

ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR MUSEUMS IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

April 2007

This briefing note describes sources of advice and support to the museums community in the West Midlands as well as the complimentary roles of the regional agency and the West Midlands Hub. It is not exhaustive and will be updated regularly, but it is a signpost to current regional and national museum support networks.

This is a joint publication by the West Midlands Hub and MLA West Midlands. It covers:

- County-based advice
- The West Midlands Hub
- MLA West Midlands
- Sources of information and advice
- Regional Networks
- National Organisations

County Museum Officers (CMOs)

County Museum Officers (their titles vary) offer a range of support services from discussion seminars to advice and practical training. They also run the Museums Groups in some counties. The county museum officers for the shire counties in the West Midlands work together as the Marches Curators Group.

Museum Development Officers (MDOs)

There are many museum staff in the West Midlands whose responsibilities include a Museum Development Officer (MDO) function, often in combination with managing a service or single site museum. Renaissance funding is providing ongoing support to a network of MDOs. An MDO is currently located within each county museum service in the region. The focus of MDO development work is with the smaller, often voluntary museums, but they also work closely with colleagues in larger local authorities, independent and University museums. Within the 2006-2008 Renaissance funding cycle, the network has been expanded to include a metropolitan conurbations museum officer.

The MDO is the first person to go to for advice in the shire county areas

An MDO can give curatorial advice, help with Museum Accreditation and advise about other sources of information, including current funding programmes. They will also put you in touch with other assistance. MDOs in

each county support workforce development (paid or volunteer); sustaining business viability; physical and sensory access; informal learning; county wide networking groups

Your county contacts:

Herefordshire

Principal Heritage Officer:

Kate Andrew

T: 01432 260692

E: kandrew@herefordshire.gov.uk

Museum Development Officer:

Virginia Mayes Wright

T: 01432 383 381

E:

vmayeswright@herefordshire.gov.uk

Herefordshire Museums Forum

Shropshire

Head of County Museums:

Nigel Nixon

T: 01694 781306

E: nigel.nixon@shropshire-cc.gov.uk

Museum Development Officer:

Judith Karena

T: 01694 781306

E: judith.karena@shropshire-cc.gov.uk

Shropshire Museums Group

Staffordshire

Acting Head of Arts and Museums:

Nigel Singh

T: 01889 881388

E: nigel.singh@staffordshire.gov.uk

Museum Development Officer:

T: 01889 881388

Staffordshire Museums Forum

Warwickshire

Head of Museums Service:
T: 01926 418127

Museum Development Officer:
Glynis Powell
T: 01926 412481
E: glynispowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Warwickshire County Network

Worcestershire

County Museums Officer:
Robin Hill
T: 01299 250416
E: rhill@worcestershire.gov.uk
Worcestershire Museums and Heritage Group

Museum Development Officer:
Karen Spry
T: 01299 250416
E: kspry@worcestershire.gov.uk

Conurbation Community Museums Officer
Su Booth
T: 01902 556303
E:
susan.booth@wolverhamptonart.gov.uk

Curatorial Advisors

Every registered museum that does not have the services of a professionally trained and/or experienced curator has a Curatorial Adviser. Advisers are a primary source of information and support.

Regional structures in the West Midlands

Both MLA West Midlands and the West Midlands Hub aim to improve museum services in the region. In broad terms this is divided between them into:

- MLA West Midlands – Monitoring and developing regional policy within the broader museums, archives and libraries sector, acting as strong advocate, undertaking research, and assisting with delivery when it can add value.
- West Midlands Hub – Developing capacity, diversifying audiences, raising standards and delivering excellence to our users.

West Midlands Hub

The West Midlands Hub is one of nine regional Hubs that deliver MLA's national programme. The Hub is a partnership between five museum services: Birmingham (lead partner), Coventry, Ironbridge, Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton.

The Hub's role is:

- To provide leadership and a cohesive framework for the regional museums and galleries community in museum practice.
- To build capacity in improving the quality of the region's museums.
- To maximise the importance of the museums sector through demonstrating their impact and contribution to the regional economy as key players.

