

RecordKeeping

April 2009
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For all those interested in archives and records



**Supporting religious
archives in the UK**
A look at achievements
and future plans



**Digital Preservation
roadshow 2009**
Raising awareness of tools
and techniques

**BT Archives
launch
online
catalogue**

Examining the
latest online
venture from the
world's oldest
telecommunications
company

nationalarchives.gov.uk

Welcome

Since its launch in summer 2004 *Recordkeeping* magazine has been a great success. Over the last five years it has covered issues from public sector reform in Sierra Leone to the conservation of drawings at Wimpole Hall, and every article has been researched, written and contributed by volunteer authors from across the archive and record keeping community.

However, we are finding that considerably more people are choosing to download the online version rather than receive the paper magazine, making it a very costly way to distribute news. At the same time, the Society of Archivists' magazine, ARC, has seen a vibrant redesign and offers a similar platform for many of the news stories we have carried in *Recordkeeping* in the past. In response to this and after much consideration, we have decided to replace the magazine with an online newsletter. This will allow us to meet the demand for online news, but also, in these challenging economic times, it will be a more cost effective way of reaching those interested in archives and records. Although we are aware many people will be saddened by the closure of *Recordkeeping* we hope that the online newsletter will fill much of the gap and ensure that people do not feel they are missing out on any vital news relating to The National Archives.

In this final edition we highlight trends in the results from the 2008 self-assessment survey alongside the full table of results; Rosemary Seton, from the Religious Archives Group, gives an update about the current work of the group; and we hear about the launch of the Buckinghamshire and Berkshire Manorial Documents Register online.

Case studies include highlights from Alexandra Eveleigh, about her study visit to key Australian and American archives. There is news about the launch of an online catalogue for the BT Archive. Mark Smith, from Derbyshire Record Office gives an insightful account of Colonel Sir Henry Edward Colvile's (1852-1907) preparations for war in Africa, and there is an interesting article about Living the Poor Life, a project to uncover the hidden history of the poor, and bring it to public notice. The National Archives, local archivists, local studies librarians and around 200 family, local and other historians will be taking part in this exciting project.

Last but no means least, our standards and guidance section includes guidance on preparing loans for exhibition.

Thank you to all readers and particularly to those who have contributed over the last five years. *Recordkeeping* would not have been so successful without you and remember to look out for the new online newsletter, which we will be sending to current recipients of *Recordkeeping* later in the year.

Best wishes

Rosie Logjudice, Editor



The National Archives

RecordKeeping is published quarterly by The National Archives to provide news and informative articles for all involved in archives and records. It provides the wider archives and records management communities a forum in which to share experiences, advice and opinions.

Every effort has been made to trace the copyright holders of featured illustrations, but this has not always proved possible because of the antiquity of the images. If any material is used inadvertently copyright acknowledgement will be made in a future edition.

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Preparing for war



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Supporting religious archives in the UK: the work of the Religious Archives Group

Rosemary Seton - Secretary of the Religious Archives Group

The Religious Archives Group (RAG), an informal group of archivists, librarians and scholars interested in the administration, care, promotion and uses of religious archives in Britain, celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2009.

This seems a fitting point both to look back at what we have achieved and, more importantly, forwards to what can be done to support and promote this rich

and extraordinarily diverse archival legacy.

The primary purpose of the RAG's founders was to establish a network across denominational and faith divides, to arrange meetings and training sessions where we could discuss common issues of concern, become acquainted with best practices and new technologies, and increase awareness of our archival heritage. We have held regular annual conferences on various themes, published proceedings, circulated newsletters and are affiliated to the Society of Archivists

as a Special Interest Group.

In 2007 we held a conference to take a strategic look at the present state of religious archives in the UK. The conference, organised in conjunction with The National Archives, was held at the British Library Conference Centre and attracted around 60 delegates from a wide range of institutions*. The conference revealed several very positive features – greater interest in and use of religious archives both by academics and those interested in family history; more awareness of the importance of religious



archives, and a greater use of websites, on-line databases and digitised projects to publicise them.

The conference also drew attention to some of the considerable weaknesses of religious archives. They are not viewed as glamorous or fashionable as, for example, literary archives, nor are they seen as vital as political or business archives. This makes it more difficult for them to attract funding. Religious archives are very widely distributed, many in private ownership, which means that institutions caring for them are very often poorly financed, under-staffed, and unable to carry out many of the duties expected of them. Nor have religious archives always survived well. Personal papers are particularly vulnerable and guidelines on record keeping need to be improved. The fact that religious archives are so widely dispersed increases their invisibility and makes the task of directing researchers to them much more difficult. A particular weakness can be identified in respect of Nonconformist archives, where there are divergent denominational practices and no co-ordinating role such as that exercised by the Church of England Record Centre and by Lambeth Palace Library in respect of Anglican archives. Catholic archives had suffered from the effects of persecution during the Penal Era and very uneven provision in more recent times, despite the valuable support and advice provided by the Catholic Archives Society. It was agreed that links with non-Christian archives barely existed and that much

outreach work needed to be done in this area.

“They are not viewed as glamorous or fashionable as, for example, literary archives, nor are they seen as vital as political or business archives. This makes it more difficult for them to attract funding.”

At the close of the conference it was decided to set up a Working Party, to include representation from The National Archives, to investigate conference conclusions and to take forward its recommendations. The Working Party would consider ways of raising the profile of religious archives, of making them better known and more visible, and of ensuring their survival. It would liaise widely and report back both to future conferences and beyond. Since 2007, members of the Working Party have met with staff at John Rylands University Library in Manchester and with Dr Williams’s Library, London, both of which are seen as important centres for the historical records of Nonconformity. A particularly valuable exchange of views took

place with representatives of the Catholic Archives Society. As a result of these and other meetings RAG can report progress in a number of areas.

- Ensuring conferences are held on themes which tackle issues of particular interest or concern, and which are likely to attract new members and forge links with academics. The 2008 conference on Sight and Sound in Religious Archives made some progress towards both, while the 2009 conference, to be held at John Rylands University Library on 24th March, not only takes us to the regions but also addresses a theme – Personal Papers in Religious Archives – which has been identified as an area of vulnerability. For conference details see <http://rylibweb.web.its.manchester.ac.uk/rag2/activities/conference/>
- John Rylands University Library has generously agreed to host and support an enhanced RAG website. The site will enable RAG to better serve its membership by providing news and information, by documenting its activities, particularly conferences and conference papers, and by making available advice and guidelines on practical matters. The site will eventually incorporate a Religious Archives Gateway with the aim of introducing researchers to the range and varied provenance of religious archives in the UK. The new site, which is still being developed, can be seen at ➤

“personal papers are particularly vulnerable and guidelines on record keeping need to be improved”



Cartoon by Sally Wesley, daughter of Charles Wesley, showing parishioners attending church, c.1770.

Reproduced by courtesy of the University Librarian and Director, The John Rylands University Library, The University of Manchester

<http://rylibweb.web.its.manchester.ac.uk/rag2>

- Addressing the need to carry out a systematic mapping of religious archives in the UK, and to raise funds for this work, which have been identified as priority tasks. RAG is now engaged in discussions with The National Archives, and with other bodies, to investigate ways and means of implementing such a survey as soon as possible. This will hopefully enable us to have a

fuller and more accurate picture of the archives of Christian and non-Christian bodies in the UK at the start of the 21st century. It will better inform both the research community and those concerned with the care and administration of religious archives.

- Celebrating Britain's Nonconformist history by commemorating in 2012 the 350th anniversary of the Ejection of Puritan clergymen from the

Anglican Church in 1662. Major exhibitions will be held at John Rylands University Library and elsewhere, and a conference and publications are planned.

- Attracting more members. We now have around 90 members on our mailing list. We would certainly welcome more, particularly those outside mainstream religious archives. Joining RAG is quite simple. Please send an email to jan.whalen@manchester.ac.uk giving name, institutional affiliation (if any) and email address.
- Reaching out to individuals and bodies concerned with the care and survival of the archives of other faiths in the United Kingdom. Progress has been made by way of individual contact and by ensuring that the archives of non-Christian faiths receive attention at our conferences; but much more needs to be done. We would welcome being put in touch with those who can provide further information or contact details. To contact RAG officers go to: rylibweb.web.its.manchester.ac.uk/rag2/contact ■

* A summary account of the proceedings appeared in *Recordkeeping*, Summer 2007, pp. 16-17 while a fuller version together with most of the papers, can be seen on the RAG website. In addition, an expanded version of Dr Clive Field's paper on Nonconformist archives 'Preserving Zion: The anatomy of Protestant Nonconformist archives in Great Britain and Ireland', appears in *Archives*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 118, April 2008, pp. 14-51.

