SMALL CAPITAL GRANTS LONDON

ROUND 1, 2015-17

Background and introduction

In June 2015 ACE asked Museum Development Providers to administer a new capital grants programme for museums to run during the period 2015-17. All the major criteria for the programme, eg the emphasis on reaching GIS standards in order to be able to take loans from national and Major Partner museums, the requirement for a minimum of 10% match funding from the museums, the maximum and minimum size of grant, the requirement for beneficiary museums to be able to capitalise this expenditure on their balance sheets, were determined by ACE. London Museum Development added additional criteria about demonstration of resilience. A total fund of £97,200 was available in London.

The opportunity was advertised by email to all museums managers in London and on the weekly London museums e-update which has a circulation of 1,000 museum sector personnel. Despite the short notice and quick turnaround, the scheme was welcomed by the sector in London and 11 applications were received. An assessment team comprising 2 members of the London Museum Development team and one member of the British Museum partnership team made provisional decisions on 15 July 2015. Discussions were opened with 8 museums about the possible award of a grant. The partnerships and loan proposals which the museums were proposing showed a rich variety, ranging from partnerships with national museums to build relationships with specific ethnic minorities, to links with the Science Museum for objects telling the story of London's world-first role in creating clean water supply.

In some cases, such as in Harrow, the proposals were from museums who were already benefiting from significant investment from HLF and who could therefore afford to focus on the highest spec display cases as the finishing touch necessary in order for them to meet GIS standards. In many other cases, the applications were from museums that already had sufficient-quality display cases and security arrangements, but had a need for window blinds, UV film programmes or conversion of conventional to LED lighting in order to reduce UV and lux levels, for instance Charles Dickens Museum, Kingston Museum and Royal College of Physicians Museum.

A considerable amount of technical expertise was required in some cases to determine whether the proposed approach and equipment requested would have the best outcome in terms of collections care and thereby meeting the GIS standard. Museum of London had its own experts in the Regional Collection Care Development team to assist London Museum Development colleagues in scrutinising proposals and in one or two cases making site visits.

By September 2015 the assessment of museums' proposals had been completed and proposed awards agreed. The 8 beneficiary museums were Bethlem Museum of the Mind, London Museum of Water & Steam, Charles Dickens Museum, Strawberry Hill, Kingston Museum, Headstone Manor Museum Harrow, Brent Museum and Royal College of Physicians. The proposed awards at that point totalled about £77,000, and as £20,000 remained in the fund, it was agreed with ACE that the opportunity should be re-advertised. This was done in early December 2015, and again the opportunity was sent to all London museum managers and placed on the weekly museums e-update. However this time no new applicants came forward. The original 8 beneficiaries were therefore invited to make proposals for development of their existing funded projects. Two successful proposals were received. One was from Charles Dickens Museum for the installation of a new Building Management System, structural alterations to their storage area to reduce the risk of flooding and replacement of their gallery candle bulbs with LED lighting. The other successful proposal was from London Museum of Water and Steam to cover object restoration costs which had been upwardly revised by Science Museum. A full account of project progress and key outcomes and benefits for each of the 8 beneficiary museums appears below as part of this report. In total, just over £87,000 of the available fund of £97,200 was allocated and paid out to the museums.

Remaining steps in this 1st round of the programme are as follows:

- All works and spend by the museums of agreed funding to be complete by end September 2016
- By 31 March 2017 the museums must send to London MD team a further report confirming how far the grant has enabled them to achieve or move closer to achieving GIS, any further changes to the number and type of audiences as a result of the grant, and confirmation that the expenditure has been capitalised on the organisation's balance sheet.

Projects funded by the programme

Bethlem Museum of the Mind

Bethlem Royal Hospital Archives and Museum re-opened as Bethlem Museum of the Mind in February 2015 after a £4m redevelopment programme. The re-developed museum, located in Beckenham south-east London, has recently been shortlisted for the Art Fund prize for Museum of the Year 2016.

