum and archive sector encourages communities to develop new skills and increase pride in their area, both of which contribute to regeneration.

¹ This response has been compiled by the national MLA and the nine regional museums, libraries and archives councils, which are: ALM London, EEMLAC, EMMLAC, MLA North West, MLA West Midlands, NEMLAC, SEMLAC, SWMLAC and YMLAC.

2.2 In addition, museums libraries and archives protect, preserve and make accessible our nation's heritage through:

- Identifying mla heritage at risk
- Engaging people in the decisions of what to preserve for future generations
- Contributing specialist knowledge to decisions about significance and prioritisation
- Maintaining standards of care so that collections survive.

2.3 Last but not least, it is important to recognise the roles of museums, libraries and archives in supporting and encouraging civic debate; they are ideal fora for inclusive community debate and engagement, providing new and existing communities with perspective on contemporary events and rapid change.

2.1 The role of the MLA councils

2.1.1 In addition to providing support to the sector for maintaining the nation's heritage through transformation and capacity building programmes such as Renaissance in the Regions for England's regional museums, Framework for the Future for England's public libraries and the Archives Development programme, MLA and its regional agencies have set additional specific criteria for safeguarding our nation's heritage:

- Accreditation sets nationally agreed standards for UK museums. Museums must meet basic requirements on how they care for and document their collections, how they are governed and managed and on the information and services they offer to their users.
- Designation identifies the pre-eminent collections of national and international importance held in England's non-national museums, libraries and archives, based on their quality and significance. These inspiring collections represent a vital part of our national cultural and artistic heritage.
- MLA has specific statutory responsibilities for ensuring the preservation of our nation's heritage through our remit for managing the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme (which allows for taxpayers to transfer important works of art and heritage objects into public ownership), the Government Indemnity Scheme (which allows for our nation's heritage to be viewed more widely by providing insurance for exhibitions) and the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art, which advises the Secretary of State for Culture on whether a cultural object, intended for export, is of national importance under specified criteria.
- The Regional Agencies provide advice and guidance to organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) on the sector's needs in their regions, in particular decisions about significance and prioritisation. In addition, RAs are often called upon to provide commentaries for funding bids.
- Regional Agencies also play a role in developing regional or sub-regional heritage strategies, helping to ensure heritage investment is strategically co-ordinated across a locality or sub-region. This is often undertaken in partnership with the Regional Cultural Consortium and other NDPBs.
- Regional Agencies also provide advice to local councils on their Comprehensive Performance Assessments.

3. Making the case for museums, libraries and archives in the heritage landscape

- 3.1 Without museums, libraries or archives and the professionals who work in them, understanding and interpretation of our nation's cultural and heritage assets would be lost or severely diminished. MLA and the Regional Agencies are, therefore, alive to the importance of championing the sector's contribution to heritage and the wider public benefit. The relationships we forge with policy audiences, funding bodies and other stakeholders at both the national and regional level are critical to our sector's ability to engage with wider agenda.
- 3.2 We are conscious of the need to minimise duplication of effort and maximise resources and so have forged close working relationships at the national level with organisations such as the National Museum Director's Conference, Arts Council England, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, UK Film Council and Visit Britain (to name but a few). Where possible, we join together to create a single voice advocating for our cultural and heritage assets. A regional example is the North East Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's (NEMLAC) active involvement in the North East Historic Environment Forum, which brings together representatives from across the heritage sector. A recent output of the NEHEF is the 'Economic Cultural and Social Impact of the Historic Environment in the North East' commissioned from ARUP, which would not have been so effective if carried out by individual organisations or a smaller partnership. In addition, our Regional Agencies are actively engaged in the Heritage Environment Forums and Heritage Counts in all regions and some also work with local voluntary groups which exist to preserve the historic environment, whether it be urban townscapes or industrial archaeology.
- 3.3 We focus particular attention on engaging with the local government agenda and the contribution our sector makes to the shared priorities of national and local government. As part of this, MLA (assisted by the Regional Agencies) has been instrumental in developing Comprehensive Performance Assessments for museums, libraries and archives, engaging with local authority Corporate Heads of Performance and Service Heads around the introduction of the Culture Block, including dissemination of CPA cultural indicators.
- 3.4 Representing and promoting the interests of museums, libraries and archives means that we actively seek to make links between the intrinsic value of our institutions and their role in protecting and preserving our heritage, and the instrumental value they bring to the economy and the sustainability and wellbeing of our communities. Another example from the north east has been NEMLAC's recognition as a regional delivery partner for the North East's Regional Economic Strategy, reflecting the contribution heritage assets make to the economy, as well as the sector's level of influence and leverage with regional decision makers, funding bodies and sector governing bodies.

