



The National Archives

Press release

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THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES LAUNCHES NEW GUIDE TO REVEAL SECRET WEAPON FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

Today, many of the UK's most senior business leaders will discover the power of an often forgotten asset as The National Archives launches a new publication, *Corporate Memory – A guide to Managing Business Archives*.

Through this guide, The National Archives demonstrates how businesses can use their archives to explore new markets, provide legal and regulatory protection and to succeed in today's competitive markets. The guide highlights many different ways companies are successfully using their archives and the benefits of maintaining high quality records.

A diverse range of business leaders are attending a parliamentary reception, hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Archives and the National Council on Archives, to launch the guide and hear eminent speakers, Sir Stuart Rose of Marks & Spencer plc, Professor Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England, and Dame Stella Rimington, former head of MI5 and professional archivist to promote the value of archives to the business sector.

Speaking at the reception at the House of Lords, **Sir Stuart Rose, Chairman of Marks & Spencer plc**, said:

“We're celebrating 125 years of M&S this year and most of what we have delivered to mark our birthday has been inspired by our wonderful archive collection. Businesses can learn so much from their pasts that is relevant to today's consumer. Unless we take action now to preserve our corporate heritage we are at risk of losing it – which is why

M&S is pleased to be supporting the work of The National Archives.”

Professor Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England, added:

“I am delighted to support The National Archives in helping the business community realise the potential of their corporate memory. This comprehensive guide to company archives clearly highlights the value of knowledge management and record keeping. It is only by having reliable archives that we can learn from, and fully exploit, the experience of earlier generations.”

On launching the guide, **Professor the Lord Bew, the Secretary to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Archives**, commented:

“Companies with a long history of trading have a fantastic treasure trove of material to exploit and must look after this important asset. Newer businesses should also develop ways to keep records safe and to start to build an archive to tell the story of their company’s development and to use for helping to protect their innovations.”

“As a historian, I have long recognised the role played by business archives in promoting a company’s identity and values, giving brands clearer meaning and embedding them in the consciousness of the population.”

Natalie Ceeney, Chief Executive of The National Archives, said:

“Business archives are a truly essential part of our country’s commercial history. They are also clear proof to present and future entrepreneurs of the importance and value of information management. By creating and storing information effectively, it allows the corporate memory to inform decisions, inspire people and provide innovation for new products.”

The guide’s release also coincides with launch of the **National Strategy for Business Archives**, which has been written by The National Archives in partnership with the Business Archives Council, the Society of Archivists and other sector bodies. The strategy aims to ensure that the archives of our nation’s business are cared for, protected and properly used in the future.

A full copy of *Corporate Memory – A guide to Managing Business Archives* is available at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/corporatememory. The National Strategy for Business Archives will be available on the Business Archives Council website www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk. The text of the national strategy will also be available on the Managing Business Archives best practice website, which offers a step by step guide to managing business archives and can be found at www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk

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Notes to editors:

- The House of Lords reception to launch the Guide is being hosted by Professor the Lord Bew, Secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Archives.
- The National Archives in partnership with the National Council on Archives and the Business Archive Council has been working with a consortium of UK professional archive organisations to develop a National Strategy for Business Archives.
- This website www.managingbusinessarchives.co.uk will provide archivists in businesses and other repositories (e.g. local authorities) with the professional tools and guidance they need to enhance record keeping and the development and use of company archives.
- “Corporate Memory – A guide to Managing Business Archives” has been produced by The National Archives to showcase the varied ways in which companies are using their archives to promote and develop key activities, including advertising, marketing, brand building, corporate & social responsibility and to protect company information and intellectual property.
- The event is being sponsored and funded by the National Council on Archives, the body which brings together professional and user groups across the archive sector.
- To help businesses manage their archives, The National Archives is offering free professional advice and support at a national and regional level. The Business Archives Advice Manager (based at The National Archives) can answer questions and provide advice on archive management for businesses.
- For further information and an online version of Corporate Memory please go to www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/corporatememory

About The National Archives:

The National Archives, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archives of the UK government, it cares for, makes available and ‘brings alive’ a vast collection of over 1000 years of historical records, including the treasured Domesday Book.

Not only safeguarding historical information, The National Archives also advises on managing current digital information and devises new technological solutions for keeping government

records readable now and in the future. It provides world class research facilities and expert advice, publishes all UK legislation and official publications, and is a leading advocate for the archive sector.

At the heart of information policy, The National Archives sets standards of best practice that actively promote and encourage public access to, and the re-use of information. This work helps inform today's decisions and ensures that they become tomorrow's permanent record.

About the National Council on Archives:

The National Council on Archives was established in 1988 to bring together the major bodies and organisations, including service providers, users, depositors and policy makers, across the UK concerned with archives and their use. It aims to develop consensus on matters of mutual concern and provide an authoritative common voice for the archival community.

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Archives

The APG Archives was established in April 2008 to provide Parliamentarians with an opportunity to explore and discuss the public policy issues relating to archives and record keeping. The APG has members in both the Commons and the Lords and is Chaired by Tim Boswell MP and Professor the Lord Bew is Secretary. Vice-Chairs of the APG are: Dr Hywel Francis MP, Rt Hon the Lord Howarth of Newport and Lord Redesdale.