



The National Archives

Press release
Friday, 26 June

Digital times call for digital measures

A road show on digital information preservation comes to York

A road show on preserving information in the digital age jointly arranged by The National Archives, the Society of Archivists and the Digital Preservation Coalition comes to the Borthwick Institute in York today (Friday, 26 June).

The Digital Preservation Road Show, the second in a series of regional road shows, aims to highlight the issues associated with preserving digital information as well as offering expert advice and cost effective practical solutions to the archives sector. Delegates will learn how a phased approach to digital preservation may be more manageable, particularly in a time of shrinking budgets, and identify what information needs to be kept and the main risks to it.

The National Archives is also inviting comment on the newly released consultation on *Archives for the 21st Century*, a new draft government policy for publicly-funded archives. The policy stresses the vital importance of digital preservation and the need for the sector to develop new business models, partnerships and skills to manage it. The policy consultation can be viewed at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/304.htm?WT.lp=n-33642

Experts in the field speaking at the event include Carol Tullo from The National Archives and William Kilbride from the Digital Preservation Coalition as well as complementing case studies on pioneering initiatives including one funded by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC).

Malcolm Todd, Digital Archives Advice Manager, The National Archives says, “Making a start in digital preservation means knowing what you’ve got and what immediate risks you need to mitigate. You can then draw up a plan to deal with the longer-term issues in line with your needs and resources.”

“We recognise that the challenges of digital preservation are bigger than any one organisation: by working together we can support each other and find solutions that are appropriate to our own needs” says William Kilbride Executive Director, the Digital Preservation Coalition.

Neil Grindley, Programme Manager for JISC says, “Where complementary work is being undertaken across the education, government or cultural heritage domains, it is vitally important that it is properly coordinated and exploited to maximise public investment”

The next Digital Preservation Road Shows available to book will be held in Edinburgh on 28 October and Dublin on 26 November. For further information and to book places, visit the Society of Archivists’ website:

www.archives.org.uk/events.asp.

Archives provide popular and unique services to local communities, researchers and businesses. Many are either not able to handle digital deposits or lack confidence in what to do once they have accepted them.

Simple digital preservation tips

Many of the simplest and most cost effective preservation measures are not yet routine in many organisations. These include:

- Moving information off ephemeral media to storage better able to maintain the information and remain compatible with changing hardware.

- Storing at least two copies of the information and have some way of comparing them to enable recovery from corruption, and
- Check regular back-ups can be restored if hardware or media fail.

Freeware tools to manage the longer-term risks to digital information are available from The National Archives website:

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/aboutapps/PRONOM/tools.htm

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Notes to Editors

The National Archives and Digital Preservation Coalition conduct preservation advocacy and provide advice and guidance. The Society of Archivists provides training for archival professionals.

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 manages 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 promotes and encourages public access to, and the re-use of information, both online or onsite at Kew. This work helps inform today's decisions and ensures that they become tomorrow's permanent record.

The National Archives brings together the Public Record Office, Historical Manuscripts Commission, the Office of Public Sector Information and Her Majesty's Stationery Office. See also www.opsi.gov.uk

Partner websites

Society of Archivists <http://www.archives.org.uk>

Digital Preservation Coalition <http://www.dpconline.org>

Useful links

Archives for the 21st Century policy consultation:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/304.htm?WT.lp=n-33642>

The National Archives digital preservation planning
tools: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/aboutapps/PRONOM/tools.htm>

Society of Archivists training events, including road show bookings:
<http://www.archives.org.uk/events.asp>