

Equality and diversity strategy: our single equality scheme

April 2010 to April 2012

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Foreword by the Chief Executive

The National Archives is going through significant change. But some things are not changing, including our determination to make our records, information and knowledge available to all. We're proud of the unique collections, resources and services we offer, which enrich the lives of millions. We know we can succeed if we create an environment where everyone feels equally welcome, and we value the rich mix of talent reflected in our workforce. Ensuring diversity is crucial to our success.

I am pleased to present our single equality scheme which will ensure that, as both a service provider and an employer, we promote equality and diversity. The scheme:

- provides a framework for individuals to take action, and for us to measure our performance regularly
- shows our desire to follow best practice and identify what more we can do to turn our plans into real benefits for our users and staff
- confirms our strong intention to meet our legal duties in the areas of race, disability, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, and to follow *Delivering a Diverse Civil Service: A 10-Point Plan*

This is a two-year scheme and a working document. We will learn as we go, and will review and update our action plan regularly.

My role as Chief Executive is to ensure we keep sight of the bigger picture. I am committed to keeping equality and diversity firmly in the frame, and will actively support equality and diversity across The National Archives.

Oliver Morley
Acting Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

The National Archives is a government department, an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, and the official archive for the UK government. We preserve 11 million public records; our nation's story can be read through the documents and artefacts we hold. We are also the sector leader for local archive services across the country, working with and supporting them to preserve the histories of countless communities, companies and individuals. We support and guide government in managing information. We set standards for public-sector information and encourage its reuse. We publish and make accessible vital information including legislation and government reports such as the budget.

This strategy sets out the commitments that will directly inform our single equality scheme action plan (see **Appendix F**). Encouraging equality and diversity is at the heart of achieving our vision and providing good-quality services to as broad a range of people as possible, regardless of background.

This strategy builds on our work to 'mainstream' (systematically consider – see **Appendix D**) equality and diversity in all aspects of what we do, building these into our processes and structures. Initiatives that aim to broaden representation will give sustainable improvements that we can build on. This strategy will help us create an even more inclusive environment, so we can continue to benefit from a rich mix of talent. It will allow us to take further steps to reduce barriers and enable greater access for all. It's important for us to have the skills to provide and adapt existing and future services that respond to the needs of the people who use them.

This is the first single equality scheme to be implemented over the next two years, up to April 2012. Its content has been informed by views and feedback from colleagues across various departments at The National Archives. Improving ways to involve employees and service users in developing this scheme is a vital part of our plan to ensure greater diversity among them.

Everyone at The National Archives will be involved in implementing this strategy, whether they deal with customers, provide support services or advise on government policy. We will continue to raise our ambition, identifying and building good practice, and monitor and review as we progress.

Purpose

This strategy sets out what we want to achieve in equality and diversity. It is supported by other policies and strategies that direct and guide our work.

Our aims are informed by current law and regulations, our commitment to; *Promoting Equality, Valuing Diversity: A Strategy for the Civil Service*, (at www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/diversity-strategy.pdf) and the impending Equality Bill. Currently our public-sector duties mean we must demonstrate that we are taking action on race, disability and gender equality in policy making, service delivery and employment. The Equality Bill sets out a single public equality duty that covers race, disability, gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, and religion or belief. The bill will integrate a number of laws and related duties, listed in **Appendix A**. **Appendix B** outlines the timetable for implementing the Equality Bill.

This strategy describes our commitment to equality and diversity beyond legal requirements. We are responsible for promoting The National Archives and its services to non-traditional users through developing a diverse programme of activities onsite, online and through outreach activity. This is crucial to our survival for future generations.