3.1 The remit and effectiveness of DCMS, English Heritage and other relevant organisations in representing heritage interests

- 3.1.1 MLA and the regional agencies work closely with DCMS, English Heritage and other relevant heritage organisations. Our collective view is that the current structures work well with regard to traditional definitions of heritage, ie those items/places which have been recognised of national significance. It has been

recognised that those criteria were laid down decades ago and they have been updated with regard to historic environment (English Heritage) and archives (Community archives, The National Archive) within recent months. It is too early to tell whether those changes have had impact upon what local communities believe to be worthy of passing on to future generations.

3.1.2 The areas where perhaps the current systems work less well are:

- libraries, because libraries are not seen as holding “heritage” in the traditional sense, although many of them hold permanent specialist collections which are critical to our heritage, and
- where a more modern definition of intangible heritage is needed, for example local or group pride expressed through oral history, dance, environmental interpretation and so on.

3.1.3 In our view, DCMS could argue more robustly within government, especially to the ODPM, the value of heritage, in particular arguing for those ‘on the ground’ initiatives where heritage can play a part in supporting new growth. Some of the MLA Regional Agencies feel that information about heritage developments does not always filter down effectively from DCMS to their GO reps and that the process is too top-down and often too late to enable effective and timely actions. The recent Heritage Counts report for the Yorkshire region illustrates what good work is being done already; it is an example of a cooperative approach between DCMS and the heritage and culture agencies which DCMS should be leading consistently across all the regions.

3.1.4 We also believe that the Heritage Lottery Fund needs to take a more pro-active and consistent approach to targeting their investment; for example supporting development projects that aim to plug gaps and build capacity in areas otherwise under funded and poorly served in terms of access to heritage.

4. The balance between heritage and development needs in planning policy – the role of museums, libraries and archives in regenerating our communities.

4.1 We believe that to approach this as an ‘either heritage /or development’ issue is to miss, or misunderstand, the vital role heritage and museums, libraries and archives play in creating vibrant, modern, loved and sustainable communities. Communities need identities and identities are defined by our culture and heritage.

4.2 It is important to recognise that heritage is not static. It has to continue to evolve, involve and reflect growing and changing communities if it is to retain relevance and the power to engage.

4.3 Many exciting opportunities exist to ensure heritage is included within new developments; however, too often it is presented as a barrier in planning controls. Although planned growth is essential to minimise the impact of too much erratic growth on the historic environment, with only a small degree of extra flexibility such new planned growth would be enhanced by the inclusion of new heritage community facilities such as a new library or museum.