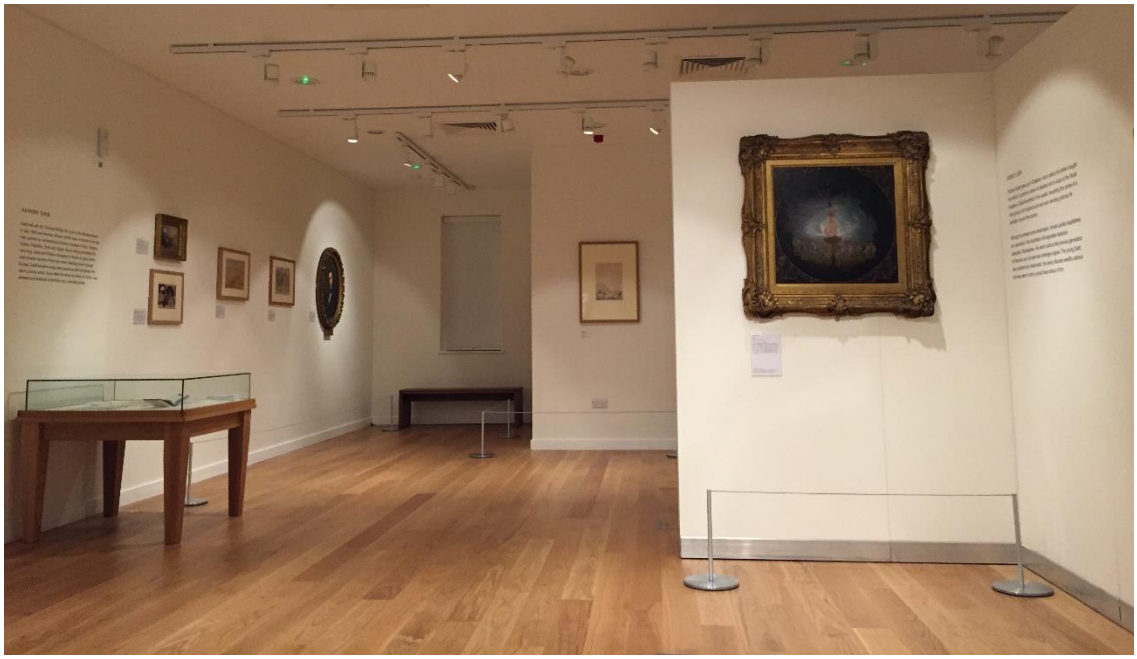
Although the governing Trust had been very active in lending its collections to other museums nationally and internationally, having a modern gallery of its own provided for the first time an opportunity to stage major exhibitions of its own. The museum was awarded £3,954 from the Small Capital Grants scheme in order to cover costs in areas where they still fell short of GIS standards.

The funding was particularly important in helping the museum stage *The Art of Bedlam: Richard Dadd*, running from November 2015 – February 2016. The exhibition was developed in partnership with the Watts Gallery, Surrey and curated by Dr Nicholas Tromans. The exhibition showcased a number of works from Bethlem's collection alongside other works by Dadd held in museums and private collections, for instance two paintings from the V&A and two from the British Museum. The museum also applied for Government Indemnity to cover four inward loans from non-National Museums including Harris Museum and Art Gallery and Wellcome Library. The National Security Advisor William Brown inspected the museum's temporary exhibition gallery in August 2015. One of his recommendations was that a separate intruder alarm system to meet grade 3 should be installed for the gallery, and the funding received contributed to this.

The museum also used the funding to purchase a lux meter (enabling the museum to meet the GIS requirement that lux and UV levels be recorded on a daily basis), a barrier system to restrict access to the paintings on loan, and a display case which was used to exhibit the bound volume containing *A Lady with a Minstrel*.

