



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

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**Date:** 31 October 2013  
**Time:** 11.30 – 14.30  
**Venue:** N M Rothschild & Sons Ltd, New Court, St Swithin's Lane, London EC4N 8AL  
**Chair:** Dr Clive Field  
**Minutes:** Trish Humphries  
**Members:**  
Dr Clive Field  
Professor Michael Moss  
Dr Christopher Ridgway  
Dr Ian Mortimer  
Mr Clive Cheesman

**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 Julie Lennard, Head of Chief Executive's Office, The National Archives  
Ms Emma Markiewicz, Initiative Development Manager, The National Archives

	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from the Master of the Rolls, Dr Bendor Grosvenor and Ms Elizabeth Lomas</p> <p>Forum members agreed that, in the absence of the Master of the Rolls, Dr Field should take the Chair for this meeting. Dr Field welcomed members to the eleventh meeting of the Lord Chancellor's Forum on Historical Manuscripts and Academic Research.</p> <p>Dr Field expressed thanks to N M Rothschild for kindly agreeing to host the meeting and members recorded their appreciation.</p>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising</b>
1.1	The Minutes of previous meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> June 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.

<p>1.2</p> <p>1.3</p>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><i>3.1 Triennial Review:</i> Mr Morley confirmed that an extension of the membership for those members whose term was due to expire at the end of 2013 had now been approved for a period of six months. The extension had been granted because of the delay in obtaining ministerial approval for Stage 1 of the review. However this had now been verbally signed off by ministers and the Review Team were undertaking Stage 2.</p> <p>It was noted that the outcome of the review was likely to have some implications for the Forum and therefore it would not be appropriate to take forward certain aspects of the discussions on the future strategy of the Forum until the review was completed.</p> <p>Following consideration of the future strategy paper and discussion at the last Advisory Council meeting, one name change suggestion had been received from Arthur Lucas. This will be considered when the Forum future strategy review is discussed.</p> <p><i>1.5 Knowsley Hall:</i> Dr James advised that a visit had been made to Knowsley Hall to view the 20<sup>th</sup> century papers of the Derby family, and a report had been submitted to Lord Derby regarding possible places of deposit for the papers.</p> <p>Dr James and Mr Clem Brohier had also attended a recent Study Day at Knowsley Hall. This had been very informative, and the presence of staff from The National Archives had been noted.</p>
<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p><b>Strategic Vision for The National Archives Leadership of the Archives Sector</b></p>
<p>2.1</p> <p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p> <p>2.4</p> <p>2.5</p> <p>2.6</p> <p>2.7</p>	<p>Following discussion at last meeting, Mr Kingsley had agreed to produce a paper outlining the strategic vision for The National Archives' leadership of the Archives sector, which would complement the Forum future strategy review paper. A paper had been circulated for discussion, to provide some clarity and enable Forum members to monitor activities being undertaken in respect of sector leadership and Royal Warrant responsibilities.</p> <p>The paper identified many of the challenges facing the archive sector, with suggested plans for how they may be addressed. Some elements of the paper had not been articulated in this form before, such as the SWOT analysis, and Mr Kingsley advised that this had proved to be a useful exercise.</p> <p>A number of possible areas for future focus in relation to private archive work were noted. Members were advised that the implementation of the business archives strategy would be completed in early 2014 and it was hoped this would provide an opportunity to move some resources in to supporting another area. Consideration would need to be given to identifying the areas and issues most in need of support.</p> <p>Mr Kingsley advised that an external review of The National Archives' sector leadership had been commissioned, and any recommendations would need to be reflected in the next iteration of the paper. The review report will be circulated when complete.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Mr Kingsley to circulate the review report when available.</p> <p>Members felt the paper was very informative and complemented the earlier Forum review report, although there was some concern that it focused more on what is currently being done and less on looking ahead.</p> <p>It was also felt that one of the main challenges for the future concerned the digitisation of private archives and capturing of born digital records. Mr Kingsley confirmed he would be happy to include more reference to this issue, bringing in key messages from the Archives for the 21st century policy. Members of his team were also working with the Digital Preservation Coalition to revise the handbook.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note that work on putting in place standard specifications for digital</p>