- 4.4 Investing in the infrastructure and services of museums, libraries and archives can have a considerable impact upon the regeneration of both urban and rural areas. Revitalising a flagship cultural asset, such as a landmark museum, library or archive can have a considerable impact on attracting external investment, improving quality of life and enhancing pride of place. This position has been accepted by Yorkshire Forward, which has placed culture at the heart of many of their schemes and has integrated it into one of its three core aims: *'Utilising the full potential of Yorkshire and Humber's physical and cultural assets, maximising resource efficiency and conserving and enhancing its environment to achieve an integrated, sustainable economy.'*²
- 4.5 During 2004–09 in excess of £14m will be invested in the cultural and creative industries of Scarborough in order to regenerate the town. Two museum focused projects will be at the heart of this scheme, the redevelopment of the Rotunda museum and the creation of a Creative Industries Centre at Scarborough Museum. The Rotunda project alone is an investment of £2m.³ Leeds and Sheffield are also identified as 'core cities' by ODPM and are considered to be drivers of regional and national economic growth. In all of the major Yorkshire cities of Bradford, Hull, Leeds, Sheffield and York, culture is recognised as a major asset in driving economic growth.⁴
- 4.6 There is also growing interest in our archaeological and 'portable' heritage, as evidenced by the popularity of programmes such as 'Time Team' and the increase in metal detectorists.
- 4.7 MLA's Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is the only proactive mechanism for recording archaeological finds made by the public in England and Wales. It is also the country's largest community archaeological project, and offers an impressive range of educational and outreach benefits. Furthermore, PAS is vital to the reporting of Treasure and the efficient and effective running of the Treasure Act 1996. It is therefore vital that the Government accords appropriate significance to the PAS and archaeological finds in future planning legislation.
- 4.8 Some PAS key facts:
- In 2004/5, 67,213 finds were recorded with the PAS, many of which would have otherwise gone unrecorded.
 - Almost 89% of finds recorded by the PAS have been recovered from cultivated land, where they are susceptible to plough damage and natural corrosion processes. Nearly 75% finds are now being recorded to the nearest 100 square metres, so Historic Environment Records can use the data to help protect the historic environment.
 - In 2004/5, PAS outreach activities (talks, exhibitions, finds days etc) attracted over 30,000 people, including more than 3,500 children.
 - 47% of people recording with the PAS are from socio-economic groups C2,D&E, which compares favourably to museum visitors (29%).

² Yorkshire Forward (2005) *Regional Economic Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber 2006 – 2015. Government Draft, October 2005.* Leeds: Yorkshire Forward, p.20

³ York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit (2005) *Investment Plan for York and North Yorkshire 2004/2009. Appendix: Investment Themes and Priority Actions. Spatial Themes.* York: York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit. p106

⁴ Yorkshire Forward (2005) *Regional Economic Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber 2006 – 2015. Government Draft, October 2005.* Leeds: Yorkshire Forward, p. 63

- 4.9 It appears, however, that there is still little consideration being given by ODPM and local authority planning committees to the impact of developing funded archaeological excavations. MLA proposes that Planning Policy Statement 16 (which would combine PPGs 15 & 16) should state that funding for archaeology in mitigation of development projects should always include a full provision for assessing, recording, analysis, publishing and archiving the archaeological data in such a way that it is easily accessible to the public. Museums and archives collect information and artefacts relating to the built heritage and can help conserve or record heritage relating to the broader built environment. Where the built heritage is to be changed or lost, museums and archives need to be given the time and resources to document this process and curate items where it is appropriate to do so. This should form part of the core statement of policy principles and not just contained in the annexe that recommends best practice.
- 4.10 A good example of this 'new' approach is the Hanson Aggregates project in Cambridgeshire. The Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (ASLF) funded a joint project by Cambridge Archaeological Unit and Hanson Aggregates to increase public awareness of archaeological knowledge arising from investigations associated with mineral extraction. Educational packages for including handling materials were developed. The condition of Southern Over round barrow cemetery, an impressive prehistoric scheduled monument close to Needingworth Quarry, was enhanced and access improved. This initiative ensured the long-term survival of this crucial monument and made it accessible to a broad spectrum of society.⁵
- 4.11 The regeneration of Hartlepool's Historic Quay and the development of its maritime heritage attractions have transformed Hartlepool into a leading tourism destination within the region, attracting significant numbers of visitors and tourism spending. Similarly, an integrated approach to the development of a network of award-winning small heritage attractions in Weardale (eg Killhope Lead Mining Museum, Weardale Museum and High House Chapel Rural Regeneration) is driving rural regeneration, attracting visitors and visitor spending to a geographically remote area.
- 4.12 Now is the time to plan new heritage assets in a co-ordinated manner and at an appropriate regional level in order to meet the needs of new communities and to provide tourists with attractions that are sustainable economically and socially. Ensuring that English Heritage and heritage agencies are 'empowered' to influence this development should be a priority.