Vision

Our five-year vision aims to meet the needs of our service users. The equality and diversity strategy is informed by our vision to:

- lead and transform information management
- guarantee the survival of today's information for tomorrow
- bring history to life for everyone

Strategic priorities

Our strategic priorities for the year identify what we must do to achieve our vision. For 2010/11, they are to:

1. encourage innovation and service excellence
2. make consistent the experiences of customers visiting our premises and our website
3. strengthen our working relationships with key partners
4. build a culture that inspires us all to fulfil our potential
5. promote investment in managing information throughout its lifecycle

Key themes

Our equality and diversity strategy will focus on four key themes:

- encouraging **behaviour and culture change** to make The National Archives more accessible
- promoting **strong leadership** throughout the organisation, with clear **accountability** for equality and diversity
- **attracting, retaining and developing talent** from all areas of society, with a focus on hard-to-reach communities
- being more **representative of the wider society** we serve

Behaviour and culture change

How we behave towards each other affects how well our organisation performs, how staff feel about working at The National Archives, and how others feel we work with them and provide services to them. To create an inclusive environment, we must implement policies that uphold the rights of individuals for example the, *Harassment and Bullying Policy*. Everyone must agree not to discriminate unfairly, and accept that we all have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. A healthy culture where people can freely express different perspectives will help us challenge unacceptable behaviour.

Managing performance

Our performance management system aims to measure how people perform and behave against our values, and reward those who do well. Managers need the skills and confidence to manage effectively. The values ensure that all employees sign up to clear expectations and standards. Equality and diversity are implicit in our values, which are as follows:

- Putting customers first
- Responsible guardians
- Information set free
- Delivering what we promise
- Everyone working together

Learning and development

In addition to ensuring that employees understand equality and diversity through compulsory training, we want respect for diversity to be a theme in all our development opportunities.

Our commitment:

Through our leadership and management development programme, we will:

- **give managers the skills to recognise, understand and support the diverse needs of staff**
- **explore ways to change behaviour in line with our values**

Awareness

We want people to understand and appreciate others' perspectives and experiences. We support staff to deal with diverse customers through training on topics such as deaf awareness, British Sign Language and using accessible equipment in the reading rooms. For example, our 'In Your Shoes' scheme gives staff the opportunity to work in other departments, raising awareness of how customers can access all services onsite and online.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **use awareness-raising campaigns and training on diversity to help staff broaden their knowledge and understand complex issues faced by customers, colleagues and people they manage**
- **raise customers' awareness of how to access all services onsite and online**

Customer service onsite

We welcome users of all abilities, and clearly explain (on our website, onsite, and to those who contact us before coming) the full range of services, adaptations, facilities and equipment available. In our publicity, we name a person in our Public Services Development Team as a contact for disability and access issues; to welcome, advise and ask whether we could have done more to improve the visitor's experience. We also get feedback through regular surveys that measure and analyse how satisfied disabled users are.

For over 10 years, we held Charter Mark – the government's standard for service excellence – which includes criteria relating to access and inclusion. This has now been replaced by a new, more rigorous standard, Customer Service Excellence, which we currently hold and will continue to aim for.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **identify barriers to providing a high standard of service for all our customers, and implement initiatives that improve access to this standard**
- **ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act regulations**

Business planning and project management

Wherever possible, we want equality and diversity to be fundamental to all our business processes and structures.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **explore how our business planning can support the mainstreaming of equality and diversity across The National Archives**
- **consider the impact of projects on staff, service users and stakeholders in the initial stages to ensure our services are accessible and inclusive**

Procurement

All public-sector bodies can use their buying power to help equality. They must consider equality law when buying goods, services or works from external providers. Our contract terms and conditions are explicit about the standards we expect from those who provide services to or for us.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **review our procurement activities including our list of suppliers and invite a more diverse range of service providers to join this**
- **ensure that all suppliers provide evidence that they support equality and diversity**

Staff forums

We support the activities of staff forums that provide a voice for staff; this enables a channel for managers to hear staff views and needs. Staff forums can help us predict and respond to how our plans and actions may affect staff and customers. This in turn helps the forums to remain active and relevant to the organisation and staff. We currently have a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff forum (Archus) and a disability staff forum.