Take Flight!

The Archive Awareness Campaign is an ongoing celebration of all kinds of fascinating archive treasures. It celebrates and promotes local and national archives. Throughout the year archives across the country open their doors to showcase history, hold open days and present workshops to help the public discover a piece of their own history.

The theme for Archive Awareness Campaign 2009 will be "Take Flight!". This theme is open to interpretation and lends itself to a wide variety of areas of archival work, whether in economic and industrial history; the impact of movement of peoples; innovation and ideas; engineering and science.

The theme is designed to be as inclusive as possible, to bring in archives from across all sectors and thus enable more engagement with a wider variety of user groups. We want this theme to inspire and provide opportunities for fresh thinking in approaching how archive services work with AAC. We are looking for projects and events which continue to push archive services to groups currently under-represented amongst regular users, including BME communities and younger people.

Please send your ideas to
✉ angela.owusu@nationalarchives.gov.uk
and see www.archiveawareness.com
for more information.



Considerations when developing offsite storage for current records

The National Archives is due to publish a new piece of guidance, *Considerations for Developing an Offsite Store*, in spring 2009.

The aim of this guidance is to help organisations identify and articulate their needs when contracting an offsite storage facility for current records. The guidance covers the principles and key aspects of creating

a specification from establishing the business need and expected levels of service to identifying specific service requirements.

The intended audience for the publication is anyone in the public sector who is looking to procure an offsite storage service from a private company for current business

records not for archival purposes.

The consultation draft will be available on The National Archives website until April 17 2009 and is open for comment until that date. Further enquiries about this guidance can be forwarded to
✉ rmadvisory@nationalarchives.gov.uk



Digital preservation roadshows 2009

Digital Preservation Roadshow planning group

A series of roadshows will be held around the UK to raise awareness of digital preservation tools and techniques. These are being run by the Society of Archivists in partnership with the Digital Preservation Coalition, The National Archives and CyMAL.

The aims of the events are to raise awareness of the issues, to demonstrate that there are solutions that don't involve spending large amounts of money, and to show how to take the first, small, incremental steps in this field.

The first roadshow will be held at Gloucestershire Archives on 29 April 2009. Subsequent road shows in 2009 will be held in York, London, Edinburgh, Dublin and Manchester. There will also be two further roadshows in Wales during 2010. The exact programme of speakers

will vary from event to event, but will cover strategic issues and practical first steps, with at least one local speaker to provide a source of ongoing regional advice and support.

The programme for the Gloucester roadshow includes an introduction to digital preservation from The National Archives, speakers from The National Archives and the PLANETS Project (www.planets-project.eu) on digital preservation tools, a further speaker on funding and business

case issues, a speaker from the Digital Preservation Coalition, and case studies from Alexandra Eveleigh (West Yorkshire Archive Service) and Viv Cothey (Gloucestershire Archives).

The roadshows are free of charge to members. For further information, including how to book, visit www.archives.org.uk/careerdevelopment/digitalpreservationroadshows200910.html.

Spaces are limited and early booking is recommended. ■

Self-assessment of local authority archives 2008: improvement demonstrated

Nicholas Kingsley - Head of National Advisory Services, The National Archives

By the time this article appears, results of the 2008 self-assessment exercise for local authority archive services will have been published online and reported in the press. We publish overleaf the full table of the results for each repository.

For the third year running, local authority archives in England and Wales were asked to undertake a self-assessment exercise to measure their performance across all areas of the public task of such bodies. Once again, over 90% of services responded, and only three local authorities have now not made returns in any of the three years for which the exercise has been run. The National Archives is very grateful for the level and fullness of the responses, which have provided an immensely rich set of data and allow broadly-based assessments of service quality to be made.

The results published overleaf give the scores achieved by each repository on the five sections of the questionnaire, and the performance banding for that score. Last year, these performance bands were labelled from three-stars to no-stars; this year they are labelled from four-stars to one-star, for consistency with other Government assessments of local government services. For the sectional scores, the top 10% of scores are placed in the four-star category, and the bottom 10% in the one-star category, with the remainder divided equally between the middle two bands. The performance bands for the

overall scores are a little more complex, since they were set by the independent panel which oversees the self-assessment process, based on the 2007 bandings but adjusted for the typical impact of changes to the questionnaire from 2007 to 2008. Additionally, to secure a two, three or four star performance banding, services had to score above a 'threshold score' in all five sections of the questionnaire: the thresholds were again set at 55% for four stars; 45% for three stars and 35% for two stars. Services which failed to meet these thresholds in all areas were held down to the highest band for which they did meet the thresholds; eight services were affected in this way.

Because the change to the star-rating scheme might be confusing, we have not published the 2007 results alongside the 2008 data in the following table. The 2007 results set can, however, be found online at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/self-assessment.htm> for those who wish to make detailed comparisons, and we have published a 'direction of travel' judgement, which takes into account not only the year-on-year comparisons between 2007 and 2008, but also what else is known of

the threats to, and opportunities for, future service development. Only limited and small-scale changes were made to the self-assessment questionnaire in 2008. These affected mainly the first two sections of the questionnaire, and although the overall impact of the changes was modest, they do account for some volatility in the scores of individual services on these sections between 2007 and 2008.

Individual services receive from The National Archives a more detailed set of results, showing their score on each of the 109 questions in the questionnaire. Last year, we encouraged services to use this detailed information to explore the strengths and weaknesses of their services and to form the basis of an improvement plan. In 2008 we asked about such plans, and found not only that many services have created such a plan or have built relevant actions into their business plan; but also that a number of services had used the data to demonstrate the need for investment, and had been able to lever additional resources into the service, as at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, which achieved additional staff for cataloguing work.

continues on page 14 ►►

Institution	Governance and Resources score	Star Rating	Documentation of Collections score	Star Rating	Access score	Star Rating
Anglesey	50.50%	★★	64.00%	★★★	54.50%	★★
Barking and Dagenham						
Barnet	60.00%	★★	43.00%	★★	43.00%	★★
Barnsley	43.50%	★★	50.50%	★★	47.50%	★★
Bath and North-East Somerset	45.00%	★★	34.50%	★	36.00%	★
Bedfordshire	76.00%	★★★★	82.00%	★★★★★	65.50%	★★★★
Berkshire	75.50%	★★★★	63.50%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★
Bexley	76.00%	★★★★	83.50%	★★★★★	62.00%	★★★★
Birmingham						
Bolton	41.50%	★★	57.00%	★★	39.00%	★
Brent	22.00%	★	49.00%	★★	47.00%	★★
Bristol	71.50%	★★★★	67.50%	★★★★	73.00%	★★★★
Bromley	60.50%	★★	61.00%	★★★★	68.00%	★★★★
Buckinghamshire	71.00%	★★★★	50.00%	★★	52.00%	★★
Bury	56.00%	★★	58.50%	★★	60.50%	★★★★
Cambridgeshire	66.50%	★★★★	62.50%	★★★★	60.50%	★★★★
Camden	77.00%	★★★★	57.50%	★★	69.00%	★★★★
Carmarthenshire	42.50%	★★	59.00%	★★★★	35.00%	★
Ceredigion	62.00%	★★	56.00%	★★	44.50%	★★
Cheshire and Chester	67.50%	★★★★	70.50%	★★★★	62.50%	★★★★
Conwy	58.00%	★★	59.50%	★★	42.50%	★★
Cornwall	77.00%	★★★★	66.50%	★★★★	55.50%	★★
Coventry						
Croydon	40.00%	★	53.50%	★★	52.00%	★★
Cumbria	69.50%	★★★★	63.00%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★
Denbighshire	64.00%	★★★★	48.50%	★★	44.00%	★★
Derbyshire	78.00%	★★★★	86.00%	★★★★★	61.50%	★★★★
Devon	57.00%	★★	53.00%	★★	48.00%	★★
Doncaster	36.50%	★	50.50%	★★	48.00%	★★
Dorset	78.00%	★★★★	61.50%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★
Dudley	60.50%	★★	59.00%	★★★★	52.00%	★★
Durham	55.00%	★★	63.50%	★★★★	64.00%	★★★★
Ealing	33.50%	★	52.50%	★★	43.50%	★★
East Riding of Yorkshire	83.50%	★★★★★	81.00%	★★★★★	76.50%	★★★★★
East Sussex	80.00%	★★★★★	66.00%	★★★★	51.50%	★★
Enfield	55.00%	★★	24.00%	★	41.50%	★
Essex	71.50%	★★★★	77.50%	★★★★★	71.00%	★★★★
Flintshire	57.50%	★★	60.50%	★★★★	44.50%	★★
Glamorgan	82.50%	★★★★★	67.50%	★★★★	63.00%	★★★★
Gloucestershire	87.50%	★★★★★	75.50%	★★★★	71.50%	★★★★
Greater Manchester	67.50%	★★★★	60.00%	★★★★	58.00%	★★★★
Greenwich	49.50%	★★	54.50%	★★	69.50%	★★★★