Loan on display in case purchased with grant funding

UV and lux levels being measured for one of the loans covered by GIS



Loans covered by GIS protected by the barrier system purchased with grant funding

When Bethlem Museum of the Mind re-launched in February 2015, initial visitor numbers were high. This reflected the widespread national and international publicity surrounding the opening of the new museum. The programming of a high profile exhibition to conclude the first year of opening was designed to encourage repeat visits and encourage further media coverage.

Both objectives were achieved: the exhibition received print coverage in publications which included *The Independent* and the *London Evening Standard*, and on-line coverage via the BBC and Time Out. Total visitor numbers for the exhibition were 3,740, meaning it had the highest weekly average visitor numbers for any of the 4 exhibitions staged since Bethlem re-opened in February 2015.

Visitor feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Comments included:

"Beautiful and illuminating exhibition. Thank you."

"Thank you for this fascinating exhibition which shows some of the versatility and range of Dadd's tremendous talent."

"Richard Dadd's work is fascinating, inspiring and 'mind-blowing'. Thank you for exhibiting his work here at Bethlem."

"Have been looking forward to this for ages. Today didn't let me down! Thank you – great exhibition."

The equipment funded by the Small Capital Grants Scheme continues to add value to the museum's exhibition programme. Bethlem's current exhibition includes an inward loan from Lambeth Palace Library (which would not have been possible had the new alarm system not been in place) and a delicate 3D installation which is being protected by the barrier system.

Brent Museum

Brent Museum moved back into the Willesden Green centre in 2015 after substantial redevelopment and reconfiguration of the building by the Council. The museum had high ambitions to develop partnerships with the museums such as the British Museum and the Horniman in order to better engage local ethnic populations, but there was a shortage of display cases and other equipment in the new building enabling them to meet the necessary loan standards.

An award was agreed to meet the costs of a new display case, UV filtration, a case alarm and environmental monitoring equipment. The first stage of the project is well under way. All procurement and installation should be complete by May 2016: the showcase is being built and will be complete by then, and the UV filters will also be installed then when the current exhibition finishes.

Negotiation with partners for potential loans for the next round of exhibitions will begin in April 2016. Two exhibitions are planned for this year where Brent would like to supplement their own collections with additional objects. The Brazil exhibition and events programme would benefit greatly from an original piece for this culture and there will be discussions with existing partners holding ethnographic collections. For an exhibition on strikes/industrial disputes in Brent, the museum will be approaching Museum of London and London Metropolitan Archives for supplementary material.

Charles Dickens Museum

Charles Dickens Museum applied to the fund in order to improve environmental conditions concerning its permanent displays, loans displayed around the house and it's Special Exhibitions Gallery. The museum was at the time planning a special exhibition about Catherine Dickens for which it was aiming to borrow items from both the V&A and Glasgow Library. Achieving GIS would provide significant savings on the insurance costs associated with such loans.

The museum is well equipped in terms of display cases and security equipment following its HLF-funded refurbishment some years ago. However it had been aware for some time of issues regarding environmental conditions within the building, and had conducted a research project with help from an MA work-placement volunteer which involved analysis of lighting conditions within the museum and research visits to other historic houses and museums.

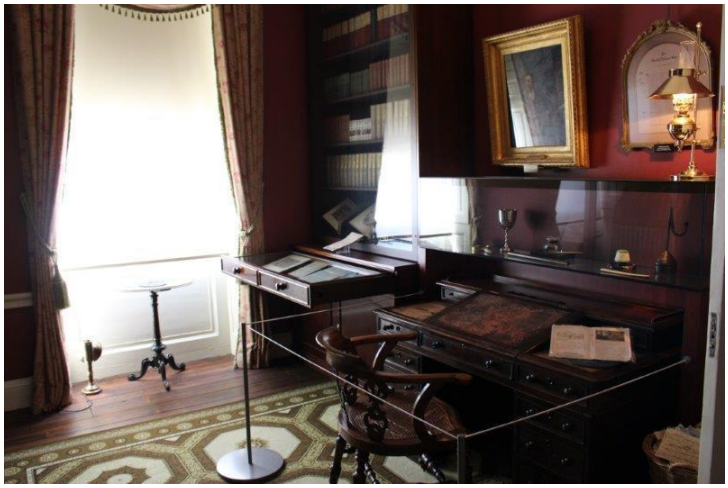
The museum has already implemented a number of the recommendations from its internal survey. But the costliest concerned the need to replace filters on windows and install new blinds, in order to reduce to reduce UV levels affecting objects on display. This was a key part of museum's application to the small capital grants scheme.