Our commitment:

- **We will review staff forums and formalise how we consult them and they feed back to us, to encourage partnership working**

Equality Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are central to complying with equality and diversity law, which requires public bodies to complete these for race, disability and gender. Every time we introduce, amend or discontinue a policy or procedure, we must carry out an EIA. If this shows some groups to be adversely affected, we will change the policy or procedure to reduce the adverse impact.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **review Equality Impact Assessments and consider expanding these to include age, religion or belief, and sexual orientation**
- **provide tools and support to ensure that we carry out Equality Impact Assessments in a meaningful way**

Leadership and accountability

Successful delivery of this strategy depends on active and visible leadership, and clear accountability from the Management Board and Executive Team to first-line managers.

Leadership influences the culture of an organisation; how managers behave sets a crucial example. Both who leaders *are* and what leaders *do* are vital to promoting and mainstreaming equality and diversity.

Roles and responsibilities

The **Chief Executive**, working closely with the Executive Team and Management Board, is accountable for ensuring that our equality and diversity strategy is put into practice. The Management Board has overall accountability for ensuring the strategy and action plan is implemented, monitored and reviewed.

All directors are responsible for promoting diversity and ensuring that their functions, policies and services are reviewed for equality and diversity. The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development is responsible for ensuring the employment duty is implemented. This director also chairs the Positive Action Group, which consists of committed staff from all departments. This group identifies barriers and proposes initiatives to improve performance on equality and diversity.

All managers are responsible for ensuring that their teams work effectively together, that individuals have regular feedback about their performance, including behaviour, and that staff receive relevant support on equality of opportunity and career development.

A new **Equality and Diversity Working Group** is accountable for developing and overseeing the equality and diversity action plan. This group comprises leaders from The National Archives, including a non-executive board member, and those responsible for promoting and delivering equality and diversity.

The **Equality and Diversity Coordinator** works with the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development to promote and support equality and diversity across the organisation through coordinating the action plan. The Outreach and Inclusion Manager is responsible for promoting our services and holdings to new audiences.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **ensure that there is clear accountability from the Management Board, Executive Team and line managers**
- **make leaders and managers aware of their responsibility to promote equality and diversity, and support them in this**

Leading and transforming information management

Our role in leading and transforming information management has led us to refocus our skills on influencing central government departments on how information is managed. This is helping to build the capability that future archives depend on, improving the effectiveness of public services and increasing trust in the government's ability and accountability.

What to keep

The basis of enabling people to reuse and access information is ensuring that the right information is kept and remains accessible for as long as it is needed. This is becoming more challenging as we use new forms of communication and generate more information. In a complex digital world, our advisory and consultative role to government departments is ever more important, helping them understand what information to keep and how.

Reuse of public sector information

Providing access to information not only underpins the work of government but is vital to citizens in their everyday lives, and is key to our services. We play an important role in enabling the government to open up data and promote transparency. We are working to ensure that public data is published in a reusable form, and is easily accessible online. We launched a new online service in March 2010 that will provide a single point of access to UK legislation. Our work in enabling easier and wider access to information is seen as key to empowering citizens and communities to improve public services. The ability to share information and compare data enables choice and helps raise standards. Access to information can also help individuals become more independent.

Selection processes

Our Acquisition and Disposition Strategy and selection policies guide the government on selecting public records for historical preservation. An awareness of equality and diversity is important in interpreting policy and deciding what to select for transfer.

Our commitment:

- **We will ensure that equality and diversity are actively considered in selecting records for transfer to The National Archives**

Leadership and the wider archives sector

We are integral to leading and influencing the wider archives sector, aiming to ensure that all Britain's communities are included in our national story and heritage, and that archives are for all. This is in tune with our vision, in particular to bring history to life for everyone.

In the archives sector, our self-assessment exercise invites local authority archive services to demonstrate that they are actively engaging with a variety of communities that have previously been excluded. This exercise will continue under our proposed accreditation scheme for improving the archives sector.

