



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

Date: Thursday 6th March 2014

Time: 12.45 – 4.30pm

Venue: The National Archives

Chair: Dr Clive Field

Minutes: Trish Humphries

Members:

Dr Clive Field
Dr Elizabeth Lomas
Dr Bendor Grosvenor
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, Head of Research, The National Archives
Mr Clem Brohier, Acting Chief Executive, The National Archives
Ms Julie Lennard, Head of Chief Executive's Office, The National Archives

	Welcome and Introductions
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from the Master of the Rolls, Dr Christopher Ridgway and Professor Michael Moss.</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 twelfth meeting of the Lord Chancellor's Forum on Historical Manuscripts and Academic Research.</p> <p>Members welcomed Mr Clem Brohier, Acting Chief Executive of The National Archives to his first Forum meeting.</p>
1.	Minutes and Matters Arising
	<p>The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 October 2013 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of discussions and decisions taken.</p> <p>Matters Arising As discussed at the previous meeting, Dr Johnson circulated a paper outlining the current</p>

	Research Commitments at The National Archives, for information.
1.1	<p><i>1.3 Knowsley Hall</i></p> <p>Dr James advised that as a mark of continued co-operation, Knowsley Hall will be lending some papers to the Liverpool Record Office for an exhibition.</p>
1.2	<p><i>1.2 Triennial Review</i></p> <p>Mr Brohier advised that the report on the recent Triennial Review of the Advisory Council had been submitted to the Ministry of Justice and was now with Cabinet Office, awaiting official sign off.</p>
1.3	<p>The Advisory Council had discussed the review at its recent meeting, especially regarding recruitment, and agreed that, dependent upon the outcome of the review, the size of the Forum should remain unchanged, with four Advisory Council members and three external members. The Council further agreed that there should not be a Deputy Chair for the Forum.</p> <p>The forthcoming recruitment of new members was discussed and members asked to be consulted on the process, especially relating to the experience and background required of candidates.</p> <p>Forum members were pleased to note that the Advisory Council had agreed that the Forum should continue in its present form and approved the general strategic route being taken.</p>

2.	Sector Leadership Review and Response
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2.1	Mr Kingsley advised that the recent review had been commissioned as part of the commitment to consult with the sector, in order to gain the views of the sector. An external reviewer had been used to ensure that people could express their views more openly. Forum members had been invited to comment on the report and observations received had been taken on board.
2.2	Overall the response had been positive, although it was acknowledged that some issues had not been fully addressed. However, many of the recommendations in the report were being put in place.
2.3	<p>Key points of the report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing focus on digital preservation • More clarity around addressing advocacy • More openness around communication • A need to define the offer to the private archive sector and higher education sector more openly
2.4	The National Archives had published a response to the report and accepted both the report and the recommendations made.
2.5	Members agreed that the report was very positive and congratulated The National Archives on its achievements, in particular the proposals to private archives and higher education authorities. It was agreed that communications was an issue which does need to be addressed.
2.6	The cost of the review was discussed and members felt that the text of the report was a little pretentious in places. However, the outcome had led to some important lessons being learned and the use of an external reviewer gave additional credibility. Members felt that some Forum or Advisory Council input to the questionnaire design and content at an earlier stage might have been beneficial.