5. Placing heritage at the heart of our communities - Access to heritage and the position of heritage as a cultural asset in the community

- 5.1 Heritage exists as a cultural asset within communities in two key respects: the physical embodiment exemplified by buildings or collections within museums, libraries and archives and the intangible assets as demonstrated by community engagement in culture and heritage.

⁵ Heritage Counts: The State of the East of England's Historic Environment 2005, (p 12).

- 5.2 Museums, libraries and archives are often housed in buildings that are considered to be of cultural significance. In many cases these buildings are not only core architectural components of a place, but are also foci for cultural identities. Modern flagship buildings such as the Sage in Gateshead are already taking on the mantle of heritage assets, alongside more traditional buildings such as the Municipal Building in Leeds, for example, which is an architectural monument in the centre of town and has housed the city library and art gallery for over 100 years and used to be the home of Leeds City Museum. The Grade II* listed Leeds Institute is currently being redeveloped, with HLF support, as the location for the new Leeds Museum. Also in the 19th century, the Yorkshire Museum in York was designed by the Yorkshire Philosophical Society to be a focal point for cultural heritage throughout Yorkshire.
- 5.3 In the West Midlands in 2004, 71% of museums were providing public access to listed buildings (119) and scheduled ancient monuments (16) - a significant proportion of protected heritage assets in the region.
- 5.4 Similarly, the National Coal Mining Museum for England is used as a focus of identity for local people. Where previously the role of the mine(s) as a centre of employment for the area helped to create the identity of the community, the museum is now working with local people to explore their perceptions of heritage assets and how they relate to the community, both past and present. This includes the continuation of activities that are of cultural interest (intangible heritage) such as the annual Miner's Gala, continuing a tradition that began in the 19th century.
- 5.5 The resourcing of these activities is just as important as the maintenance of the physical fabric. The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Beamish Open Air Museum and the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes are all examples of how museums protect and preserve our rural and industrial heritage, holding workshops demonstrating historical and contemporary crafts, industries or recreating building methods. Institutions need resources to conserve, promote and interpret the intangible heritage.
- 5.6 It is in developing the intangible assets of our heritage that museums, libraries and archives can place heritage at the heart of our communities. Local museums, libraries and archives are already very effective at attracting socially and economically diverse audiences. Nevertheless, access is key and MLA and the RAs make increasing and broadening participation a top priority for all their transformation programmes for the sector. We are committed to promoting the widest possible access for all and to ensuring that provision is focused on the needs of actual and potential users. We believe that museums, libraries and archives have a significant role to play in promoting physical, cultural and social inclusion and celebrating diversity and can contribute effectively to these key government agendas.
- 5.7 Some examples include:
- Renaissance in the Regions which has focused on increasing and developing wider audiences to regional museums. Between 2002/03 and 2003/04 participation by socio-economic groups C2,D&Es and by black and minority ethnic groups who have traditionally not been active users of or visitors to museums increased by 15.2% and 60% respectively.