- To build centres of excellence by developing resources, skills and expertise that may be shared between Hubs and museums throughout the region.

The Hub's programme is set out in the *West Midlands Hub Operational Plan 2006-2008* and is based on three priority areas set by MLA. The plan outlines how the Hub will work to invest in the continuing development of a user-focused, modern museums sector and contribute to targets set by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department of Education and Skills (DfES).

The operational plan focuses on initiatives that will:

- Increase and sustain user participation
- Provide benefits to users by developing the organisation and the workforce
- Provide benefits to users through improving access and use of collections, through better collections development, care and interpretation.

Programme areas identified within the plan have been specifically developed in response to regional consultation and to support regional museums. They are described below. Other programmes will be providing research or data that will be of interest and use to all museums.

For more details about the Hub and Renaissance West Midlands, visit www.renaissancewestmidlands.org.uk

Renaissance West Midlands Programme Areas 2006-2008:

Education and Learning

Objectives:

- Develop a comprehensive service to schools (0-19 years)
- Increase capacity, innovate and experiment
- Partnership building
- Monitor service effectiveness
- Targeted programmes in areas of multiple deprivation
- Engage youngsters in issues of cultural identity

Strategic Chair: Steven Miller

T: 01952 433522

E: stevemiller.miller@ironbridge.org.uk

Education and Learning Working

Group Lead: Richard Statham

T: 0121 303 2782

E:

richard.statham@birmingham.gov.uk

Audience Development

Within this strand there are two elements which are primarily aimed at increasing usage and diversifying our audience: Family Friendly and Embracing Diversity. The objectives are:

- Develop family offer
- Re-position museums as family attractions
- Encourage cross-over between educational and family visits
- Attract C2DE, BME, disabled people, hard to reach audiences

- Bring about long-term sustainable audience development
- Deeper levels of engagement

Strategic Chair: Roger Vaughan
T: 024 7683 2375
E: roger.vaughan@coventry.gov.uk

Family Friendly
Working Group Lead: Paul Gossage
T: 01952 435 900
E: paul.gossage@ironbridge.org.uk

Embracing Diversity Working Group
Lead: Jenni Waugh
T: 0121 631 5813
E: jenni.waugh@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Organisational Development

Objectives:

- Enhance leadership and workforce skills
- Raise standards
- Organisational and cultural change
- Develop a diverse workforce

Strategic Chair: Corinne Miller
T: 01902 552050
E: corinne.miller@wolverhamptonart.org.uk

Working Group Lead: Isabel Churcher
T: 0121 303 4202
E: isabel.churcher@birmingham.gov.uk

Skills development and sharing

Objectives:

- Development of courses and workshops working closely with MDOs in the region.

- Disseminating and sharing good practice across the region.
- Guidance on Positive Action Traineeship placement

Contact: Robert McDermid
T: 0121 303 2584
E: robert.p.mcdermid@birmingham.gov.uk

Supporting Accreditation

Objectives:

- Pre-application advice and support to museums for the Accreditation Standard.

Contact: Marie Fowler
T: 0121 303 3969
E: marie.fowler@birmingham.gov.uk

Extending Access to Collections

Objectives:

- Interpretation and redisplay programmes
- Improved physical access to collections
- Access to collections via ICT
- Developing collections through better knowledge and expertise
- Raising standards in collection care

Strategic Chair: Jane Arthur
T: 0121 303 4510
E: jane.arthur@birmingham.gov.uk

Interpretation Working Group Lead: Marguerite Nugent
T: 01902 551 951951951
E: marguerite.nugent@wolverhamptonart.org.uk

Conservation and collections care

Renaissance at Work (RAW) is a collections care advice and training programme which includes:

- Principles of decay and preventive conservation
- Handling, packing and transporting collections
- Controlling the museums environment
- Emergency response planning
- Understanding benchmarks in collections care
- Collections care of specialist materials

Contact: Jane Thompson Webb (for training)

T: 0121 303 4589

E: jane.thompson-

webb@birmingham.gov.uk or

RAW_Enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk

Collections Care Working Group Lead: Simon Cane

T: 0121 303 4509

E: simon.cane@birmingham.gov.uk

Ironbridge offers a range of courses and workshops focusing on conservation of the historic environment.