KEY: likely to improve further neither improving nor deteriorating at risk of further deterioration

Preservation and Conservation score	Star Rating	Buildings, Security and Environment score	Star Rating	Overall score	Star Rating	Direction of travel assessment
64.00%	★★	51.50%	★★	55.50%	★★	
				No return		
57.00%	★★	46.00%	★	48.50%	★★	
62.50%	★★	56.50%	★★	51.00%	★★	
39.50%	★	50.00%	★★	41.50%	★	
76.50%	★★★★	53.50%	★★	68.00%	★★★★	
77.00%	★★★★	82.50%	★★★★	72.50%	★★★★	
74.50%	★★★★	78.00%	★★★★	76.00%	★★★★★	
				No return		
55.00%	★★	62.00%	★★★★	49.50%	★★	
45.00%	★★	62.00%	★★★★	46.50%	★ HD	
68.00%	★★★★	83.00%	★★★★	74.00%	★★★★★	
59.00%	★★	69.50%	★★★★	65.00%	★★★★	
66.00%	★★	65.50%	★★★★	60.00%	★★	
67.50%	★★★★	67.50%	★★★★	62.00%	★★★★	
62.50%	★★	53.00%	★★	60.00%	★★★★	
59.00%	★★	42.50%	★	61.00%	★★ HD	
53.00%	★★	56.00%	★★	47.00%	★★	
68.50%	★★★★	54.50%	★★	54.50%	★★	
83.50%	★★★★	59.00%	★★	66.00%	★★★★	
69.00%	★★★★	57.50%	★★	54.50%	★★	
64.00%	★★	58.00%	★★	62.50%	★★★★	
				No return		
66.00%	★★	70.50%	★★★★	56.50%	★★	
67.00%	★★★★	60.50%	★★	64.50%	★★★★	
65.00%	★★	69.50%	★★★★	57.00%	★★	
84.00%	★★★★★	72.50%	★★★★	73.50%	★★★★	
77.00%	★★★★	74.00%	★★★★	60.50%	★★★★	
62.00%	★★	53.00%	★★	49.00%	★★	
89.50%	★★★★★	91.00%	★★★★★	76.00%	★★★★★	
48.50%	★★	48.00%	★★	53.00%	★★	
66.00%	★★	78.00%	★★★★	66.00%	★★★★	
44.50%	★★	53.00%	★★	45.50%	★	
75.00%	★★★★	88.00%	★★★★★	81.00%	★★★★★	
76.50%	★★★★	56.50%	★★	62.50%	★★★★	
36.50%	★	69.00%	★★★★	48.00%	HD ★	
84.00%	★★★★★	83.50%	★★★★	76.50%	★★★★★	
76.50%	★★★★	69.00%	★★★★	58.50%	★★	
71.00%	★★★★	43.00%	★	63.00%	HD ★★	
85.50%	★★★★★	85.00%	★★★★★	80.00%	★★★★★	
80.50%	★★★★	58.50%	★★	62.50%	★★★★	
53.50%	★★	69.50%	★★★★	62.00%	★★★★	

Institution	Governance and Resources score	Star Rating	Documentation of Collections score	Star Rating	Access score	Star Rating
Gwent	25.50%	★	46.00%	★★	36.00%	★
Gwynedd	69.00%	★★★★	77.00%	★★★★★	68.00%	★★★★
Hackney	63.00%	★★★★	61.00%	★★★★	61.50%	★★★★
Hammersmith and Fulham	40.50%	★	50.50%	★★	45.00%	★★
Hampshire	94.00%	★★★★★	77.00%	★★★★★	82.00%	★★★★★
Haringey	55.00%	★★	47.50%	★★	56.00%	★★
Harrow						
Havering						
Herefordshire	56.50%	★★	49.00%	★★	52.50%	★★
Hertfordshire	68.50%	★★★★	62.00%	★★★★	60.00%	★★★★
Hillingdon	62.00%	★★	61.50%	★★★★	57.00%	★★
Hounslow						
Hull City	60.00%	★★	50.50%	★★	43.50%	★★
Isle of Wight	61.00%	★★	46.50%	★★	54.50%	★★
Islington	46.50%	★★	52.50%	★★	62.00%	★★★★
Kensington	39.50%	★	32.50%	★	37.00%	★
Kent	69.50%	★★★★	51.00%	★★	67.00%	★★★★
Kingston						
Knowsley						
Lambeth	64.50%	★★	58.50%	★★	71.50%	★★★★
Lancashire	77.50%	★★★★	69.00%	★★★★	71.00%	★★★★
Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland	76.50%	★★★★	71.00%	★★★★	61.50%	★★★★
Lewisham	73.00%	★★★★	84.50%	★★★★★	76.00%	★★★★★
Lincolnshire	75.50%	★★★★	65.00%	★★★★	61.50%	★★★★
Liverpool	57.50%	★★	55.50%	★★	61.50%	★★★★
London Metropolitan Archives	92.00%	★★★★★	89.50%	★★★★★	83.00%	★★★★★
Manchester	71.00%	★★★★	77.00%	★★★★★	65.50%	★★★★
Medway	66.00%	★★★★	72.00%	★★★★	53.50%	★★
Merton	40.50%	★	20.50%	★	30.00%	★
Newham	48.00%	★★	35.00%	★	64.50%	★★★★
Norfolk	93.00%	★★★★★	84.00%	★★★★★	74.00%	★★★★★
North Yorkshire	72.00%	★★★★	56.50%	★★	71.50%	★★★★
Northamptonshire	67.50%	★★★★	41.00%	★	63.50%	★★★★
North-East Lincolnshire	59.00%	★★	51.00%	★★	55.50%	★★
Northumberland and Berwick	79.00%	★★★★	63.50%	★★★★	67.50%	★★★★
Nottinghamshire	86.00%	★★★★★	70.50%	★★★★	76.00%	★★★★★
Oldham	41.50%	★★	42.50%	★	60.50%	★★★★
Oxfordshire	62.50%	★★	66.50%	★★★★	56.00%	★★
Pembrokeshire	48.00%	★★	51.00%	★★	50.50%	★★
Peterborough	55.50%	★★	57.00%	★★	53.00%	★★
Plymouth and West Devon	59.50%	★★	67.50%	★★★★	51.50%	★★
Portsmouth	49.00%	★★	45.00%	★★	46.00%	★★

KEY: likely to improve further neither improving nor deteriorating at risk of further deterioration

