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The National Archives and Arts Council England forge new partnership

The National Archives and Arts Council England (ACE) join forces to work for the collective benefit of archives, museums and libraries and the people who use them.

The signed memorandum of understanding (MOU) marks the beginning of a new partnership as the two bodies commit to working more closely together given their common responsibilities and shared vision for increasing access to information and improving services.

Collaboration on areas of shared interest will result in delivering schemes like Museum and Archives Accreditation; sharing expertise to develop opportunities such as those presented by emerging digital technologies, pooling resources to secure 'at risk' collections and identifying effective ways of working together in the regions.

Speaking about the new partnership **Oliver Morley, Chief Executive and Keeper, The National Archives said:**

"Our new partnership with the Arts Council affirms the cultural value of archives and ensures they are viewed as part of the wider cultural landscape. Working together we will share knowledge, expertise and create the opportunity for resource. This vital link will enhance collaborative innovation and together we will strive for excellent services and better customer experience now and in the future."

Alan Davey, Chief Executive, Arts Council England said:

"This partnership recognises the shared values that underpin both the Arts Council and The National Archives.

"As well as showing our knowledge and learning, I hope that by working together we can deliver even better value by making it easier for people across the country to connect with archives, museums and libraries."

The memorandum of understanding recognises that while The National Archives and Arts Council England have distinct roles, their strategic vision and aims reflect areas of shared interest. These include: improving access to information, services and cultural experiences; promoting sustainable services; developing a skillful and diverse workforce; and taking advantage of new technology.

The arrangement follows the closure of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) whose responsibilities were divided between The National Archives and Arts Council England last year.

Officials from both bodies will meet regularly to review progress on agreed actions, share knowledge, discuss emerging strategic initiatives and agree shared priorities for the year to come.

– Ends –

For media enquiries please contact The National Archives Press Office on **0208 392 5277** or press@nationalarchives.qsi.gov.uk

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Notes to Editors

Following the transfer of functions from the former Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), both The National Archives and Arts Council England have new responsibilities. The National Archives has taken on an expanded leadership role for the archives sector, while Arts Council England is responsible for the development of regional museums and libraries, cultural property functions and for national programmes like Acceptance in Lieu, Accreditation, and the Government Indemnity Scheme.

The National Archives

For the record, for good... The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archive of the UK government and England and Wales, we look after and make available to the public a collection of historical records dating back over 1,000 years, including records as diverse as Domesday Book and MI5 files.

Our 21st-century role is to collect and secure the future of the record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible as possible. We do this by devising technological solutions to ensure the long-term survival of public records and working to widen access to our collection. The National Archives also advises on information management across government, publishes all UK legislation, manages Crown copyright and leads the archive sector. We work to promote and improve access to public sector information and its re-use.

Follow the press office on Twitter @TNAPressofficer and for general news @UkNatArchives.

Archives Accreditation

The new Archives Accreditation standard will provide a framework for benchmarking performance and support development planning. It is intended to replace a number of existing benchmarks including Self Assessment for local authority archives and dovetail with the existing Museums Accreditation scheme. Archives Accreditation is central to the *Archives for the 21st Century* priority to develop better and more effective services and increase sustainability within the sector. The Accreditation Standard will help archives nationwide shape their services to provide the best user experience whilst ensuring their records remain accessible in the future. The scheme will enable archives to demonstrate and improve performance, raise their profile, meet the needs of users and staff, assist partnership working, support service planning and encourage greater funding and support.

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries – from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections. Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2011 and 2015, we will invest £1.4 billion of public money from government and an estimated £1 billion from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country. www.artscouncil.org.uk

Follow the links to find further information about [Museums Accreditation](#), [Designation](#) and [Acceptance in Lieu](#).