Contact: Harriet Devlin

T: 01952 435900

E: harriet.devlin@ironbridge.org.uk

Other programme areas include:

Building Capacity and Sustainability across the Region

This programme covers the MDO network detailed earlier.

- Improve overall quality of regional museum services in relation Informal Learning
- Improve overall quality of regional museum services in relation to Disability Access
- Improve overall quality of regional museum services in relation to Policy and Planning

Contact: Kate Andrew

T: 01432 260692

E: kandrew@herefordshire.gov.uk

Supporting Stewardship

Objectives:

- Enable access to collections hidden to users
- Raise the level of stewardship in the region's museums

Contact: Michael Cooke

T: 0121 631 5818

E:

michael.cooke@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Supporting Diversity

Objectives:

- Shire County and Metropolitan Borough museums devise and implement diversity strategy and action plan
- Shire County and metropolitan Borough museums diversify workforce
- Shire County and metropolitan Borough museums work with more diverse audiences

Contact: Jenni Waugh

T: 0121 631 5813

E:

jenni.waugh@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Further information about the West Midlands Hub:

A summary version of the Hub's Business Plan is available from the Hub office. The Hub also produces two newsletters annually.

Or visit

www.renaissancewestmidlands.org.uk

If you would like to join the Hub's mailing list, please forward your contact details to:

Susannah Penn

T: 0121 303 4778

E:

susannah.penn@birmingham.gov.uk

For general enquiries, please contact:

Carol Bowsher, West Midlands Hub Manager

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
Chamberlain Square

Birmingham B3 3DH

T: 0121 303 6698

E: carol.bowsher@birmingham.gov.uk

MLA West Midlands: the regional council for museums, libraries and archives

MLA West Midlands is the strategic development agency for museums, libraries and archives in the region. We are part of the wider MLA Partnership with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the eight other regional agencies. Together we work to improve people's lives by building knowledge, supporting learning, inspiring creativity and celebrating identity. The Partnership

acts collectively for the benefit of the sector and the public, leading the transformation of museums, libraries and archives for the future.

The MLA Partnership has developed a three year Corporate Plan.

Our strategic aims are:

- To increase and sustain participation
- To put museums, libraries and archives at the heart of national, regional and local life
- To establish a world class and sustainable sector
- To lead sector strategy and policy development

Each Regional Agency fulfils a number of core roles to enable the implementation of the plan. These functions have been defined as:

- **Advocacy** - high level regional advocacy on behalf of the sector (and contribution to national advocacy) influencing key stakeholders and the sector.
- **Policy and Strategy** - engagement in regional and national policy with a view to influence policy-making and translate it on behalf of the sector.
- **Research and Evidence** – Produce the necessary information and data to support corporate policy and strategy development, and to assess the needs and value of our sector.
- **Delivery** - within the sector and with stakeholders so that museums, libraries and archives become user-focussed, fit for purpose, and efficient.

Advocacy:

MLA WM's senior staff forge and maintain relationships with regional partners and stakeholders as well as keeping in touch with the museums community in the region through the Museums Policy Forum.

Contact: Michael Cooke

T: 0121 631 5818

E:

michael.cooke@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

MLA WM represents the sector in the region and nationally, providing leadership, marshalling arguments and securing regional advocacy towards, among other targets, the next Government Spending Review.

Contact: Jon Finch

T: 0121 631 5801

E: jon.finch@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Access and learning:

MLA WM supports a wide range of learning programmes related to museums, libraries and archives including 'Inspiring Learning for All'. It will be helping to share good practice by encouraging the collection of case studies from museums in the region.

Contact: Elizabeth Roberts / Annie Brierley

T: 0121 631 5815

E:

elizabeth.roberts@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

annie.brierley@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

MLA WM offers signposting to disability related information and

advice including training opportunities and toolkits.

Contact: Jenni Waugh

T: 0121 631 5813

E:

jenni.waugh@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Standards and stewardship:

MLA WM will provide assessments for the Accreditation scheme. It is also leading the development of a regional stewardship strategy.