Preservation and Conservation score	Star Rating	Buildings, Security and Environment score	Star Rating	Overall score	Star Rating	Direction of travel assessment
33.00%	★	46.50%	★★	37.50%	★	
76.50%	★★★★	82.50%	★★★★	74.00%	★★★★★	
68.50%	★★	61.00%	★★	62.50%	★★★★	
55.00%	★★	40.50%	★	45.00%	★	
87.00%	★★★★★	89.50%	★★★★★	84.50%	★★★★★	
47.00%	★★	61.50%	★★	55.00%	★★	
				No return		
				No return		
65.50%	★★	59.50%	★★	56.00%	★★	
59.00%	★★	72.50%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★	
63.50%	★★	67.00%	★★★★	61.50%	★★	
				No return		
53.50%	★★	34.50%	★	46.50%	HD ★	
51.50%	★★	40.00%	★	50.50%	★★	
67.50%	★★★★	53.50%	★★	56.50%	★★	
32.50%	★	61.00%	★★	42.50%	★	
75.50%	★★★★	54.00%	★★	63.00%	★★★★	
				No return		
				No return		
42.50%	★	54.50%	★★	61.00%	HD ★★	
83.50%	★★★★	72.50%	★★★★	73.50%	★★★★	
77.00%	★★★★	73.50%	★★★★	70.50%	★★★★	
77.50%	★★★★	81.00%	★★★★	78.00%	★★★★★	
73.50%	★★★★	72.50%	★★★★	68.50%	★★★★	
79.00%	★★★★	55.50%	★★	60.50%	★★★★	
92.00%	★★★★★	87.50%	★★★★★	88.00%	★★★★★	
72.00%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★	68.50%	★★★★	
69.00%	★★★★	67.50%	★★★★	63.50%	★★★★	
27.00%	★	52.00%	★★	36.00%	★	
48.00%	★★	57.00%	★★	53.50%	★★	
93.00%	★★★★★	96.50%	★★★★★	86.50%	★★★★★	
84.00%	★★★★★	70.50%	★★★★	70.50%	★★	
72.50%	★★★★	72.00%	★★★★	64.00%	HD ★★	
59.00%	★★	55.00%	★★	56.00%	★	
77.50%	★★★★	87.00%	★★★★★	75.00%	★★★★★	
89.00%	★★★★★	79.50%	★★★★	79.50%	★★★★★	
47.00%	★★	50.00%	★★	50.50%	★★	
71.50%	★★★★	81.50%	★★★★	66.50%	★★★★	
59.00%	★★	45.00%	★	50.00%	★★	
57.00%	★★	77.00%	★★★★	60.50%	★★★★	
60.00%	★★	37.50%	★	52.50%	★★	
52.00%	★★	48.50%	★★	47.50%	★★	

Institution	Governance and Resources score	Star Rating	Documentation of Collections score	Star Rating	Access score	Star Rating
Powys	57.00%	★★	69.00%	★★★	42.00%	★★
Redbridge	31.00%	★	43.00%	★★	44.00%	★★
Richmond	17.50%	★	29.50%	★	39.00%	★
Rochdale	62.50%	★★	59.00%	★★	62.50%	★★★
Rotherham	70.00%	★★★	59.50%	★★★	58.50%	★★★
Salford	14.50%	★	5.50%	★	2.50%	★
Sandwell	50.00%	★★	52.50%	★★	50.50%	★★
Sefton						
Sheffield	68.50%	★★★	61.00%	★★★	62.00%	★★★
Shropshire	67.50%	★★	66.50%	★★★	63.50%	★★★
Solihull	29.00%	★	13.00%	★	33.00%	★
Somerset	87.50%	★★★★	74.50%	★★★	65.00%	★★★
Southampton	59.50%	★★	56.00%	★★	46.00%	★★
Southwark						
St Helens	67.50%	★★★	63.50%	★★★	71.00%	★★★
Staffordshire	88.00%	★★★★	83.00%	★★★★	78.00%	★★★★
Stockport	49.50%	★★	45.00%	★★	53.00%	★★
Suffolk	82.50%	★★★★	59.50%	★★★	72.50%	★★★
Surrey	78.00%	★★★	70.50%	★★★	75.00%	★★★★
Sutton	67.50%	★★★	56.50%	★★	69.50%	★★★
Tameside	67.50%	★★★	72.00%	★★★	74.50%	★★★★
Teeside	67.50%	★★★	70.00%	★★★	67.00%	★★★
Tower Hamlets	45.00%	★★	64.50%	★★★	49.00%	★★
Trafford	68.50%	★★★	63.00%	★★★	54.00%	★★
Tyne and Wear	54.50%	★★	68.50%	★★★	65.50%	★★★
Walsall	62.50%	★★	70.50%	★★★	52.00%	★★
Waltham Forest						
Wandsworth	69.50%	★★★	58.00%	★★	60.50%	★★★
Warwickshire	81.50%	★★★★	63.50%	★★★	69.50%	★★★
West Glamorgan	71.50%	★★★	63.00%	★★★	57.00%	★★
West Sussex	78.50%	★★★	72.50%	★★★	77.50%	★★★★
West Yorkshire	71.00%	★★★	62.50%	★★★	49.50%	★★
Westminster	70.00%	★★	86.00%	★★★★	78.50%	★★★★
Wigan	51.50%	★★	55.50%	★★	43.00%	★★
Wiltshire and Swindon	64.00%	★★★	68.50%	★★★	56.00%	★★
Wirral	77.50%	★★★	42.00%	★	48.50%	★★
Wolverhampton	67.50%	★★★	63.50%	★★★	56.00%	★★
Worcestershire	78.50%	★★★	50.50%	★★	68.00%	★★★
Wrexham	50.50%	★★	55.50%	★★	51.50%	★★
York City	42.50%	★	36.00%	★	24.50%	★

KEY: likely to improve further neither improving nor deteriorating at risk of further deterioration

Preservation and Conservation score	Star Rating	Buildings, Security and Environment score	Star Rating	Overall score	Star Rating	Direction of travel assessment
56.50%	★★	45.00%	★	50.50%	★★	
35.50%	★	63.50%	★★★★	45.50%	★	
25.00%	★	54.00%	★★	36.00%	★	
75.50%	★★★★	77.00%	★★★★	67.00%	★★★★	
72.50%	★★★★	62.50%	★★★★	63.00%	★★★★	
11.50%	★	54.50%	★★	18.50%	★	
48.00%	★★	53.50%	★★	51.00%	★★	
				No return		
80.50%	★★★★	66.50%	★★★★	66.00%	★★★★	
68.50%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★	65.50%	★★★★	
35.00%	★	57.00%	★★	35.50%	★	
81.50%	★★★★	61.00%	★★	71.00%	★★★★	
68.50%	★★★★	65.50%	★★★★	57.50%	★★	
				No return		
61.50%	★★	71.50%	★★★★	68.50%	★★★★	
84.50%	★★★★★	69.50%	★★★★	79.00%	★★★★★	
38.00%	★	58.00%	★★	50.50%	★★	
78.50%	★★★★	77.00%	★★★★	74.00%	★★★★★	
83.50%	★★★★	87.50%	★★★★★	79.00%	★★★★★	
62.00%	★★	75.50%	★★★★	68.00%	★★★★	
68.50%	★★★★	80.00%	★★★★	73.50%	★★★★	
71.50%	★★★★	64.50%	★★★★	67.50%	★★★★	
46.50%	★★	64.50%	★★★★	54.00%	★★	
70.50%	★★★★	61.00%	★★	61.50%	★★★★	
74.50%	★★★★	65.50%	★★★★	65.00%	★★★★	
76.50%	★★★★	60.00%	★★	61.00%	★★★★	
				No return		
58.00%	★★	61.50%	★★	63.50%	★★★★	
73.00%	★★★★	79.50%	★★★★	73.50%	★★★★	
66.00%	★★	72.50%	★★★★	65.00%	★★★★	
91.00%	★★★★★	87.00%	★★★★★	81.00%	★★★★★	
86.50%	★★★★★	66.00%	★★★★	63.50%	★★★★	
91.00%	★★★★★	83.00%	★★★★	80.50%	★★★★★	
66.00%	★★	61.50%	★★	53.50%	★★	
85.00%	★★★★★	87.50%	★★★★★	70.50%	★★★★	
59.00%	★★	79.00%	★★★★	61.00%	HD ★★	
68.00%	★★★★	52.00%	★★	60.00%	★★	
48.00%	★★	56.50%	★★	62.50%	★★★★	
63.50%	★★	55.50%	★★	54.50%	★★	
35.00%	★	44.50%	★	35.50%	★	

In addition, many services had identified improvements in practice which could be implemented within existing budgets, or had established targets for longer-term improvements. The impact of these improvement plans is evident in raised scores for many services, and in some cases was sufficiently marked to carry the service into a higher performance band, as for example at the London Borough of Bexley, which moved into the highest performance band this year. Services have also continued to improve their outreach services and partnership work, so that there are now many examples of good practice in this area. During 2009, we intend to pull together some of the best examples of work in this area and publish a series of case studies of the most innovative projects.

