



THE LORD CHANCELLOR'S
FORUM ON HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS AND
ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Date: 6th June 2013
Time: 13:15 – 16:40 pm
Venue: The National Archives
Chair: Dr Clive Field
Minutes: Trish Humphries

Members:

Dr Bendor Grosvenor
Dr Clive Field
Professor Michael Moss
Ms Elizabeth Lomas
Dr Christopher Ridgway

Non-members:

Dr Norman James, Senior Manager (Private Archives),
The National Archives
Mr Nick Kingsley, Head of Archives Sector Development,
The National Archives
Dr Valerie Johnson, Research and Policy Manager,
The National Archives
Mr Oliver Morley, Chief Executive, The National Archives

Ms Anne Barrett, Imperial College London
Ms Fleur Soper, Collections Knowledge Manager, The National Archives
Ms Melinda Haunton, Programme Manager, The National Archives

1.	Welcome and Introductions
1.1	Apologies for absence were received from the Master of the Rolls, Dr Ian Mortimer and Mr Clive Cheesman. Forum members agreed that, in the absence of the Master of the Rolls, Dr Field should take the Chair for this meeting, with Mr Morley chairing Agenda Item 3, Discussion on Forum Achievements and Future Strategy. Dr Field welcomed members to the tenth meeting of the Lord Chancellor's Forum on Historical Manuscripts and Academic Research.
2.	Presentation on the work of the Centre for Scientific Archives
2.2	Dr Field introduced Ms Anne Barrett, Chair of the Trustees of the Centre for Scientific Archives (CSA), who gave a brief presentation on the background and work of the Centre.
2.3	Scientific archives comprise scientific and personal manuscript papers. They can be reapplied to

	new technical inventions and provide a rich resource of hidden history, with workings which might help technological advances today.
2.4	The CSA is a successor body to Contemporary Scientific Archives, and currently employs two archivists, working on cataloguing projects.
2.5	A business plan for the next few years has been developed, but is heavily dependent on further funding. Ms Barrett advised that the Centre would like to identify and work with 'Champions' but at present does not have a strong enough basis to ask people to become patrons.
2.6	The level of current funding will only permit work for this year. Additional funding is urgently required and Forum members were advised that any advice would be welcome. Members felt it was important to make a solid case for the centre, and suggested that a short, concise paper be produced outlining what is needed, risks and objectives.
2.7	Further promotion, through the website, fundraising events, lobbying, approaching external organisations and colleges could then be considered.
2.8	Dr Field clarified that the Centre is not a repository in its own right but catalogues scientific papers being held by other repositories, some of which is carried out by legacy funding. It is also acting as a broker to match papers with an appropriate repository. If this was not done, it was likely that papers would either be left in private collections or destroyed as families are often not aware of their importance.
2.9	It was suggested that scientific papers of all kinds, not just those of eminent scientists, appear to be less accessible than those relating to, for example, literature and people do not realise what important history they may contain. Many papers belonging to academics end up in university archives who do not have the expertise to identify or catalogue them. Also this is not core business to the universities.
2.10	Forum members were impressed with the enormous amount of work being done by people on a voluntary basis to keep the centre operating and thanked Ms Barrett for her presentation.

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting on 7th March 2013 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of discussions and decisions taken. Members noted that the draft minutes had been circulated to The Advisory Council for information and spoken to by Dr Field at that Council's last meeting in May.

Matters Arising

- 1.1 1.5 Support for private archives
 Dr Johnson advised that the Catalyst funding bid had passed through the Stage 1 process.
 [Post meeting note: The Heritage Lottery Fund announced on 13 June the award of a Catalyst Umbrella grant to The National Archives of £484,100]
- Forum members were advised that, following a departmental restructure, the Research team would be moving into the Technology directorate, although it was likely that the additional research post mentioned at the previous meeting would stay within the Archive Sector Development team.
- 1.2 1.3 Wedgwood Collection
 Dr James provided a brief update on the situation regarding the collection and members noted that it was hoped a positive outcome would be achieved.
- 1.3 1.2 Bangor University Archives
 Dr James advised that in response to a request from the Forum, a draft strategy had now been

	produced and a more stable environment created. The proposed strategy was awaiting approval by the relevant University Committee. The new librarian at Bangor understood the challenge and was making strenuous efforts to address it.
1.4	<u>Liverpool Record Office</u> Dr James advised that he would be visiting the Liverpool Record Office in June
1.5	<u>HHA</u> Dr James advised that the Private Archives Team had been invited to Knowsley Hall to view the archive collection and discuss future deposits to local archives. A report will be brought to the next meeting.
3.	Discussion on Forum Achievements and Future Strategy
3.1	Mr Morley took the Chair for this item, to ensure that all Forum members were free to contribute fully to the discussion, which had been prompted by members' concerns that they could be providing more value to The National Archives, and utilising their specialist skills. There had also been a request for the Forum to review its priorities, having now been in existence for almost three years.
3.2	Thanks were expressed to Ms Lomas for producing a comprehensive paper and set of recommendations.
3.3	Ms Lomas advised that it was hoped the discussion would lead to agreement on a series of recommendations which could be put to the Advisory Council for ratification and strengthen the process in which Council and Forum work together. She stressed that the intention was not to criticise the Forum but enable members to provide better value to The National Archives.
3.4	A complementary paper provided by Mr Kingsley on future strategy of The National Archives with regard to the wider archive sector was well received by Forum members, who agreed that its content helped inform the discussion.
3.5	It was acknowledged that any proposed changes to the work of the Forum would have to be reflected in its Terms of Reference (TOR), again to be signed off by the Advisory Council. Members agreed that a revised paper, incorporating information provided in Mr Kingsley's report, be forwarded to the Master of the Rolls for his approval before being put to Council.
3.6	For clarity, it was agreed that reference to Private Archives means archives which are not public records. These may be in public hands.
3.7	Forum members discussed in detail the recommendations contained in the discussion paper and clarified the type of issues which should be brought to the Forum.
3.8	It was agreed that matters relating to private records, held in public and private hands, and issues covered within the Archive Sector Development team at The National Archives, should all be in scope.
3.9	Members felt that it would be helpful to have a clear strategic vision for private archives, with an overview of strategic priorities being produced at the beginning of each year. Mr Kingsley advised that the views of the Forum would be welcomed in a number of areas, including the decision on how activities within his team are prioritised. Involvement in work developing archives of the future could also be considered.
3.10	It was suggested that the Forum should define other strategic issues it would like to review, and contribute to meeting agendas.
3.11	It was agreed that Mr Kingsley should be free to respond when needs arose and any strategy document should not restrict the work of the team.