The new government policy *Archives for the 21st Century* (see **Appendix E**) supports the sustainable development of the archives sector, driving up standards so that publicly funded archives can offer a full range of services to their communities.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **lead and support sector initiatives to make archives and catalogue data**

more accessible online to a more diverse audience

- **develop and promote initiatives to ensure that the sector's workforce becomes more diverse and has the leadership and professional skills required to meet future challenges**
- **develop a strategic overview of archive-collecting activity and work with institutions to address gaps and weaknesses in collecting to reflect the diverse community we serve**

Talent management

The way we manage our people is crucial if we are to attract, motivate, develop and retain a diverse range of skills. A rich mix of employees will help us improve our activities; our workforce should reflect the diverse society we serve. We must recognise that diversity and innovation are linked.

Raising the profile of The National Archives and having clear strategies that actively promote the organisation and its activities to diverse communities will help us have the right people in the right place. The Outreach and Inclusion Manager will support this by raising awareness of and interest in The National Archives among a wide range of people. In addition, our *Patterns of Work and Flexible Working Hours* policy covers flexible and part-time working, among other benefits, to attract and retain staff. We will encourage greater representation by monitoring our workforce and measuring the diversity of staff and job applicants against that of wider society. We will also explore new ways of promoting diversity in the workforce.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **continue to create an accessible and inclusive environment through developing and implementing policies and best practice**
- **develop new ways to attract a more diverse range of job applicants**
- **identify where there may be barriers to career progression or development, for example areas where some groups of people are under-represented**

Representation

We will monitor representation and use this data to inform our action plan so we can prioritise and review what we do best and what we could do better, identifying groups that are hard to reach and devising initiatives that will include them. We need to get a clear picture of how successfully we are implementing the equality and diversity strategy and action plan.

Involvement and consultation

To meet our legal duties, we need to keep communicating with employees, service users, trade unions and other stakeholders – about services, initiatives, policies and processes.

Our main channels of consultation include:

- representative groups, including the Positive Action Group, Policy Review Group, Archus (our lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender staff forum), Disability Staff Forum and the TNA Staff Forum
- trade unions, through the departmental Whitley Council
- Customer User Forum and survey
- the staff survey

We involve users in designing and developing services, and encourage all staff to provide informal feedback, ideas and suggestions.

Building strong networks is important, so we work with other government organisations, external bodies, and private-sector and voluntary organisations. We have a User Advisory Group on Social Inclusion (UAGSI) and we regularly survey customer satisfaction. We must include all aspects of diversity in our processes for seeking and receiving feedback. We are also involved in consultative processes and groups such as the Heritage Diversity Task Force, developing and sharing good practice on inclusion and access to collections across the archives sector.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **continually engage others and review our activities through consulting trade unions, employees, service users and other stakeholders**
- **monitor the diversity of our staff and customers (visiting us both onsite and online)**

Developing new audiences and outreach

In line with government objectives on increasing access and promoting tolerance and respect, we have a duty to make our collection and services accessible and relevant to as broad a range of people as possible. Traditionally, many individuals and communities have not used the collections or services of museums and archives. This is particularly true of disabled people, black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, some faith groups, people on low incomes, and people with multiple forms of disadvantage. The reasons for this vary:

- Some people may believe that our collections or services hold nothing of relevance or interest to them.
- Disabled users may think that the collections or services are inaccessible to them.
- Some people fear that they would not be made welcome, or that it would be costly or too challenging to participate.

We have the opportunity to encourage all communities to feel that they belong, and that they have ownership of historical and public records. Archives can empower people and help communities and individuals better understand each other. But if we are going to serve the needs of our wider audiences, we must understand and overcome some of

the barriers that prevent individuals and communities engaging with and enjoying what we hold.

Outreach is the means by which organisations such as archives reach out to these new users, consulting and working with them directly or through advocacy groups or charities. In this way, the organisations can understand different users' needs and perspectives to broaden access and encourage participation. Outreach activity must also be supported by both internal and external developments to ensure we reach these audiences in a sustainable way. Toolkits such as the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's *Revisiting Archive Collections* promotes access to, and engagement with, collections for people who may not use archives (see **Appendix E**).