In another positive development, this year's results show a significantly greater awareness of the urgency and importance of addressing the permanent preservation of digital records, and also demonstrate that more services are taking simple and affordable practical steps in this area, such as drafting digital preservation strategies, designing ingest procedures for digital records, and establishing appropriate methods of sustaining digital objects.

The other key driver of improved scores continues to be building improvements, which can transform not only the care of archive collections and the facilities for staff and onsite users, but also the opportunities for services to develop innovative new services, to

accommodate volunteers and educational users, and to develop their collections. This year saw the impact of new buildings for the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office and Wirral Archives, as well as accommodation improvements at the West Glamorgan Record Office, where new searchroom facilities were opened, and East Riding of Yorkshire Archives, where a new conservation facility was completed and staffed.

"In another positive development, this year's results show a significantly greater awareness of the urgency and importance of addressing the preservation of digital records, and also demonstrate that more services are taking simple and affordable practical steps in this area."

Despite all these positive developments, however, the broad outlines of the picture revealed by the 2008 results are very similar to those of 2007. There is still a huge disparity between the standards of service provision in the strongest

and weakest authorities, which is correlated with the scale of operation of the service, so that larger services are more likely to be high-performing than smaller ones. Many services are still unable to actively develop their collections because of a lack of staff and storage capacity. No authority yet has an active digital preservation programme, although an increasing number of interesting and promising developments are taking place. Most services still have large backlogs of uncatalogued or inadequately catalogued collections, and backlogs are actively growing in the majority of institutions. And finally, although there are many excellent examples of new buildings, in too many places archive services continue to be housed in premises which constrain their development and quality of service provision, and fall well short of the environmental standards appropriate to the long-term preservation of archives. In the next few weeks, we expect to publish for consultation a proposed new Government policy on archives which has been framed in the light of our understanding of these challenges, and those facing other parts of the archives sector. We hope that this will provide the context in which they can be addressed in the coming few years, despite the challenging financial circumstances that the UK public sector faces at this time. ■

LIVING THE POOR LIFE

Paul Carter and Natalie Whistance - The National Archives

In October 2008 The National Archives began work on 'Living the Poor Life': an ambitious project working with local archivists, local studies librarians and around 200 family, local and other historians.

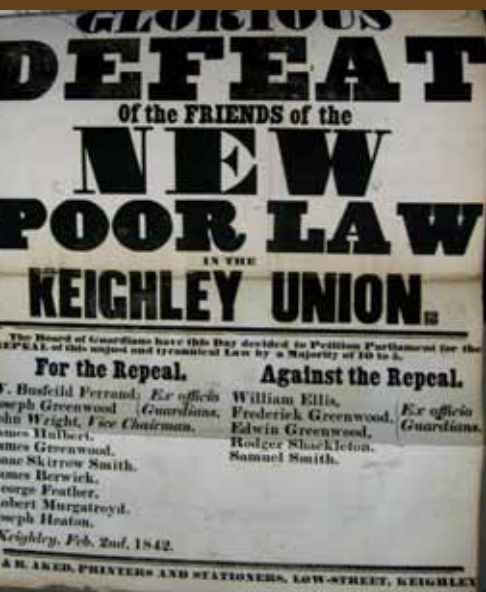
The project will see over 100 large volumes of poor law union correspondence from 22 areas across England and Wales catalogued, made key word searchable and their collective 126,000 pages digitised and made available for free to download via The National Archives' website. These records are held at The National Archives in the huge Ministry of Health archives (MH 12 series). They are the letters (and draft letters) that passed between the Poor Law Commission, Poor Law Board and Local Government Board in London and the hundreds of poor law unions set up following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act: the beginning of the Victorian workhouse system.

From this time, parishes were gathered into groups or 'unions' controlled by guardians elected by parish ratepayers. The unions were supervised by the Poor Law Commission based in London. Assistant Commissioners (later termed Inspectors) were each allocated a geographical area in which they were to establish, and later inspect, the unions. Levels of relief expenditure were to be curtailed by the building of union workhouses and relief practices were to be based on a harsh and deterrent workhouse test. It was intended as a self-acting test: if relief itself was made so degrading, then costs could be cut as the poor turned away in fear and disgust at the relief on offer. The records are an essential national collection that tell us much about the lives of the poor at a time when Britain was the 'workshop of the world'.

Previously The National Archives has worked with a number of volunteer editors at Southwell in Nottinghamshire to catalogue 'their' local poor law union records [see RecordKeeping Summer 2007, pp 30-33, C Lawrence, *Southwell Workhouse and Poor Law Union Papers, 1834-1871*]. They worked from filmed copies of the records from 1834 to 1871. Their work is available on The National Archives' catalogue and the images were made available for free via the The National Archives' website from 2007.

Following this, staff at The National Archives were informally approached by a number of groups or societies wanting to "do a Southwell". Impressed by local researchers' desire to look at this part of our history, we asked for expressions of interest from the family and local history communities. We were approached by over 150 local and family history groups, who wanted the volumes for their home areas to be digitised and catalogued in the same way: that is to say by us working in partnership with them. ►►





MH 12/15158, Keighley Poor Law Union correspondence, 1834-1842. The New Poor Law was opposed in many northern towns and cities. Here the Keighley Guardians themselves vote to abolish the New Poor Law. 2 February 1842.

As all of the volunteer editors are working off-site, many of them hundreds of miles away from The National Archives, staff had to think carefully about the best way to support them. Our first priority was to get the project structure right. Much of this came from an analysis of how we approached the work at Southwell. We wanted to have local coordinators for each group to facilitate easy communication between The National Archives and the 200 people working on the project.

This means we have someone locally we can go to if we have questions around how the groups are getting on, when and where we should next meet – this also gives each editor in the group someone locally they can go to with any initial queries/problems. Some of these coordinators are chairs of local history societies or similar groups, local archivists or local studies librarians. Without them, it would have been impossible to progress the project. Many of the groups hold meetings between The National Archives staff visits. We know from the Southwell project how important such activities are to share knowledge within the groups and to keep a sense of project momentum. In addition, one of the recommendations identified by the Southwell volunteer editors was the necessity for a dedicated member of staff assigned to the project at The National Archives to act as central coordinator. This is the structure we have adopted.

Following on from the structure is the personal support we could provide. Obviously personal visits to the groups and emails between the groups and The National Archives staff are essential. However, we also decided on an additional innovative approach. For this project the volunteer editors will be working from high quality digitised images rather than from film. This had been something of an issue at Southwell where some images were difficult to read. As the images were on film it also made the work difficult to do at home (how many people have a film reader?). ➤



The National Archives staff conducted a series of consultation meetings with groups around the country. We were limited to the number of groups we could work with and unfortunately we were unable to include numerous excellent groups who would have been an asset to the project. In part, the final selection was determined by the need to achieve a good geographical spread across England and Wales (Scotland and Ireland were covered by different nineteenth century legislation and their records are not held at The National Archives). From Northumberland to Cornwall, and from Wales to East Anglia we have sought to ensure a good spread of agricultural and industrialised areas and coastal and inland localities. It was clear from the local groups that there was huge enthusiasm for the planned project, and that they could clearly see the potential benefits for family, local and social historians. We also received huge interest from the academic and the archive communities.

Staff from The National Archives visited the groups to carry out the initial workshops for the volunteer editors to help them get to grips with the history and cataloguing complexities of the records. Following a short 'practice run' each volunteer editor is then allocated a section of the correspondence which relates to their local poor law union for which they will create detailed item level catalogue descriptions.

A project website has been created onto which the digitised images of MH 12 volumes for the relevant areas are uploaded. The volunteer editors can then download and work from these images at home, in their local library, or perhaps at the county or borough archives.

“It was clear from the local groups that there was huge enthusiasm for the planned project, and that they could clearly see the potential benefits for family, local and social historians.”

As well as hosting the images, the project website has allowed staff at The National Archives to make available a number of useful things such as cataloguing guidelines, lists of Poor Law Commission staff, subject book lists, details of press interest in the project as well as regular newsletters. One of the key benefits of a project website in relation to a national project like this is the ability for us to respond to and make available information which the groups themselves have identified as additional ‘useful things’. For example some of the groups have made lists of guardians or the spelling of specific local place names. We can then host those on the project website for other groups to pick and mix ideas for what they may like to do. In this way the volunteer editors themselves dictate sections of the content of the project website.

