

Providing Advice and Support for Museums in Yorkshire & the Humber

In June, Museum Development Yorkshire sponsored two places at the Association of Independent Museums National Conference at the British Motor Museum. For one delegate as a local authority employee, the cost of these events can be prohibitive, yet this support made their attendance possible. Hear their reviews and takeaways from the trip:

Susan Hopkinson joined us from Burton Constable Foundation

The session 'Mind-set not Money: why every charity needs inspired financial leadership' made me think differently about financial leadership. Was very interested to learn more about the new partnership between AIM and the Charity Finance Group. Signed up immediately on my return to work. I think it is going to be extremely useful.

'Making Money: easier said than done' gave really practical advice, hints and tips from Julie Tew at the British Motor Museum. To hear first-hand from someone who has successfully turned round an organisation was inspirational.

My soundbites of good advice are:

- You don't make money just by thinking about it – good museums make money
- Believe in the power of small actions 'baby steps'
- Don't do nothing simply because the task is too big or too difficult
- Change the word 'diversity' into 'representation'
- Don't try to change everything at once – prioritise

The conference helped me to focus on where BCF is as an organisation and gave me a lot of good ideas of how we can improve our income generation, some of them are quick wins and some much longer term. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Helen Suckling joined us from Harrogate Borough Council

The opening session, in particular Hannah Fox and Shaz Hussain (Science Museum), was the most inspirational and a great introduction for me to the cultural sectors view of its audiences. I was particularly impressed by Shaz, her self-confidence and the clarity of her message.

I was also impressed with Julie Tew from the Motor Museum and the radical changes she had made to be able to move the organisation from a Heritage hobby to a 21st century museum and visitor destination.

Being new to this sector, the conference provided me with a fabulous introduction, meeting the MDY team and making many new connections. I was made to feel extremely welcome, and the MDY team in particular looked after me throughout.

I gained an interesting perspective on the sectors approach to its customer, its audiences, and its embryonic approach to commercialism. I have just started my new role, supporting and leading our front of house team. The insight and knowledge provided to me by attending the conference has increased my levels of confidence going into the role and hopefully helping me to make a valuable contribution more quickly than I would have done had I not attended the conference.