Our Prisoner 4099 project created a web resource that visually impaired students can access; it led to improving access to other new web resources such as our *World War 2* resource for schools. This is a clear example of how an outreach project benefits a hard-to-reach audience, other audiences and our own organisation. Sustained and targeted marketing, guided by an understanding of the users' different perspectives and needs, can make the positive impact more effective and long lasting.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **understand the barriers to using our services and collections, by consulting people and following best practice**
- **build sustainable relationships with hard-to-reach communities, by working in partnership with them**
- **harness and develop specialist skills, knowledge and expertise internally and externally to support the development of new users**
- **use knowledge we gain through consulting people, and best practice, to better understand users' needs and preferences, and so plan positive action**

Education

The recent report *Taking Part* (Department for Culture, Media and Sport – DCMS) found that the most significant factor in deciding whether an adult visits a museum, library or archive is whether they visited such places as a child. Schools and places where adults learn informally offer the best opportunity to work with a diverse group of people. Recent developments in government policy and the National Curriculum (see **Appendix E**) require schools to work with the cultural and heritage sectors. The importance of archives in supporting informal adult learning is recognised in the white paper *The Learning Revolution*, published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. We need to ensure that school groups are not excluded by geography, social or ethnic intake, or student ability and attainment. An education and audience development programme can contribute significantly to this equality and diversity strategy.

Our commitment:

We will extend access to education services for all student groups by:

- **selecting a more diverse range of source material**
- **using technology to support remote access**
- **ensuring all web resources are fully accessible**
- **developing new services to meet the learning needs of specific groups of students where practicable**
- **ensuring social and ethnic inclusion is maintained in schools audience**

Collection and catalogue

Where poor or no catalogue descriptions exist, we need to provide accurate and useful descriptions that are socially inclusive. Three areas to consider are:

- selecting material to be catalogued
- applying social inclusion principles to cataloguing
- using inclusive language and terminology

When we decide which un-catalogued material to prioritise, we should bear in mind the government's requirement for public services to be socially inclusive, including the greatest possible number of social groups and those that have traditionally been excluded.

Guidance stresses the need to describe archives using language that is fully descriptive, concise and socially inclusive, particularly since material being catalogued may have offensive language and distressing content which can be noted in quotation marks. A need to widen participation in cataloguing has also been identified. We have already started this by hosting volunteer cataloguing projects, such as 'Your Caribbean Heritage', and inviting users to participate through Your Archives (our wiki).

We continue to improve search facilities that throw light on 'hidden' histories of groups and people who have been traditionally marginalised, to uncover the rich information in our collections. For example, Matt Houlbrook's paper 'Gay and Lesbian History at The National Archives: an introduction' discussed the obstacles faced by researchers looking for gay and lesbian resources in our collections.

We consult the User Advisory Group on Social Inclusion. The remit of this group, since 2002, has been to advise our staff on the catalogue improvement programme, description and use of language in the catalogue, and usability of the catalogue. For more information on social inclusion and cataloguing guidelines, see **Appendix C**.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **widen participation in cataloguing to include volunteers from relevant communities**
- **develop the use of language in archival description that is descriptive, concise and socially inclusive**
- **improve search facilities, exploring 'hidden' histories and a diverse range of records, so uncovering the rich information in our collections**

Volunteers

Volunteers can add to the diversity of the organisation and provide a wide range of talent. For example, we currently operate a 'Back to Work' scheme with Richmond Council for Voluntary Services (RCVS) to help people who have mental health problems and are finding it difficult to return to work. Projects need to be graded by complexity; the training needs of staff and volunteers should be assessed, and support provided.