The benefits of such a project are many but interrelated. Without the dedication of the volunteer editors and coordinators, such projects are not feasible. Their participation is key and these types of complex records would undoubtedly be left underused for another 170 years without them. The volunteers’

experience we hope will be a good one, learning the various procedures of the poor law authority, details of cases from the records and the creation of a resource they can re-visit time and time again. The benefit to The National Archives and the research community at large, is the growth of detailed entries in the catalogue which thus promotes and provides greater access (in this case) to the way in which the nineteenth poor were treated, problems of unemployment, the development of basic but national health care provision and the education of pauper children. It is an ideal project for the research community and The National Archives to come together to ‘build’ the resources they need for their research. This model of remote volunteering removes the necessity of people living close to us in order to take part. It also allows people to be flexible and ‘choose’ the time of their volunteering contribution, and gives them the ability to change their minds at a moments’ notice: *‘I don’t have time today but will do some tomorrow evening’*.

However, it is not just the created resource which we identify as significant in this project. By The National Archives seeking to work with people across the country and designing projects that allow volunteer editors to work from home and meet in their localities to discuss, exchange information and extend their knowledge of the archives, we can do our bit in encouraging community identity and promoting active involvement around archives. ■



MH 12/10320 Clutton Poor Law Union Correspondence. Coloured hand drawn map of the parishes within the Clutton Union. 1836.

EXPLORING DIGITAL

AUSTRALIA

Alexandra Eveleigh was awarded a 2008 Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship to study the long-term preservation of local digital archives in Australia and the USA. Here she describes what local archives in the UK can learn from international initiatives in digital preservation.

and to build up a business case and feasibility study. Digital preservation being a new and quickly evolving discipline, I found much to interest me, but practical applications of digital curation research in the UK seemed to be predominantly restricted to large, national organisations, or focused in the higher education sector. Although pioneers in their field, their (comparatively) well funded, research-led work was not necessarily immediately applicable to the local government context of my own work.

I began to investigate the potential for a digital archives programme at West Yorkshire Archive Service in 2007. I started looking for models and evidence we might use for technical guidance,

Churchill Fellowships

Billed as "travel to make a difference", the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowships enable individuals from the UK to travel overseas to acquire knowledge and experience. I planned a series of visits to working digital repositories in Australia and the USA, particularly state government services and smaller private archives, and to organisations developing preservation workflow tools. I was also interested in collaborative initiatives as potential models for partnership digital curation services in the UK local archives sector.

Fellowship Themes

The themes were threefold:

- ◆ Practical Digital Preservation - technical infrastructure and workflow in a digital repository. How are born-digital collections accessioned, appraised, arranged and described? How do you encourage deposit in a digital world where space is much less of a driving force? How do users access digital archives, and how might this influence the archive service's relationship with its customers?
- ◆ Strategic development of digital preservation services – political advocacy, securing investment and funding ➤



Top image: Sydney Northern Beaches.
Bottom image: view of Sydney from seaplane

© All photographs in this article courtesy of Alexandra Eveleigh

ARCHIVES IN AND THE



Alexandra Eveleigh – Collections Manager, West Yorkshire Archive Service

for digital preservation programmes, organisational infrastructure, and project planning.

- ♦ Training and skills - What kinds of skills and experience are needed for practical digital curation work? What is the role of the archivist in the digital world, and how might this impact upon our professional identity? Are traditional archival and record keeping paradigms still relevant in a digital world?

“If we try we may fail, if we don’t try we will certainly fail.”

Many of the programmes I visited legitimised a ‘start small’ approach. Few archives are lucky enough to receive windfall funding to build a digital archives solution from the ground up. The majority of early adopters in US state government have built up expertise from a blend of grant-funded pilot projects and partnerships, and external service provision. Many of the state archives are subscribers to the Internet Archive’s Archive-It service or submit content to the OCLC Digital Archive, allowing them to experiment with practical issues of digital preservation in a supported environment. North Carolina State Archives are a good example of the partnership approach, having worked closely with the State Library to develop a single preservation architecture across the state government, and having used grant funding opportunities to form collaborations for specific projects focused on email preservation and geospatial data. Most of the places I visited in the USA are now lead partners in a National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Project (NDIIPP) multi-state project, sharing their experience with partners in other states, whilst simultaneously tackling new projects in digital ►►



Images from top to bottom:
Grand Canyon, USA: London Bridge VIC, Australia:
12 Apostles VIC, Australia: Cacti, Pheonix, USA



preservation. Over and over again, people made the point about small projects being a stepping stone to bigger efforts, building skills and capacity in an incremental manner. "If we try we may fail, if we don't try we will certainly fail", as the Principal Investigator for the Persistent Digital Archives and Library System (PeDALS) at Arizona State Archives put it to me.

The digital record keeping continuum

Even where archive services have successfully submitted a business case for investment in a comprehensive digital service, this opportunity has usually arisen on the back of sustained success or openings for wider digital recordkeeping initiatives. The Digital Archive at the Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV), one of the larger programmes I visited, was funded as the culmination of over 10 years of work on the Victorian Electronic Recordkeeping Strategy (VERS). Washington State Digital Archives is conceived and marketed to creating agencies as a business service providing online, fee-based, access to public records, and as a disaster recovery facility. This natural continuum between current and archival recordkeeping is frequently broken apart in UK local government, where archive services are often managed under a different directorate to the authority's records management function. Influencing current record keeping practice to ensure longer term survival is the focus of The National Archives Digital Continuity project, and it will be interesting to see whether those local authorities who retain continuity of management across the information spectrum will prove better placed to develop digital preservation solutions within UK local government archives.

Scalable solutions

I found initiatives scalable to the UK local archive context in unexpected places. The Smithsonian may be the largest museum complex in the world, but their Collaborative Electronic Records Project (CERC) is a

granted-funded initiative with two members of staff. The manuscripts department is a very small part of the National Library of Australia, but faces precisely the same kinds of issues regarding private digital collections deposited on portable media as every UK local archive service.

Digital preservation: a work in progress

Few, if any, of the organisations I visited would claim that they have comprehensively solved digital preservation. For instance, some had fantastic workflows for dealing with office-type documents, but hadn't begun to consider how they might preserve database formats or websites. As a consequence of grant funding, many of the projects have quite a narrow focus on specific record types, and sustainability is an issue. But the important point is that they are at least giving it a go, and willing to publicise work in progress, recognise success, and perhaps even to admit failure. After all, digital preservation is itself a work in progress.



"Isn't fulfilling our part of the chain – handing over authentic, reliable and usable archives to the next generation of record keepers – good enough?"

To quote the Australian Sebastian Chan, "In the cultural sector we are cautious, careful, meticulous. This is a virtue – it ensures that our physical collections are preserved for future generations. But when applied





About the author

Alexandra Eveleigh is Collections Manager at West Yorkshire Archive Service, with responsibility for the strategic development of collections and collections information, and the application of ICT within the Service. Current professional interests include the use of social software to enhance description and access to archival material, technological influences on information creation and use, and digital preservation.

to all areas of the business, this same virtue inhibits our ability to make the most of emerging opportunities – especially in digital space – in a timely manner.”

Chan’s comments were in respect to museum websites, but might they equally apply to the local archives’ sector’s response to digital archives? To allow ourselves to be so overwhelmed by the apparent complexity and diversity of digital content that we fail to recognise and exploit the available shorter term strategies that will lay the foundations of our future digital service provision.

At the National Archives of Australia, the staff were quite clear about how their professional outlook was changing in this digital world:

“We need to become more outcomes focused and accept imperfections.” Is our aim really permanent preservation? Isn’t fulfilling our part of the chain - handing over authentic, reliable and usable archives to the next generation of record keepers - good enough?



Change is challenging. I saw some of the challenges which digital preservation poses in practical settings. At PROV, digital accessions are processed by the same team that deals with incoming paper records; in Washington State, by contrast, they have built a quite separate digital archive staffed largely by IT professionals. As an archivist, I instinctively felt more comfortable with the integrated Australian model, but I spent three days at the Washington Archives and began to really think about which parts of the archival paradigm are challenged and perhaps overturned by the world of digital content, with its hugely increased capacities for automation in both processing and resource discovery.