	services was now underway, which should help.
2.8	The SWOT analysis was discussed and a number of points were raised:  Following discussion, the SWOT was broadly agreed.
2.9	<b>ACTION:</b> Dr James to provide a supplementary high level paper on private archives for discussion at the next meeting.  The information on staffing resources, included to illustrate the challenges facing the department, was noted and succession within the department briefly discussed and Mr Kingsley agreed to circulate the Archive Sector Development Team's draft plans for the financial year 2014-15, when finalised.  <b>ACTION:</b> Mr Kingsley to circulate the ASD team's draft plans to members.
2.10	In response to a suggestion for a broader Vision of the Archives in the Future paper, Mr Kingsley advised that this would be addressed in the Archives for the 21st Century successor. He confirmed that over the next six months, his team would be planning this with a view to release in autumn 2015.
2.11	Members agreed that the paper was extremely informative and thanked Mr Kingsley for producing such detailed information.  <b>ACTION:</b> A further iteration of the paper, including an executive summary to be produced for the next meeting.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Update on Acceptance in Lieu of Tax Cases</b>
3.1	Members reviewed and discussed papers relating to two Acceptance in Lieu cases which had been circulated prior to the meeting and Dr James provided a brief update.
3.2	Following discussion, members endorsed the proposed recommendations.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Update on Strategic Advisory and Casework in the Archive Sector Development Department</b>
4.1	A comprehensive report on the recent activities of the Archives Sector Development Department had been circulated in advance of the meeting, and Mr Kingsley provided brief updates on some of the issues:
4.2	A project relating to Digital preservation in cloud storage was discussed. Members felt it would be useful to bring this issue to wider attention to encourage other users to take more proactive steps. Ms Markiewicz advised that a focus group was being set up representing people from public sector archives and their requirements and views would be taken on board.
4.3	Members asked about the type of advice provided to the National Heritage Memorial Fund regarding the papers of Thomas Bewick. Mr Kingsley advised that this was a particularly complicated case because the papers were widely scattered. Following discussion, members felt it was important to monitor such cases.  Thanks were expressed to Mr Kingsley and his team.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Export Stops and the Preservation of the UK's Archival Heritage</b>
5.1	Following the recent Export Stop case concerning Major James Wolfe's papers, members had

	expressed concern about the overall process and an explanatory paper had been produced by Dr James and circulated. The aim of the paper was to set out how the system operates and to provide information regarding the role of the champion.
5.2	Members noted that The National Archives have requested receipt of future press releases in order to be aware of cases as early as possible.
5.3	It was agreed that there does appear to be an issue around communication. The announcement regarding the Wolfe papers had been released at the height of the summer at the same time as others, including one which had generated a great deal of press interest.
5.4	Concern was also expressed about the delay in updating the website of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art.
5.5	Mr Morley advised that The National Archives has no formal role in the process but in his role as Historical Manuscripts Commissioner agreed to write to the Chair of the Documents Working Party committee and express the concerns of the Forum.
5.6	It was agreed that the concerns mainly related to the following issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of publicity regarding the availability of papers and the fact that the press release also referred to other material which was viewed as having a higher profile</li> <li>• A perceived lack of contact with historical experts and other organisations who may have been able to assist with a fund raising campaign if alerted earlier</li> <li>• A lack of transparency over the role of the champion</li> <li>• Delays in updating the website for the Reviewing Committee</li> </ul>
5.7	Members felt that generally archives and manuscripts were not seen to be as valuable as paintings and objects, although it was equally important that they be saved wherever possible. .
5.8	Dr Field suggested that the Forum could have a legitimate role in getting the public part of the process working better.