- Various initiatives to digitise our cultural assets and make them more readily available to a wider public such as Cornucopia (an online database of information about more than 6000 collections from museums, libraries and archives), MICHAEL (a European cultural initiative to catalogue cultural assets online), and the MLA funded 24 Hour Museum, People's Network Enquire, Discover and Read services and the PAsT Explorers website, to name but a few.
 - MLA resources to help museums, libraries and archives develop access for disabled people. Disability Portfolio: a portfolio of twelve guides on how to best to meet the needs of disabled people, the DDA, training, audits, ICT and low cost solutions; Disability Experts: a database of disability auditors, trainers and consultants working in the museums, libraries and archives sector; and Disability Checklist: an easy to use checklist of 100 questions to identify existing good practice and areas for improvement.
 - *Maxcard*, a project pioneered by NEMLAC in 2002 creates significant social and educational benefits for children in care who would have otherwise been unlikely to visit museum and heritage attractions. The card offers free access to 54 heritage attractions in the NE region and to date 9,800 cards have been issued. This initiative has also been adopted by the Yorkshire region.
- 5.8 Finally, it is important to acknowledge that museum, library and archive buildings as public spaces also improve community infrastructure. They support community participation and create benefits through volunteering. (Discovery Museum's 'Developing Volunteer Participation' project created 300 volunteer placements over three years.)
- 5.9 There are numerous examples of community archive projects helping to build relationships through providing historical information on people or places, while fostering understanding of the role and relevance of archives and the identification of relevant content from the holdings. Teesside archives 'Community Champions Programme' worked with asylum seekers and museums, libraries and archives in the Tees Valley focusing on Oral History. This has now led to the community champions devising a further project and applying for funding to HLF.
- 5.10 'Connecting Histories' is a HLF funded project in Birmingham taking post-war and recent archives that relate to black and ethnic minority communities with the aim of increasing access to culturally diverse archive collections, promote learning and community engagement. Britain today is commonly portrayed as a multi-cultural nation. However, the diverse historical experiences that constitute the story of this 'new' Britain are less well known. The history of the West Midlands in the 20th century is central to this story and this project will release the potential of these archive collections, so that connections can be made between the past and the present, and thereby encourage debate about our shared identities, our common sense of belonging and our multiple heritages.
- 5.11 East of England Museum, Library and Archive Council, with project funding from HLF, has embarked upon an innovative project in the Thames Gateway area, employing a Community Heritage Officer whose remit is to encourage 'grass roots' community activity. Among many targets is the drawing in of external funding to support the growth of sustainable heritage projects including providing new communities with a sense of belonging, place and identity. (See para 3.1.4)

6. Sector funding

- 6.1 Our sector is funded in the main through central government via programmes such as Renaissance in the Regions and Framework for the Future and through local authority budgets. Additional funding may be achieved from lottery distributors such as HLF or (particularly for museums) through Friends associations and commercial enterprises such as shops and restaurants.
- 6.2 Renaissance in the Regions is a major new funding stream to regional museums. From an initial DCMS investment of £10m in 2002/03 this rises to £45m in 2007/08. Spending has risen in the nine regional Hubs (partnership of museums) as a result of Renaissance but has not been matched by direct local authority spend.
- 6.3 In terms of spending on local authority archives services the trend has been a downward pressure on resources with many budgets frozen, or at best inflationary increases in core budgets. Many archive services are reliant on external sources of funding (such as HLF programmes) to run projects to improve catalogues or to digitise material for wider access. Traditional stewardship and conservation work has fallen lower on the agenda, with an emphasis on preventative conservation rather than preservation by professionals. There has been an increase in outsourcing specific conservation rather than such services being run in-house.
- 6.4 The trend in local authorities is for annual pay rises not to be fully funded, effectively resulting in budget cuts year on year.
- 6.5 All local authority budgets are affected by the impact of the Olympics, across the country as well as in London. We welcome the opportunities presented by the Olympics but recognise the challenges it presents. It will require cultural services to respond while at the same time reducing the budget available to them. In addition the Heritage Lottery Fund will be diverting a large proportion to the Olympics, so cultural services, which have received much external funding from HLF, will suffer.
- 6.6 In contrast, there are many examples of how our sector contributes to the local economy, eg.
- Museums account for 12 of the top 20 tourist attractions in North East England
 - ALM London published an Economic Impact Evaluation study that highlights the contribution the sector makes to London's economy.⁶ The city's cultural attractions are a primary driver of tourism, both from within the UK and from overseas. London's museums, libraries and archives attract over 2 million visits each week.
 - MLA North West has also recently published a study with Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council on the contribution museums, libraries and archives make to their local economy.⁷ This found that Bolton's museum, library and archive

⁶ London's Culture Equation, published 2005. Available from www.almlondon.org.uk

⁷ Bolton's Museum, Library and Archive services, published December 2005. Available from www.mlanorthwest.org.uk/mlanorthwest/publications

services were valued by users and non-users at £10.4 million (compared with a budget of £6 million). This means that Bolton's museums, libraries and archives generate £1.60 for every £1 of public funding received. Alternatively if public funding were to end, the Bolton economy would lose net benefits of £3.9 million. The majority, £7.4 million, of the value comes from the direct benefit enjoyed by users of Bolton's museums, libraries and archives as opposed to non-users. This underpins the critical role that these cultural services play in many people's lives. Non-users value the museums, libraries and archives at £3 million.