Partnerships in innovation

This is a new world in which roles and responsibilities are still being negotiated and partnerships are vital to syndicate knowledge and skills. Collaboration and sharing of knowledge requires commitment from those involved, but does not necessarily require huge organisational infrastructures or massive financial outlay. The Australasian Digital Recordkeeping Initiative (ADRI) relies upon each member of the partnership committing to contribute to ADRI workpackages, and including them in their own organisational business plans. The outputs are then made available through an agreed common framework for the use of all the ADRI partners, who can customise the models to fit local circumstances. The digital preservation Best Practices Exchanges in the USA are more informal gatherings of archivists, librarians and IT professionals from the state government sector – short presentations on practical projects are followed by facilitated discussions in small groups; continued collaboration is made possible through online forums. “We’re all going to need to find a way of coping with Microsoft Exchange emails”, someone pointed out to me, “why write the rules x times, when you could identify a common framework and tweak?”.

Future direction

I hope over the next year or so we shall start to see a change of perspective in local archives in the UK – away from simply seeing the problems, towards recognising the opportunities that digital archives might offer to this sector. In the series of roadshows to be held around the UK to raise awareness of digital preservation (run by a partnership of The National Archives, the Society of Archives, and the Digital Preservation Coalition, and CyMAL), we hope to showcase what can be achieved with only modest resources, to encourage others to embrace these possibilities, and lay out the path for our digital future. ■



Manorial Documents Register: Launch for Buckinghamshire and Berkshire

Sarah Charlton - Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies

In April 2008 the project to revise and digitise the manorial documents register for Buckinghamshire and Berkshire was completed and the register for both counties was placed online on The National Archives' website.

To publicise and celebrate the achievement, several events were planned throughout the year, aimed at different audiences, including a family fun day, "Explore Medieval Times", at the Buckinghamshire County Museum in Aylesbury in June 2008. This provided a rather unusual platform from which to publicise manorial records and was a new departure both for the manorial documents register projects and for the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, which organised it.

The County Museum in Aylesbury was chosen for the formal launch of the manorial documents register in Buckinghamshire as it offers good facilities and exhibition space. It had also been, for many years, the home of the largest collection of manorial records in the county, prior to their transfer to the then Buckinghamshire Record Office in 1987. This made it seem particularly appropriate as a venue.

In addition, the museum has a programme of family days and children's activities. The decision was made to complement a formal launch in the morning, to which contributors to the project, councillors, and interested parties would be invited, with a family event in the afternoon. This had a medieval theme, complete with children's activities, costumed helpers and the re-enactment of a manor court.

David Lidington, MP for Aylesbury, spoke at the formal event and took part in a demonstration of the online database. The Museum's display cases ►►

were used to present a selection of Buckinghamshire's manorial records and this remained in place for the afternoon's activities. Sorting out hands-on activities and drama and organising effective publicity were more of a leap in the dark for archive staff, so being able to work with museum staff who are much more experienced in such events was a great help.

"Over 200 people came to the Family Day and from the feedback we received, it seems that they all would like to come back for more!"

We chose activities for the children to reflect the medieval theme: making shields or banners to introduce and explain some basic principles of heraldry, writing a "court roll" with quill pen and ink, and colouring in illuminated letters. A local partnership called Sun Jester was approached to set up a re-enactment of a manor court. The recent translation of Winslow's medieval court rolls, due to be published on the Buckinghamshire Record Society website, were a great help. Sun Jester picked several of the cases from the fourteenth century and, having read round the subject, wrote a script which would involve members of the audience as jurors and defendants. Another local re-enactment group, Lion Rampant, heard of our event and offered to put on medieval games and music on the museum lawn and to distribute leaflets in



Case of assault at the manor court creating strong feeling

Aylesbury Market Square in the morning. We worked hard at publicity and were pleased to get slots in the local papers before the event, as well as sending flyers to local libraries and public places. Two



members of Lion Rampant demonstrating medieval music

members of the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies staff entered into the spirit of the occasion by dressing in medieval costume.

Over 200 people came to the family day and from the feedback we received, it seems that they all would like to come back for more! Lion Rampant did an excellent job of drawing people in and then directing them to what was going on inside. They also joined in with the court re-enactment, which added greatly to the atmosphere. It was the court which made the biggest impression on people, judging by the feedback and comments. The court "sat" twice during the afternoon in a separate room, and adults and children alike packed into it. Many said how surprised they were at the types of cases dealt with, the presence of a jury, and the formality of the situation and language used. It was pleasing to see several parents then spending time looking over the exhibition while their children scribbled away at the activities, their interest in the records raised by what they had seen acted out.

The success of this event has led us to plan similar ones at Milton Keynes and High Wycombe museums. ■



**BT ARCHIVES
LAUNCHES ONLINE
CATALOGUE**

Claire Twinn - Archivist (Archives Online Programme)

Did you know that BT is the oldest telecommunications company in the world?

It dates back to the first telegraph companies – the earliest being the Electric Telegraphy Company founded in 1846. Did you also know that it is now easier to access this fascinating past through the launch of a new online catalogue?

BT Archives hold collections that include the records of BT plc, the historical phone books, the Post Office telecommunications business, a reference library, and visual materials consisting of both images and film. There is a vast array of material covering topics documenting the development of telecommunications from the birth of the electric telegraph in the 1830s to the explosion of the internet.

The online catalogue is the end of a two year project that involved the cataloguing to international standards of some of the earliest documents held by BT Archives. As these are pre-privatisation they are classed as public records and as such BT recognises it has a duty of care to look after them and to make them accessible for the benefit of our whole society. The online catalogue is a huge step in improving access to them.

The records relating to telecommunications were transferred to BT from the British Postal Museum and Archives in the early 1990s. BT is the successor company to these functions once undertaken by the Post Office. Many of these records are the registered files of cases presented to the Postmaster General for a decision. These are an interesting section of the collections at BT Archives as the majority are split with the British Postal Museum and Archives. An example of this is POST 30, which contains registered files relating to England and Wales dating from the late nineteenth century to around the 1950s.

The records cover a wide variety of subjects from cable ships to refreshment clubs, and the imperial »



Publicity notice including new 999 code, 1937 (CO 152)



Detail from advertisement for Alexander Graham Bell's 'speaking or articulating telephone', c1877 (TCB 325/EHA 5608)



Demonstrating a video telephone prototype, 1969 (TCB 417/E 39028)



Publicity poster by Edgar Longman, 1952 (TCB 319/PRD 661)

There are some fascinating stories within the collections at BT.

DID YOU KNOW ...

... that the first successful transatlantic telegraph cable was laid in 1858? To inaugurate the new cable, Queen Victoria sent the first message on 16 August 1858, to United States President James Buchanan.



The National Archives catalogue
reference: COPY1/38/f328

... that the 999 system began in 1937? This was the first such emergency service in the world, opened in London on 30 June 1937. In the first week there were 1336 emergency 999 calls, 91 of which were considered practical jokes.



Taking calls in the 999 Control Room,
London Ambulance Centre, 1962
(P 9954)

... the Central Telegraph Office, which stood on the site now occupied by BT Centre was severely damaged in the devastating Second World War air raid on 29 December 1940? However there was no disruption to the service. As early as 1938 plans were laid to avoid interruption to the telegraph service by building a reserve telegraphic instrument room with 100 circuits in reinforced cellars.



Bomb damage at the Central Telegraph
Office, 1940 (TCB 417/E 17767)

wireless scheme to licence agreements. Approximately 2500 POST 30 files were transferred to BT Archives whilst the British Postal Museum and Archives retain some 5000.

Before transfer each record had a unique finding number, which for consistency across the two repositories remains the same. The finding number, as implicit in the name, is the number used to locate the record. It is the reference code a researcher would use when quoting or ordering a file. Finding numbers are used for physical material only, not for 'theoretical' levels. A second identifier, the context reference, creates the hierarchies and levels compliant with ISAD(G).

Cataloguing continues and there are many more stories waiting to be revealed.

So whether you have an interest in the early private telephone companies, greetings telegrams, cable laying, wireless telegraphy, vehicles or finding out about the history of communications' impact on the world you will be able to find relevant records at BT Archives. With the new online catalogue, access to this information is now easier. Type in the title of a file you already know or just enter a key word and see what stories you will be able to uncover.....