Consultation by the museum with other venues such Historic Royal Palaces and Soane Museum was particularly useful identifying the way forward on replacing the blinds. Advice was given on new technology concerning blinds which are made of open weave fabric, are fire retardant, washable, and made of more sustainable material than those used in the museum's ageing Holland blinds. They were also advised the new blinds would lower lux levels whilst also increasing visitors' sense of space and light.

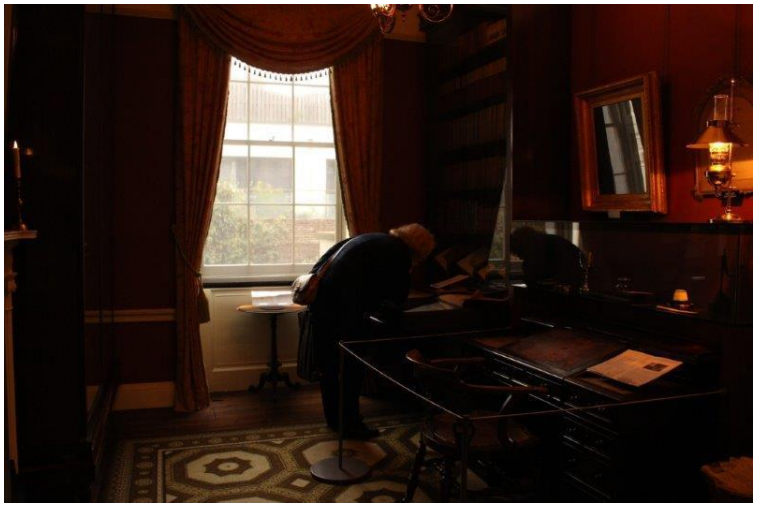
This work, completed in December 2015, has had a very positive impact both in terms of the visitor experience and in terms of improving UV and lux levels in the museum. Visitors are now able to see out of the windows and this has added a new dimension to interpretation of the house. On the Doughty street side of the property, visitors can now take in a view that is largely the same as when Dickens lived there. A stained glass window installed in the Morning Room can now also be seen. Visitors appear to like the blinds, they have stopped trying to peak behind them and are better orientated by the view out of the window.

Drawing Room before the blinds

Drawing Room after new open weave blinds installed



Study before the blinds



Study after new open weaves blinds installed

The changes in light readings are if anything even more impressive. The museum has provided thorough and ample data that shows how lux and UV levels in all rooms housing collections have dramatically decreased.

Further strands of the museum's small capital grants-funded work are in progress and due for completion by September 2016. A further recommendation of the 2015 lighting survey was to replace their conventional candle bulb lighting with dimmable LED bulbs which are more economical, environmentally friendly and produce little infra-red and no ultra-violet light. This work is also being funded through the programme. The dimmable function will also give the museum more control over light levels.

In 2014 the National Archive Advisory Team recommended that the sani-flow pump should be moved out of the collection store and relocated, thus reducing the risk of flooding in this

space. The grant has enabled the museum to enact this recommendation. Lastly, the museum will be using the grant to change its Building Management System to open-source software, which will help it create better reports for loan applications and allow it to more effectively monitor the humidity and temperature in the house.