3.12	Continued liaison with the Academic Research team was felt to be important and Dr Johnson advised that she would welcome Forum input when revising strategies. It was agreed that papers by Mr Kingsley and Dr Johnson on the work of their teams be circulated to members as they were produced, and not just as agenda items for meetings.
3.13	Forum members felt that it was vital to stress that the Forum was a resource to be drawn upon throughout the year, and interactions should not just take place at meetings.
3.14	In relation to the Historic Manuscript Commissioner's role, it was agreed that the Forum should take a 'Championship' role, to give a broad range of options when considering advice and assistance.
3.15	The future membership of the Forum was also discussed and it was felt that the composition of the group should reflect the scope of issues being considered, and align with the way the Advisory Council is appointed. The appointment of a formal Deputy Chair was agreed, although Mr Morley confirmed that as this appointment would need to be made within OCPA regulations, it would take some time to complete.
3.16	Members felt that the official name of the Forum should be more concise and following discussion, recommended the <i>Historical Records and Research Forum</i> .
3.17	A number of additional recommendations within the report were considered and supported.
3.18	It was agreed that Ms Lomas produce a revised and amended paper with input from members, which will be submitted to the Master of the Rolls and the next Advisory Council meeting.
4.	Update on Acceptance in Lieu of Tax Cases / Conditional Exemptions
4.1	Dr James advised that two conditional exemption cases had recently been dealt with.
4.2	A case considered by the Forum had been accepted within the new Cultural Giving scheme, and members noted that this was one of the first cases to involve manuscript items.
5.	Archiving the Arts: sustainability and collection development
5.1	Ms Fleur Soper, Collections Knowledge Manager, gave a brief update on the Archiving the Arts Strategy, which is being developed to support the development and improvement for those collections wherever they are held.
5.2	Ms Soper outlined the work undertaken so far with archivists and collecting institutions. The results of initial research had revealed that a complex range of records is being created which are largely digital. Whilst there is an overall understanding of the importance of capturing, preserving and sharing archives of the arts, sustainability is challenged by the availability of long term funding and there is often a lack of informed decision-making on effective custody and preservation.
5.3	Five key recommendations have been highlighted and the team is continuing to work alongside the Arts Council, delivering a recent workshop. The strategy aims to share skills and knowledge by bringing people and resources together, realising the value of current and future collections to the creative economy and cultural sector. An internal investment bid to gain two posts to deliver the strategy had been successful.
5.4	More workshops are being planned and a major UK-wide collections survey will be launched in July to identify collections worthy of preservation and online publication, which will be supported by advice to owners and custodians.

5.5 Forum members were pleased to note the progress made and asked for a further report to be brought to a future meeting. Members also noted they could have been involved at an earlier stage in discussions.

Thanks were expressed to Ms Soper and her team.

6. Archives Service Accreditation

6.1 Ms Melinda Haunton, Programme Manager, joined the meeting to provide an update on the progress of the Archive Service Accreditation scheme.

6.2 Members were pleased to note that the standard will be published during June, achieving a new standard and development programme for the archive sector.

6.3 Ms Haunton advised that the final stages of the process had involved a pilot of twenty varied archive services. The standard mirrors the structure of the museum accreditation standard although it recognises the differing needs of the sector's collections and users. Applications to the scheme will be received in late summer, initially from services involved in the pilot.

6.4 The accreditation will be UK wide and is supported by all four home nations. A Committee will be set up to own the Standard and scheme for the future. Partners will nominate a member each, with a wider recruitment held for additional members, to ensure experience across the sector.

6.5 Thanks were expressed to Ms Haunton for the successful delivery of a long standing, and much needed project.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 *Research and Academic Liaison Update:*
Members noted the update report of activities within the Research and Academic Liaison team, and expressed their appreciation of the amount of work undertaken.

7.2 *Strategic Advisory and Casework in Archive Sector Development Department:*
Mr Kingsley's update report was acknowledged, with members pleased to see the breadth and depth of activities.

Members asked for the final report on the ABC project to be circulated, following its publication.

7.3 *Audit Inspection of Parliamentary Archives:*
Dr James advised that he would be carrying out an audit inspection of the Parliamentary Archives in July.

7.4 *Data Protection Regulations:*
Mr Morley gave a brief update on the progress around the European Data Protection regulations. The UK Government has significant reservations about the current drafting, in respect to the implications for the processing of personal data. Work was being led by the European Board of National Archives and UBICA.

Date of Next Meeting: Post Meeting Note – The next meeting will be held on 31 October in central London, location to be confirmed.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.