The 'Your Caribbean Heritage' project is an example of best practice, with volunteers drawing on their own experiences and knowledge. A group of people with links to St Lucia provide full descriptions to include in the catalogue. The group received training in document handling and catalogue editing: skills that normally only professional archivists have. The group has shed light on forced and free migration within and outside the region, the rights of free people, and family relations between free people and slaves.

Online

In developing our online services, we have an opportunity to diversify, present a wider perspective and involve new audiences. The use of online resources can create greater access; currently around 90 per cent of our users are online. Anecdotal evidence in the report *Digital Britain 2009* suggests that an interest in family history has prompted some people to use a PC for the first time. This is often the case for our visitors, for example with substantial progress made in reaching out to older age groups. Our email newsletter is read by over 100,000 people, with 70% aged over 55 and an impressive 10% over 75, according to our survey. For many of our readers, finding out about family and social history has been a great way to connect with other people and communities, the common interest leading to following new strands of enquiry, making new friends and even finding family members. Our podcasts are now ranked second in the 'government online' category.

The range of our online services continues to widen, covering education, historical research, family history, legislation and government information. There are two main aspects to be considered: technical and content. Content relates to what we choose to make available online, and how we present that inclusively for broader appeal; for example, our future catalogue will present itself as a 'one stop', intuitive online system. We can widen our user base through developing new audiences and user consultation. As we develop and expand our online resources, strategic marketing can build our reputation as an organisation with a diverse range of materials.

As our online service grows, ensuring that all online content is accessible to disabled customers and staff, with a mechanism for testing and review is ever more necessary. To achieve this, we need to ensure that we robustly test usability and accessibility in line with guidelines and standards and beyond. While the growth of online services makes it easier for some audiences to use our services, we need to maintain other successful approaches to attracting diverse audiences. This is particularly so for those who have limited access to the internet or limited technical knowledge due to lack of exposure or education, or due to disability or poverty.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **widen our user base through developing new audiences and user consultation and expanding online resources to include a more diverse range of documents and material**
- **ensure that all online content is designed to be accessible to all customers and staff to a high standard**
- **improve our websites and their accessibility so they are a focal point for those who use government records online**
- **ensure that legislation is available for all and presented in an accessible way**

Marketing and communications

How we choose to present ourselves and our message is key in deciding the customers, staff and partners we attract. It is important that we support this by what we are doing. We can use branding, marketing and web design to have a positive impact. This means creating a reputation as an organisation that considers equality, diversity and access as core in all we do, and delivering tangible results.

Our commitment:

We will:

- **consider diversity in how we represent our collections in generic marketing campaigns**
- **develop strategic marketing to build our reputation as an organisation with a diverse range of materials available and wide appeal**

Appendix A – Laws and related duties

We will comply with all current equality and human rights law in Britain. Key laws and duties are listed below; for further information, go to:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/information-for-advisers/key-legislation/.

Public-sector duties are equality laws that make public bodies legally responsible for showing they are taking action on race, disability and gender equality in policy making, service delivery and employment. For further information, go to:

www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/information-for-advisers/public-sector-duties/.

The Equality Bill, expected to come into force by autumn 2010, will replace nine laws and more than 100 other measures, including the following:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act 2006
- Equal Pay Act 1970 (amended 1984)
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (updated 1986)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Having a single act will make it easier for employers and staff to understand their legal rights and obligations. For further information go to:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

Appendix B – Summary of the Equality Bill

The bill has two main purposes – to harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality. It will bring together and restate all the laws and duties listed in **Appendix A** and a number of other related provisions. It will harmonise existing provisions to give a single approach where appropriate. Most of the existing law will be repealed. But the part of the Equality Act 2006 (as amended by the bill) that relates to how the Equality and Human Rights Commission is made up and works will remain in force, as will the part of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 relating to Northern Ireland.

On 6 April 2010, the Equality Bill completed its parliamentary journey and on 8 April 2010 it received Royal Assent. There were no last-minute amendments so the Act is in the form agreed at the House of Lords' Report Stage.