The museum has set itself the goal of achieving Government Indemnity Status by March 2017. Its first meeting on the topic with relevant staff members and the Museum Board's collections sub-committee is scheduled for April 2016.

Headstone Manor Museum, Harrow

In 2014 this museum embarked on a refurbishment and renewal scheme for the museum buildings and site worth £5.5m, with funding from HLF, John Lyons Charity, and Garfield Weston Foundation, along with match funding of £1m from Harrow Council. However there was still a funding shortfall, a crucial part of which was the £33,800 the museum needed to acquire two GIS standard display cases. A grant towards this of £30,000, the maximum grant available under the 1st round of the scheme, was agreed.

The museum has been working on the project to acquire these two display cases alongside all the other furbuishment and capital works involved in the overall project. It has been working with its exhibition designers, Imagemakers, to specify the cases, and Imagemakers have in turn commissioned Access Displays to put the cases into production. The museum has also worked with its architects, Buttress, to review the security arrangements for the temporary exhibition gallery in which the GIS standard cases will be installed. It has met with Arts Council security advisor Peter Gough and Historic England advisor Stephen Senior to consider improvements to the security of this gallery within the confines of the Grade I listed building.

Completion of the overall redevelopment project and re-opening of the museum is scheduled for summer 2017. The museum already has plans in place for the opening then of its first exhibition in the gallery, which will be about Harrow during World War One. It has an in principle agreement with the Old Speech Room Gallery at Harrow School and with Dr Richard Petty for the loan of relevant artefacts, which has been made possible by the prospect of the new cases enabling them to meet GIS standards.

Between now and September 2016, the museum will be finalising security improvements for the temporary exhibition room, taking delivery of the new cases and completing contract agreements with Old Speech Room Gallery & Dr Richard Petty. It will also be exploring partnership ideas with Handel House, British Museum and other museums for future loan projects made possible by acquiring GIS status.

Kingston Museum

Kingston Museum is a small local authority museum which, despite low staffing levels, has always managed a very active temporary exhibitions programme in order to maintain its local visibility and profile. The museum has a number of ambitious proposals which might help raise its game even further, for instance with Kingston University fashion department. In particular, as Kingston has the largest Korean population in Europe, it is planning an exhibition of UK/Korean connections involving a range of artefacts from local communities, as well as from overseas and UK national museums.

A barrier however to achieving GIS standards to make these more ambitious loan proposals possible has been high light levels within the temporary exhibition gallery. The museum proposed to address this by updating the gallery's lighting system. The gallery has old track spot-lighting which is only controlled by on-off switches. It is an inflexible system and difficult to control, both overall and locally. It has occasionally been problematic for loaned objects which require low light levels. As the museum cannot control the light level of individual spot-lighting, it has on occasion had to remove actual light bulbs to achieve the localised low light level required.

London Museum Development agreed to provide £8137 towards the museum's proposal to replace the track spot-lighting system with an individually dimmable/adjustable LED lighting system. As well as helping to more easily control light levels and meet GIS loan requirements, the new lighting system will also reduce energy consumption. The museum has finished discussion with the council's works contractor Engie on proposed costs and timetable. The work will be completed by September 2016.

London Museum of Water & Steam

London Museum of Water & Steam (formerly Kew Bridge Steam Museum) underwent a £2.4m re development in 2014 which funded the creation of new displays, the complete reinterpretation of the Museum and greatly enhanced visitor facilities.

As part of its ongoing development the museum has plans to further develop its historic workshop, and it sought funding from the small capital grants scheme in order to enable the long term loan of a key object in its story, an Oscillating Cylinder Steam Engine dating from 1870 which was manufactured for the Grand Junction Waterworks Company. The Kew works of the Company are today home to the museum. The engine is owned by the Science Museum, which has indicated that it can agree to a long term loan providing that Science Museum standards of collection care and security are met.