Contact: Paula Brikci

T: 0121 631 5814

E:

paula.brikci@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Fast Forward:

The West Midlands is the only region to have a long tradition of mapping the museum scene and therefore to be able to show how standards and services have improved, where and by how much. *Fast Forward Update 2004* the fifth biennial review of museum and gallery statistics and performance for the West Midlands has now been published.

Contact: Simon Bennett

T: 0121 631 5821

E:

simon.bennett@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

www.mlawestmidlands.org.uk/priorities/researchanddevelopment/projects/

Electronic content and digitisation:

MLA WM offers advice and support on current eSociety activity with particular reference to the development of a

regional digitisation framework. It can provide useful contacts and general advice on ICT standards as well as an overview of national developments.

Contact: Philip Kiberd
T: 0121 631 5822 / 5804
E:
philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Research, data and statistics:

MLA WM is leading on research priorities for museums, libraries and archives in the region. It holds useful data of value to museums for advocacy purposes and links to wider cultural grouping.

Contact: Philip Kiberd
T: 0121 631 5822
E:
philip.kiberd@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

MLA has contributed jointly with the Regional Cultural Consortium and the Arts Council in establishing the Regional Cultural Observatory. The West Midlands Regional Observatory helps you find the data, information and intelligence you need about the West Midlands easily and efficiently through their own research, analysis and data sets and signposted key data and information resources.

Contact: Laura Venn
T: 0121 202 3249
E: Laura.Venn@wmro.org

Funding advice and application guidance:

MLA WM provides museums, libraries and archives with advice on sources of funding as well as giving grants

through its own Strategic and Service Development Funds. It works with HLF and other distributors to provide pre-application advice to museums and it can direct them to sources of guidance for business viability, strategic fund-raising and bid writing.
Contact: Carl Franklin / Glynis Powell
T: 0121 631 5806 / 5828
E:
carl.franklin@mlawestmidlands.org.uk
glynis.powell@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Strategic marketing

MLA WM supports museums, libraries and archives in re-evaluating their core services so they can respond to the needs of current, intending and new users. It encourages museums to share their approaches to marketing and audience development.

Contact: Geoff Warren
T: 0121 631 5805
E:
geoff.warren@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Workforce development

MLA-WM supports regional and national initiatives to raise skills levels across museums, libraries and archives. It can help museums with general skills and careers information. It also offers bursaries for staff and volunteers.

Contacts: Mark Hinsley
T: 0121 631 5819
E:
mark.hinsley@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Further information about MLA West Midlands:

A summary version of MLA West Midlands' Business Plan, *The Essence*, is available from the office. MLA WM also produces four newsletters annually and monthly e-alerts.

Or visit: www.mlawestmidlands.org.uk
If you would like to join MLA WM's mailing list, please forward your contact details to:

Julie Bedward

T: 0121 631 5823

E:

julie.bedward@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

For general enquiries about museums, please contact:

Michael Cooke

2nd Floor, Grosvenor House

14 Bennetts Hill

Birmingham B2 5RS

T: 0121 631 5818

E:

michael.cooke@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

T: 0121 631 5800

F: 0121 631 5825

E: info@mlawestmidlands.org.uk

Regional networks

West Midlands Federation of Museums and Art Galleries

Promotes the value and benefits of museums and art galleries and their collections in the West Midlands and represents and supports their workers and supporters.

*Contact: Midlands Federation of Museums and Art Galleries
c/o Jonathan Wallis, Derby Museums and Art Gallery, The Strand, Derby DB1 1BS.*

T: 01332 716659

E: jonathan.wallis@birmingham.gov.uk

West Midlands Museums Policy Forum

Represent the interests of museums to MLA West Midlands Board. While they cannot supply operational advice, they can suggest routes to channel comments to both MLA West Midlands and the Hub Executive.

Contact: Hon Sec: David de Haan

T: 01952 432751

E: d.dehaan@bham.ac.uk

Marches Curators Group

The CMOs of the shire counties in the West Midlands work together under this title.