The timetable for implementing the Equality Act is as follows:

- **October 2010:** main provisions of the Act will come into force
- **April 2011:** the integrated public sector equality duty, the socio-economic duty and dual discrimination protection will come into force
- **2012:** the ban on age discrimination in provision of goods, facilities, services and public functions will come into force
- **2013:** Private and voluntary sector gender pay transparency regulations (if required) will come into force, as will the requirement for political parties to publish diversity data

Appendix C – Social inclusion and cataloguing

This brief guide provides an overview of and general guidance on the role of social inclusion in cataloguing. Three broad areas need to be considered in relation to the government's agenda on social inclusion: the selection of material to be catalogued, underlying cataloguing principles, and use of language and terminology.

When an archive organisation decides which un-catalogued material to prioritise, it should bear in mind the government's social inclusion agenda for public services. This focuses on the need to include the greatest number of social groups, including groups that have been traditionally excluded from such services.

Underlying cataloguing principles should be maintained. A consistent catalogue structure, keeping to established archival standards, is essential. This facilitates easy maintenance and successful searching, giving users access to relevant material in the quickest way. Wherever possible, elaborate structures should be avoided. At all levels, a statement giving information about the form and subject matter is needed. The main statement of what the material is and what it relates to (often in terms of subjects, people and places) enables users to make an informed decision about whether they want to investigate the material further or not. Cataloguers should follow the principles of plain English, avoiding elaborate descriptions by omitting or explaining obscure or ambiguous terms, such as acronyms and abbreviations. Guidance stresses the need to describe archives using language that is fully descriptive, concise and as socially inclusive as possible. Description of all communities should be objective.

Material being catalogued may contain offensive language and distressing content. For instance, it may include terms regarding race, disability and gender that are now unacceptable, for example 'subnormal' and 'natives'; there is a risk of repeating an offensive term in describing the records. This can be avoided by adding quotation marks, making it clear that the word or term is a quotation from the record and not a statement of fact or a term chosen by the cataloguer. This has the added benefit of not interfering with language appearing in original documents, which, however unpalatable to us, may reflect thoughts and opinions held by some people at a given time and so genuinely reflect history.

Another issue of terminology is the choice of language used by government officials within records and the meaning attached to it. For example, in Colonial Office files held at The National Archives, labour disputes are often described as 'civil disturbances', playing down the action, whereas it is clear looking at the content of the file that the 'disturbance' was actually a riot.

Appendix D – Definitions

A number of terms need to be clearly and consistently introduced into our planning process to avoid confusion over the aims of this strategy.

Social exclusion and inclusion – ‘social exclusion’ refers to the possible social (and personal) consequences of poverty, discrimination and disadvantage. It is based on a relative definition of poverty, in which people whose standards of living fall well below the norm are seen to be at risk of being isolated and marginalised in society. ‘Social inclusion’ refers to the goal of achieving social integration, often through higher levels of employment and participation.

Improving access includes ensuring that we make all our services and resources available to the widest possible number of users. Barriers to this could be physical, financial, cultural, informational, intellectual or policy-based. Checking for such barriers and tackling them, bearing in mind legal requirements, is an ongoing task.

Audience development can begin to widen the user base of an organisation, once services are being delivered to meet user needs. This means consulting and working with new users to ensure that we offer and market services in ways that are relevant to them. Sustaining those services while being open to new learning is vitally important.

Equal opportunity includes ending any overt forms of unfair discrimination, and putting into action measures to ensure fair competition. Positive action measures may be needed to ensure genuine equality of opportunity. In some cases, the term ‘equal opportunity’ is being replaced by ‘equality’ when talking about providing equal treatment and an equal standard of service.

Diversity describes the range of visible and invisible differences that exist between people. Managing diversity harnesses these differences to create a productive environment where everybody feels valued and respected, talents are fully utilised, and organisational goals are met.

Recognising and celebrating equality and diversity are terms often used about employment policies and inclusive public services. Organisations must reflect the public they serve in their staff profile. Valuing the contributions of people from a diverse range of backgrounds including gender, race, disability and sexual orientation – and also individuals and groups facing discrimination on the grounds of age, language, social origin or other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, for example on religion or politics – creates a socially inclusive organisation.