The project which is being funded involves supply and installation of environmental monitoring equipment to ensure Science Museum standards are being met, supply and installation of CCTV security, the costs of refurbishment of the engine by Science Museum conservators, transport of the engine to the museum at Kew, minor building and services work to accommodate the engine, and costs of new interpretation materials.

'Oscillating cylinder steam engine, Harvey & Co., 1870' at the Science Museum's Wroughton store

The engine is currently in store at the Science Museum's storage unit at Wroughton, Wiltshire where it is not available for public view. Installation at the Museum will enable it to be seen by around 18,000 visitors per year and via the museum's education programmes.

The museum has also held discussions with the Science Museum about potential loan of other objects, so if successfully implemented the project would also ensure conditions are met for further loans.

There has been good progress with the project so far. By March 2016 all the major items of security and environmental monitoring equipment have been ordered and commissioned. The security system was installed and commissioned during week commencing 21st March. Recording of environmental conditions has begun and the three months of data required by the Science Museum will be available by June 2016. This timing, June, matches the earliest time that the Science Museum will be in a position to undertake the restoration works to the engine. It is anticipated that all the works will be completed and the engine stalled at the museum by the end of September 2016.

Royal College of Physicians Museum

The modern building which houses the Royal College of Physicians Museum is a celebrated Grade I listed post-war construction. However it has extremely large, two-storey spanning windows on the South side, facing onto the two floors of gallery space where oil paintings hang, and where the museum puts on its main exhibitions.

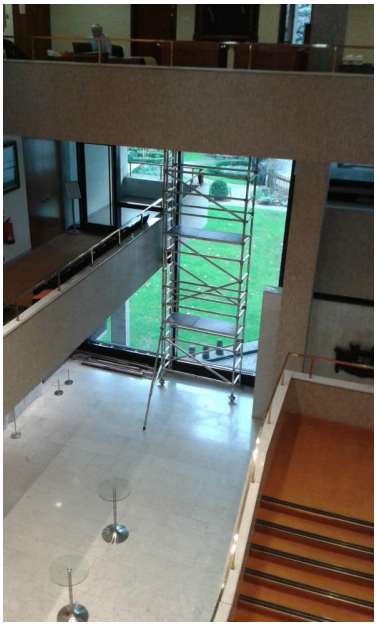
In recent years, the museum's exhibitions have become increasingly high profile and have included loan material from a number of lenders. However, the environmental conditions stipulated by the lenders have often been very challenging. The museum has added layers of UV film to display cases to bring the levels down to enable it to obtain loans. However, the large windows have meant that the museum has still been unable to bring them down sufficiently for some lenders, and therefore it has not been possible to borrow some artworks.

The small capital grant enabled the RCP museum to replace expired UV film on the large main windows, and to add additional protective film to windows in areas not previously covered, but where museum material is also displayed. Solar Shield was commissioned to carry out the work after a tendering process managed by the College's Facilities team, and finished to a high standard.

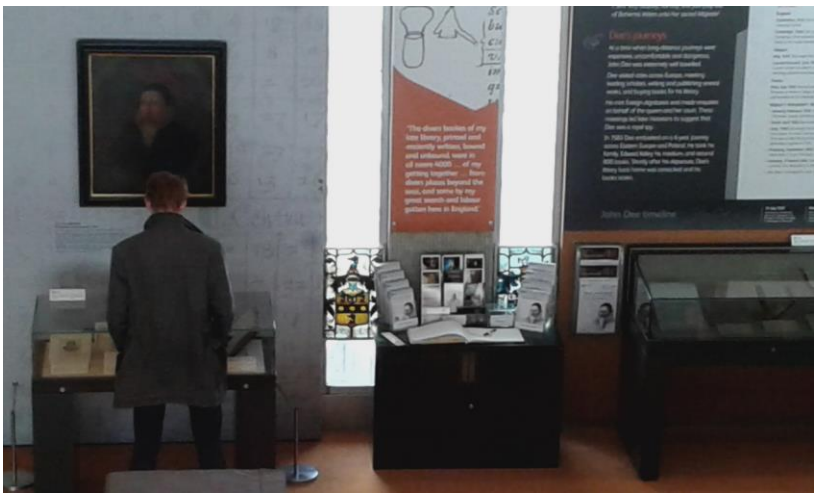
Since installation of the film in January 2016, light levels in the galley have reduced from a maximum of 263 lux to well below 200 lux. As a result, the museum was able to achieve Government Scheme (GIS) coverage for a loan of a painting for its 2016 exhibition 'Scholar, courtier, magician: the lost library of John Dee'. The painting, from the Asmolean Museum Oxford, is important to the exhibition as it is believed to be the only contemporary portrait of Dee painted during his lifetime. Securing GIS helped save considerable insurance costs. The exhibition has so far proved highly successful, with audience figures for the first two months coming to 50% of the museum's total figure for 2015.