Contact: Robin Hill, Worcestershire County Museums Service

T: 01299 250416

E: rhill@worcestershire.gov.uk

West Midlands Regional Designated Collections Group

Convenor: Jane Arthur

T: 0121 303 4510

E: jane.arthur@birmingham.gov.uk

West Midlands Archaeological Collections Research Group (WeMACRU)

Contact: Phil Watson

T: 0121 303 4633

E: phil.watson@birmingham.gov.uk

West Midlands Natural Sciences Group

Provides advice on good practice and assists with the promotion of natural science collections in the region.

Convenor: Jane Arthur

T: 0121 303 4510

E: jane.arthur@birmingham.gov.uk

Group for Education in Museums, Midlands Area (GEMMA)

GEM promotes the importance of learning through museums and galleries.

Co-convenor: Julia Kingston, Think Tank

T: 0121 202 2319

E: julia.kingston@thinktank.ac

Co-convenor: Sue Pope, Dudmaston Hall

E: sue.pope@nationaltrust.org.uk

Heritage Lottery Fund

Regional Manager - Anne Jenkins, Bank House, 8 Cherry Street, Birmingham, B2 5AL

T: 0121 616 6870

F: 0121 616 6871

www.hlf.org.uk

English Heritage, West Midlands Region

Regional Director – Tim Johnson, 112 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 3AG

T: 0121 625 6820

E: westmidlands@english-heritage.org.uk

www.english-heritage.org.uk

Arts Council England, West Midlands

*Regional Director – Sally Luton
82 Granville Street, Birmingham, B1 2LH*

T: 0845 300 6200

F: 0121 643 7239

www.artscouncil.org.uk

National organisations

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council provides information and reports about strategic planning and development for museums, libraries and archives.

www.mla.gov.uk

Association of Independent Museums provides a network of information and help to members.

www.museums.org.uk/aim

The Army Museums Ogilby Trust

Support the development of those museums in the UK displaying collections of regiments and corps of the British Army.

58 The Close, Salisbury, Wiltshire SN1 2EX.

T: 01722 332188

F: 01722 334211

E: dir@amot.demon.co.uk

www.armymuseums.org.uk

The University Museums Group

Represents and speaks for university museums, art galleries and collections.

Secretary, Duncan Robinson

T: 01223 332925

*Chairman, Alistair Smith, Director of
the Whitworth Art Gallery
T: 0161 275 7450*

Information about University Museums
in the UK and their collections can be
found at:

www.lib.mq.edu.au/mcm/world/uk.html

Conservation

Information is given in the Directory of
Suppliers and Consultants published
annually by the Museums Association,
Conservation
Register.

www.conservationregister.com

UK Institute for Conservation of
Historic and Artistic Works:

www.ukic.org.uk

The Charity Commission

Provides legal advice regarding
constitutions, trusteeship, etc.

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

MDA AdvicePoint

AdvicePoint is a direct telephone and
e-mail advisory service to museums,
including guidance on SPECTRUM,
the museum documentation standard.

Members of MDA can call the
dedicated AdvicePoint line between
10-12 and 2-4, 5 days a week, and
receive an answer to their query from
professional staff.

Telephone advice point: 01223 415520

E: advicepoint@mda.org.uk

Collections Link

The new national advisory service for
collections management, funded by
MLA Council through Renaissance and
managed by MDA in partnership with

the Institute of Conservation (ICON)
and the National Preservation Office
(NPO).

Collections Link provides fast, easy
access to current best practice in
areas of professional collections
management. All of the content of the
site has been provided by authoritative
national bodies and experts with years
of experience in their field.

T: 0845 838 4000

www.collectionslink.org.uk

MODES Users Association

Support group for the users of Modes
and Catalist documentation
programmes.

www.modes.org.uk

Museums Association

Runs training seminars and maintains
the professional qualification schemes
and the codes of professional ethics. It
also publishes the Museums
Yearbook, listing most museums in the
UK and a supplement listing specialist
suppliers and consultants.

www.museumsassociation.org

Many of the contacts listed require
internet access. If you do not have
this, your library or MDO will be able
to help or advise you.