3.	Strategic Vision for TNA Leadership of the Archives Sector - Update
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3.1	A further version of the Strategic Vision had been circulated to members and Mr Kingsley advised
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	that the main changes included the addition of an executive summary, the results of the leadership review, an updated business plan for the current year and some changes to the SWOT analysis.
3.2	It was hoped that the paper now provided Forum members sufficient overview to understand the approach being taken and to advise and challenge on sector leadership.
3.3	Dr Field thanked Mr Kingsley for the comprehensive report and members agreed that it should be circulated to Advisory Council members to illustrate the work being undertaken and the relationship with the Forum.
3.4	It was noted that the paper highlighted some issues, especially surrounding the private archive team. Mr Kingsley advised that although the team is small, a lot of the work which takes place in other teams also supports the private sector.
3.5	Members felt that the offer on private archives does appear relatively small and wondered whether it would be possible to address this, as many people in the private archive sector do not feel that The National Archives is configured to help them. A similar suggestion was made in relation to higher education.
3.6	Mr Kingsley assured members that these areas were being addressed and teams were building relationships with the relevant organisations. He acknowledged that there are some interesting challenges within the higher education sector as there is not always any consistency in the themes and order of their collections. There is also likely to be more challenge in the future on how they build their collections and apply a strategic collecting role.
3.7	Mr Kingsley further advised that his team was looking at mapping gaps between what organisations say they are doing and what is actually being done, to provide an element of challenge, an approach which was welcomed by members.
3.8	Dr Mortimer suggested that consideration be given to mapping the collection policies of higher education institutes and Mr Kingsley agreed to take this on board. Members felt that generally the higher education sector is more receptive to engagement with The National Archives than it has been for some time.
3.9	Mr Kingsley agreed that future strategy should reflect the priorities and needs of the sector and The National Archives' mandate and acknowledged the importance of considering what the archives of the future will look like.
3.10	Following discussion it was agreed that the shape of archives for the future should be discussed in more detail. ACTION: Archives for the future to be included on the agenda for the next meeting ACTION: Strategic Vision paper to be circulated to Advisory Council

4. Future Objectives and Priorities for the Private Archives Team

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| 4.1 | Following a recent request to provide a high level overview of the private archive sector and his team's objectives and priorities, Dr James had circulated a paper for consideration. He advised that the aim of the paper was to give an idea of the state of the sector and practical issues being faced, and what assistance could be provided. It also suggested areas for future focus. |
| 4.2 | Some details regarding resources were also included, and Dr James acknowledged the valuable contribution received from Forum members, for which the team continued to be very grateful. |
| 4.3 | Dr James advised that future priorities would include strengthening relationships already in place and taking on new projects where appropriate. |

4.4	Members welcomed the paper and following discussion, made a number of suggestions including the possibility of scoping a project to explore how private diaries and papers could be recorded and made available, and more surveying from the top of the sector down.
4.5	Dr Mortimer expressed a particular interest in the use of private diaries and agreed to prepare a paper outlining the context and how a project might be taken forward, to be discussed at the next meeting.
4.6	In response to a query, Mr Kingsley advised that work on the Manorial Documents Register continued and it was hoped that sufficient funding will be obtained to allow the project to be completed.
4.7	The paper outlined suggestions for future prioritisation which Forum members were asked to consider. It was agreed that both Science and Technology Archives and Philanthropic archives were areas worthy of consideration and Dr James was asked to carry out more detailed preliminary work to establish how guidance and assistance might be provided.
4.8	Forum members agreed that the paper should be forwarded to the Advisory Council to demonstrate how a specific element of the Forum remit had been reviewed in detail. ACTION: Paper to be forwarded to Advisory Council for information. ACTION: Dr James to prepare further paper on possible opportunities for engagement in the Science and Technology and Philanthropic archive sectors.
5.	Agenda Item 6. Finding Archives Presentation
5.1	The Collections Information & Systems Manager joined the meeting to give a presentation on the current status of the Finding Archives project.
5.2	Mr Kingsley advised that the project was running slightly behind schedule, but would hopefully be completed in July. Additional investment funding had been secured for the next two years, enabling tools to be built so that people could access and edit the data, and providing resource to enable the team to engage with the sector and publicise the project.
5.3	The project has been mostly based on bringing in catalogues from other archives to enable one over-arching search to be carried out. The Collections Information & Systems Manager explained how the search categories will work and advised that the outcome will be similar to the current Discovery service, permitting users to search through collections held by other organisations. Information about those organisations and institutions will also be included.
5.4	The next steps of the project will be to finalise all the remaining issues and set up demonstration workshops.
5.5	Mr Kingsley confirmed that in time it was hoped this project would provide a hosting mechanism for institutions that could not otherwise maintain their own listings.
5.6	Forum members expressed their thanks to the team for the work on this project and it was agreed that a link to the beta version be circulated for information. ACTION: Beta version of Finding Archives to be circulated to members.
6.	Agenda Item 5. Explore Your Archive Campaign - Update
6.1	Following a presentation to the previous meeting, Mr Kingsley provided an update on the Explore Your Archives project, which had been very successful and was now in the evaluation phase. The evaluation was being carried out by an MA student who had conducted interviews with twelve archives and run an online survey, to which 120 organisations had responded. A report