## **6. Explore Your Archives Campaign**

6.1	Ms Markiewicz gave a short presentation on a new campaign for the archive sector. She advised that the current archive awareness campaign had now been running for 10 years and it was felt that it should now be revisited and modernised with a view to raising profile. A small pilot on training had taken place recently, providing tools and materials to encourage the archive sector to build audience involvement. Work had also been undertaken with a communications agency and discussion with archive users and non users had taken place.
6.2	A toolkit had been developed and proved to be very helpful. This was now publicly available on the website. Feedback from local archives had indicated that they did not want specific themes which would be restrictive, but something that could be used by everyone and interpreted individually.
6.3	A new logo had also been designed and very positively received.
6.4	The new campaign was due to be launched with a week of events from 16th November. Local and community archives around the country had been involved and were using their own collections in a way which best suited them.
6.5	A website page and Twitter account had been set up with at least 150 organisations taking part in some way and many showcasing on the website. <a href="http://www.exploreyourarchive.org">www.exploreyourarchive.org</a>
6.6	The feedback and participation so far was very encouraging and it was hoped that future focus would concentrate more on engagement.

6.7 Ms Markiewicz admitted that evaluation of success of the project and events would be quite difficult and may not capture all organisations taking part they had not been asked to register.

Members thanked Ms Markiewicz for her informative presentation and wished the new campaign every success.

**7. Update on Research and Academic Liaison at The National Archives**

7.1 A comprehensive report on the recent activities of the Research and Academic Liaison Department had been circulated in advance of the meeting, and Dr Johnson provided brief updates on some of the issues.

7.2 In order to refresh the Research strategy, the Executive Team at The National Archives had been asked to review their research priorities and the team was now addressing these, with a view to future work being more strategic.

7.3 A report had been provided for The National Archives Management Board, outlining the current and pending commitments for the Research and Academic Liaison team and Dr Johnson agreed to circulate this to Forum members for information.

7.4 A number of recent research bids for grant funding had been successful, although the bid for a block grant in partnership with Glasgow and Loughborough had not been approved.

7.5 A new 'Big Ideas' project was commencing, with a programme of talks given by experts to showcase some of the research and partnership work being undertaken by The National Archives. Covering themes of innovation, creativity and excellence, speakers would be sharing aspects of innovative research.

7.6 The annual Gerald Aylmer seminar would be held in February, and members would be welcome to attend. Further details would be circulated in due course.

Members expressed their thanks to Dr Johnson for her report and confirmed that they would be pleased to receive updates and additional information when published, not just in advance of meetings.

**8. Any Other Business**

8.1 *Digital Sensitivity Review Project:*  
Professor Moss advised members of a joint research project being undertaken with Glasgow University looking at ways in which to apply state of the art information retrieval techniques to assist in the sensitivity review of digital records.

Members noted that private archives would be mainly affected with regard to personal information.

One of the main tasks for the project was developing algorithms to flag information for reviewers to consider. The amount of information to review would present huge challenges

The project was making good initial progress, and building a test collection of records. Volunteers were being asked to review sample documents for sensitivity using the tools being developed and Professor Moss advised that Forum members would be most welcome to take part.

The project has received interim funding, but was becoming a much larger piece of work than initially thought and was likely to take up to three years to complete. An application for ESRC funding was currently being developed.

Members agreed that this was a critical project and were very supportive. It was noted that

without adequate sensitivity review techniques for digital records, it was likely that far more information would be kept closed in future.

8.2 *Possible Manuscript Exhibition:*  
Dr Ridgway brought members' attention to a national manuscript exhibition which had been held at the National Portrait Gallery in 1969 to mark the centenary of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. 2019 would mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and also 50 years since the exhibition and he asked members opinion on the possibility of staging a new exhibition.

It was acknowledged that any such event would need considerable funding and Dr Johnson advised that she would be happy to provide initial advice on the possibility of research grants.

Following discussion, members agreed that the suggestion had the potential to raise public interest and awareness and merited further consideration. Dr Ridgway was asked to present a more detailed paper to a future meeting for discussion.

Members noted that this would be the last meeting attended by Mr Morley, who was leaving The National Archives to take up a position as Chief Executive of DVLA. Members recorded their formal gratitude to Mr Morley for the support provided to both the Advisory Council and Forum and wished him success for the future.

**There being no further business, the meeting was closed.**