Applying UV film to the Lasdun Hall,

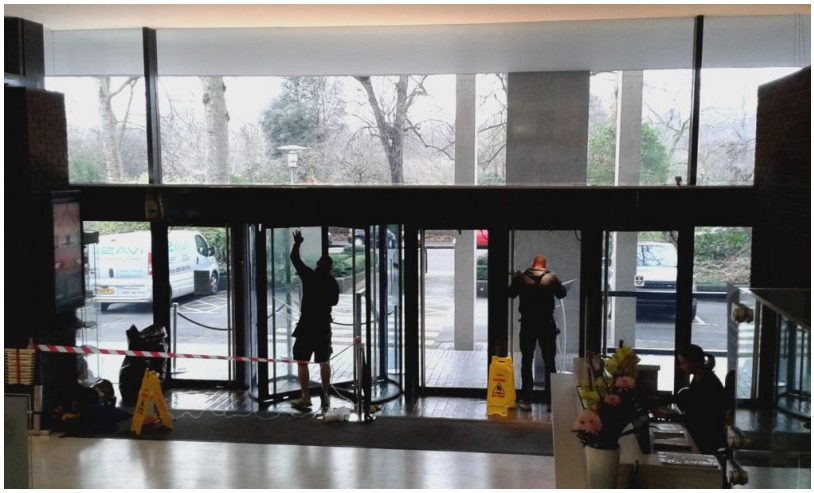
two-storey spanning windows



Applying UV film to the large windows, front of house



The Ashmolean portrait – loan secured with GIS support for 2016 exhibition



Strawberry Hill House

The mock gothic castle Strawberry Hill House benefitted from a major HLF-funded refurbishment in 2010, as part of which it went through a major programme of building conservation which restored many of its original 18th century features. The governing trust is now planning a major exhibition for 2017 celebrating the tercentenary of the birth of the house's creator, Horace Walpole. The plan is to reunite the house with the enormous collection amassed by Walpole for the first time since it was privately sold in 1842. This will involve loans from a number of the most significant stately homes in the country as well as important items from museums in the United States. Given the number and range of loans involved, achieving GIS in order to bring down insurance costs will be essential to the success of the project.

Early discussion with the house centred around the possibility of modifying two 18th century display cupboards which were integral to Walpole's original design of the house. However given the complexity involved with permissions for such alterations to the listed building, it was decided instead instead to focus in this early stage on a project to gather authoritative data about environmental conditions at various locations within the house. With advice from Museum of London's regional collection care team, this particularly focused on a programme to gather data about light levels, in order to help determine the best future display locations. In the end it was agreed to grant-fund the purchase of two IMC Universal Light Meters, which are able to measure Lux and UV and display the readings in an easily understood format, and also, via the purchase of additional probe, measure temperature and humidity.

The house will be using the equipment to build an accurate picture of room conditions, and will be reporting on this in September 2016. Planning display locations and setting loan arrangements in motion can then begin in earnest.