	will be produced and a copy circulated to Forum members.
6.2	<p>The report will be used to help shape the 2014 campaign, which is also likely to include the use of social media.</p> <p>ACTION: Copy of final report to be circulated to Forum members.</p>
6.a	Agenda Item 5a – Digital Preservation in the Cloud
6.3	Forum members were advised that this project was being undertaken to assist people in the archives sector to learn more about cloud storage, and to provide cloud providers an opportunity to understand the needs of the archive sector.
6.4	It is hoped that the guidance will be of use to larger organisation and consortia, and will be complemented by work being undertaken this year to revise the digital preservation handbook.
6.5	Two training sessions are being planned and an updated version will be produced next year.
6.6	The current version of the paper had been circulated to members, who advised that they found it clear and easy to understand.
6.7	Mr Kingsley advised that it was hoped in the near future to undertake a review of the digital preservation handbook and consider how to develop the project further using expertise to build showcases and hubs.
6.8	It was acknowledged that developing a standard would be difficult due to the different setups in organisations.
6.9	Forum members were encouraged to provide comments and feedback on the paper.
7.	Agenda Item 8. Preparing for the Move to 20 year Rule
7.1	Members were given an update on the preparation work in relation to the reduction from 30 to 20 year rule for the transfer of records. Local authorities and places of deposit had been scoped out of the first phase of the transfer process to allow more time to consider the costs and implications of the change.
7.2	Mr Kingsley advised that following review, his team were about to write to ministers, suggesting some stricter controls on the process.
7.3	With public records, the transfer part of the process is carried out by the creating body and it is hoped that this will be adopted for records of local interest. On this basis, most of the additional costs of transfer will fall on central government, minimising the burden on local authorities. It will also help to address large legacy burdens which have arisen.
7.4	<p>It is hoped that training and guidance will be provided to places of deposit over the next year.</p> <p>Forum members thanked Mr Kingsley for his update.</p>
8.	Agenda Item 7. Export Stops and the Preservation of the UK's Archival Heritage
8.1	Following discussion at the previous meeting and the Forum's concerns over the Export Stop process, especially in relation to the papers of Major General James Wolfe, Mr Brohier had written to the Chair of the Documents Working Party, and had received a very helpful response, advising that these concerns were being taken on board and would be discussed by the committee in more detail.

8.2	<p>It was agreed that a meeting with the Chair would be beneficial, to be attended by Mr Brohier and two or three Forum members. Mr Brohier advised that his office would set up a meeting and liaise with the relevant members to confirm their availability.</p> <p>ACTION: Meeting with the Chair of the Documents Working Party to be arranged.</p>
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p>
9.1	<p><i>Research and Academic Liaison Update</i> A report on the work of the Research and Academic Liaison team had been circulated to members, who congratulated Dr Johnson on the breadth of work being undertaken.</p> <p>Dr Johnson advised that the team had recently been looking at future research strategies and were engaging with the Executive Team at The National Archives to identify priority projects.</p> <p>A new academic engagement strategy was also being drafted and Dr Johnson agreed to circulate this to the Forum for information and comment.</p> <p>ACTION: Dr Johnson to circulate new academic engagement strategy when complete.</p>
9.2	<p><i>Archive Sector Development Update</i> Members confirmed that regular updates were now being received and thanked Mr Kingsley.</p>
9.3	<p><i>Update on Orphan Works</i> Following a presentation to a recent meeting by Mr Tim Padfield, an updated report on Proposals for Changes to Copyright Law had been circulated for information.</p> <p>This paper explained the issues which had been raised during consultation.</p> <p>Members were advised that The National Archives was not able to respond to the EU consultation directly but provided input into the UK Government response.</p> <p>It was noted that the changes may affect the exploitation of materials where services own copyright.</p> <p>Members agreed that the subject was extremely complex but agreed that anything The National Archives could do to provide clarity would be welcomed. The provision of expert advice within The National Archives was discussed and members felt that although having a team of staff working across issues was helpful, it was still beneficial to have staff identified as experts in some areas.</p> <p><i>Date of the Next Meeting</i> To be confirmed.</p>
	<p>There being no further business, the meeting was closed.</p>