7. Our priorities for the sector.

7.1 We believe more funding should be directed to the following:

- Archives - the archives domain has had no funding to implement the recommendations of the Archives Task Force report, *Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future*.
- In order to continue to maximise the impact of the Renaissance project, full funding should be available to Phase 2 hubs to bring them in line with those in Phase 1. This would also enable us to expand the benefits of Renaissance, eg via the Museum Development Fund, into the sub-regions, particularly rural areas.
- The increased pressure of the Olympics makes it essential that cultural venues, facilities and the historic environment in general are recognised as being world class by 2012. For this to happen, the HLF and its share of Lottery funding should be retained and protected.
- HLF should subscribe to the Government's commitment to Full Cost Recovery for funding – this will have huge impact on the long-term sustainability and responsible management of museums, libraries and archives.
- Consideration should be made about the provision of development funding. This sort of funding could cover internal infrastructure costs for a limited amount of time, allowing museums and archives to develop and grow. External funders should be encouraged to fund fundraising and income generation as part of short-term projects. Such development activities ensure that successful projects can be mainstreamed, as part of an exit strategy.

7.2 We see key priorities for DCMS as:

- Securing funding to support innovative development schemes which ensure heritage assets are an integral part of new growth eg in new communities (for an example see Heritage Counts for the East of England).
- Questioning Local Authority decisions which are closing heritage assets and pushing for greater co-ordinated planning activity within Local Authority areas.
- Providing well researched evidence to agencies and Local Authorities about the value of heritage assets.
- Arguing the case for the importance and value of heritage within other government departments, especially ODPM.
- Ensuring DCMS funded departments/agencies all speak with clarity and a full understanding of respective priorities co-ordinated via DCMS regional officers

8. Supply of professional skills within the sector

- 8.1 Some regional agencies offer workshops on environmental monitoring and protection and coordinate training in basic conservation skills. Some, such as the Yorkshire Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, Renaissance Yorkshire and Renaissance South East are developing a Regional Knowledge Bank to help museums share expertise such as conservation skills. The MLA is itself a key partner of the Conservation Awards run by the Institute of Conservation.
- 8.2 There is a real need to attract more new recruits into the sector, not just in conservation, but in other specialisms too. MLA has worked in partnership with others in the sector to create a Workforce Development strategy, which aims to enhance the skills of the current workforce and enable them to 'up their game' to meet the needs of transforming and modernising the sector.
- 8.3 Areas identified for action by MLA and the regions are:
- Skills sharing, mentoring and secondment schemes, both within and beyond sector, to enable the succession of specialist skills and expertise currently locked up in ageing workforce.
 - The difficulties of career progression and development within a fairly static sector; and need to import best practice from other sectors and export greater awareness of heritage sector.
 - The diversity and age profile of the current workforce; and the problems in attracting a more culturally diverse spread of applicants in some areas, such as the south east.
 - The sector's heavy reliance on volunteers; forcing a critical need to diversify the age and profile of this workforce in the next decade to sustain provision.
- 8.4 MLA is conducting research into some of the barriers to entering the museums, libraries and archives profession to be better able to address some of the issues outlined above. One obvious barrier is that of pay and grading structures in the sector and across local government; pay is poor across the whole of our sector and lowest in museums and archives.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 MLA and the Regional Agencies are delighted to have had this opportunity to respond to this important inquiry. Our sector plays a key role in delivering cultural, economic and social value to the public, and we call for more robust support of museums, libraries and archives from central and local government legislators, particularly when faced with budget cuts.

If you would like any further information, please contact in the first instance:

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