Positive action may legally be taken to improve the diversity of the workforce. Helping staff to reflect this positive attitude to diversity in dealing with service users, through customer care training, ensures that efforts to encourage new users are supported by good experiences when they visit.

Disability – the definition of disabled people under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 covers people with a wide variety of disabilities. We use the social model in our approach to disability, as recommended by the Equality and Human Rights Commission

(EHRC). The social model states that disabled people face physical and social barriers that result from social structures and attitudes, rather than from their impairment or medical condition.

Our wider understanding of this definition is as follows:

We are committed to breaking down any physical or social barriers that may prevent everyone joining in and getting involved. We will do this by creating more inclusive environments. We will develop and implement a range of initiatives and activities that support staff and the public such as the *Access to Work* scheme, staff forums, staff training, and improving access to our onsite and online services.

Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming equality and diversity means systematically considering, when planning, implementing and evaluating all policies or initiatives, the impact on disadvantaged groups. Mainstreaming should ensure that all opportunities are available and accessible to all potential participants, and do not adversely affect any disadvantaged groups.

Equality and diversity is the goal; mainstreaming is a process that aims to achieve this.

Appendix E – Guidance and best practice

Archives for the 21st Century (2009)

Archives have a wider role than looking after the national memory. Archives can contribute to local policies that affect people's daily lives, particularly in education and learning, empowering and involving communities, supporting regeneration and facilitating volunteering. *Archives for the 21st Century*, the new government policy on archives, sets out a path for publicly funded services in England and Wales, to raise awareness of how archives contribute to everyone's lives and to kick-start action to ensure they survive.

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/Aft21C

Revisiting Archive Collections (2008)

Revisiting Collections is a new method developed by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and Collections Trust. It supports museums and archives to open their collections for scrutiny by community groups and external experts, and to reveal and capture hidden or ignored histories. Revisiting Collections provides a framework for capturing and embedding these new perspectives in the museum's records or archive's catalogues, and for finding aids to this, ensuring that the perspectives become accessible to all.

www.collectionslink.org.uk/programmes/revisiting-collections

www.collectionslink.org.uk/programmes/revisiting-collections/995-revisiting-archive-collections-toolkit

Delivering Shared Heritage: The Mayor's Commission on African and Asian Heritage (MCAAH) (2005)

This report investigated the needs of heritage organisations based in African and Asian communities, and assessed how they serve the needs of these groups in London. It identified opportunities to better include the heritage and historical contributions of African, Asian and Caribbean citizens.

www.london.gov.uk (search for 'Delivering Shared Heritage')

Embedding Shared Heritage: The Heritage Diversity Task Force Report (2009)

Following *Delivering Shared Heritage*, the Heritage Diversity Task Force ran a two-year consultation with heritage professionals, exchanging best practice and developing strategy. The result was this best-practice guide for embedding cultural diversity across London's heritage sector.

www.london.gov.uk/who-runs-london/mayor/publications/culture/heritage-diversity-task-force-report

Taking Part (2008)

This survey was commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and its partner public bodies to collect data about who does and does not get involved in culture, leisure and sport.

www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/research_and_statistics/4828.aspx

Find your Talent (launched by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2008)

Over the next three years, the government will work towards all children and young people having the chance to participate in at least five hours a week of high-quality culture in and out of school.

www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/arts/5217.aspx

www.findyourtalent.org

Every Child Matters (2003) and The Children's Plan (2007)

Underpins all policy development and service delivery for children and young people and aims to give all children the support they need to:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/EveryChildMatters.pdf

The Learning Revolution (2009)

This white paper, from the Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS), reaffirms the government's commitment to informal learning and sets out how the government will maximise the potential benefits of this.

www.dius.gov.uk/skills/engaging_learners/informal_adult_learning/white_paper