Discover these stories and more for yourself at www.bt.com/archivesonline ■

ENTER OUR COMPETITION FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A COMMEMORATIVE BT ARCHIVES MUG

To celebrate the launch of the online catalogue BT Archives have produced a limited number of BT Archives' mugs. Be one of a small number of people to own one of these special edition mugs. All you have to do is simply answer the following question using the online catalogue at www.bt.com/archivesonline:

What is the finding number* for the lease of premises at Falmouth for a telephone exchange (1911)?



Send your answers to Claire Twinn at archives@bt.com

with your name and full postal address. The first correct 10 answers will all receive a BT Archives mug.

Please do not reply to Recordkeeping directly.

*A finding number is the reference number for the document. Each record at BT Archives has a unique finding number that helps us locate the item when it is requested.

PREPARING FOR WAR:

COLONEL COLVILE'S NOTES ON ABEOKUTA

Mark Smith - Derbyshire Record Office

Colonel Sir Henry Edward Colvile (1852-1907) had a military career that took him across the globe. His entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography notes his role in campaigns in east and southern Africa in the 1880s and 1890s as well as a brief stint in Burma.

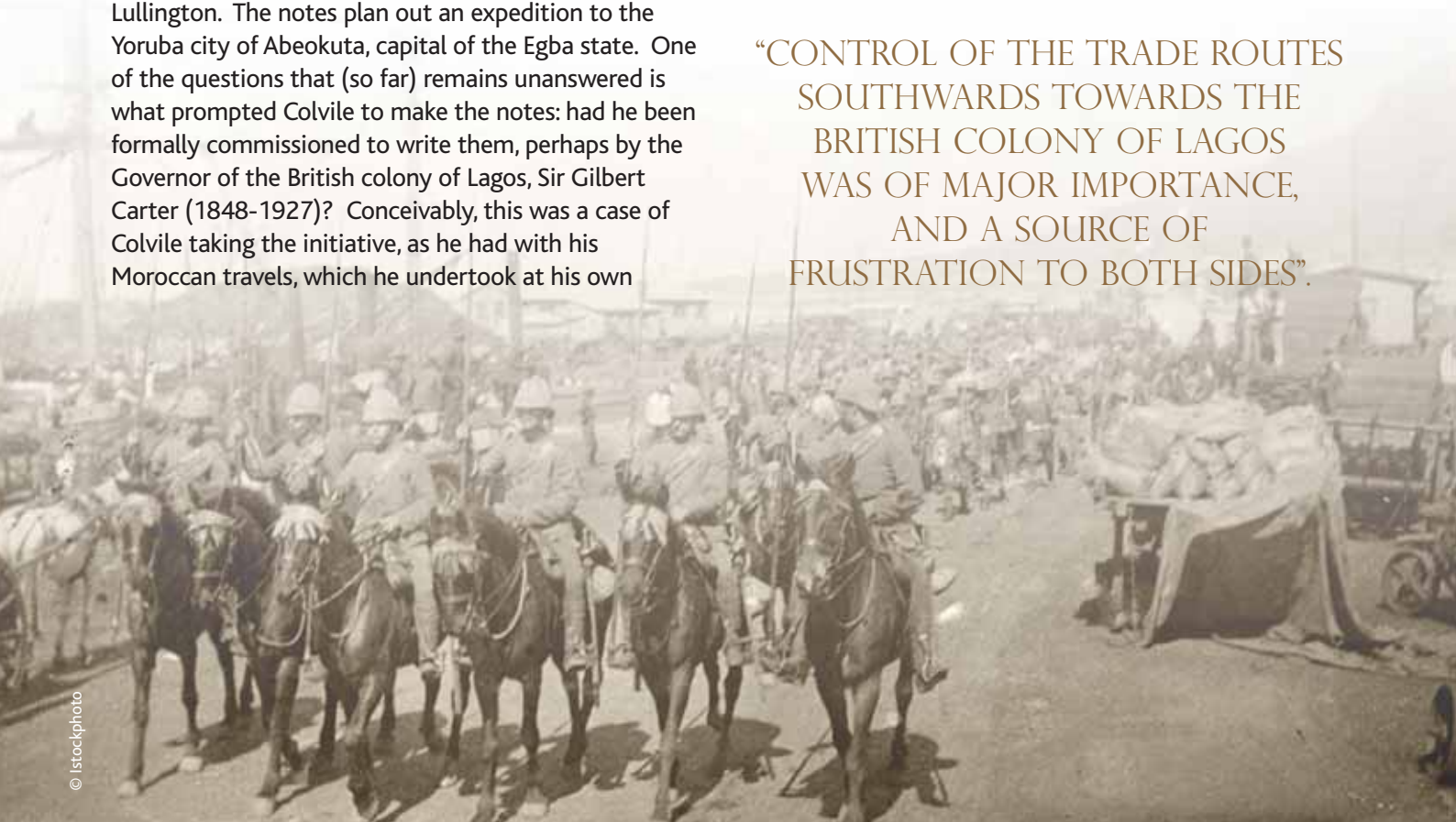
There is no mention of west Africa – yet he had sufficient experience of the area to prepare a document in 1892 entitled “Notes on an Expedition to Abeokuta” (now Nigeria), which is held at Derbyshire Record Office, alongside the records of his family’s estates near Lullington. The notes plan out an expedition to the Yoruba city of Abeokuta, capital of the Egba state. One of the questions that (so far) remains unanswered is what prompted Colvile to make the notes: had he been formally commissioned to write them, perhaps by the Governor of the British colony of Lagos, Sir Gilbert Carter (1848-1927)? Conceivably, this was a case of Colvile taking the initiative, as he had with his Moroccan travels, which he undertook at his own

expense (but presenting his findings to the Military Intelligence Department).

Striking a balance

By the 1890s, Egba and its neighbour (and rival) Ijebu had become players in a highly lucrative trade in commodities such as palm oil. Control of the trade routes southwards towards the British colony of Lagos was of major importance, and a source of frustration to both sides. “All native produce had to be sold in their markets, and at their price”, the Governor of Lagos complained, “and upon the smallest provocation the roads were stopped and no produce was permitted to reach Lagos”. For the Yoruba states, there was a difficult balance to be

“CONTROL OF THE TRADE ROUTES
SOUTHWARDS TOWARDS THE
BRITISH COLONY OF LAGOS
WAS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE,
AND A SOURCE OF
FRUSTRATION TO BOTH SIDES”.



struck: how could they negotiate the terms of trade without compromising their political and economic sovereignty?

In May 1892, British troops attacked and occupied Ijebu, to force the roads open. Colvile's notes, compiled in July, were in preparation for another war, this time against Egba. Before starting, he wrote, it would be necessary to build bridges, roads, rest camps and even hospitals for wounded troops. He estimated the amount of telegraph wire required for the mission's purposes at 80 miles. But who would assist such a massive undertaking? Colvile's suggestions on this demonstrate his prejudices: "bearing in mind the inveterate laziness of the male population, and their habit of having all their work done for them by women", he wrote, "I would suggest the enrolment of a large proportion of females for transport work". Yet, despite his low opinions of the men, Colvile was keen to "produce a lasting effect on the Egba tribe". "The terms of peace", he wrote, "should be dictated to it in its capital, Abeokuta; and as this (according to native ideas) is a strongly fortified place and has hitherto resisted all attacks of neighbouring tribes, it is probable that the enemy will then make his most determined stand in that place".

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In the event, it was a very different kind of expedition which made its way to the Egba capital: an invited one. Having seen Ijebu's defeat, the Egba authorities took the pragmatic decision to send an invitation to the Governor to visit Abeokuta. The treaty he signed there,



Lullington Hall, the Colvile family home (Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Record Office D258/54/4)



The Colvile Family Arms (from History of the Colvile Family, 1896)



Henry Colvile, pictured as a boy, with his parents (D258/54/4)

on 18 January 1893, removed the barriers to trade, and left Egba with nominal independence.

Governor Carter believed that it was only by witnessing the defeat of Ijebu that the Egba authorities were "brought to reason", and that the subsequent occupation of key areas in Yoruba land was the only thing preventing "the recurrence of the inter-tribal wars which so seriously interfere with trade and the general prosperity of the country". The wars between the competing Yoruba states had certainly been a longstanding problem in the region, and it was Carter's opinion that the conflict persisted with "the sole object on either side being the maintenance of the slave trade". The continuing illegal slave trade provided Britain with its best propaganda in favour of imperial expansion. The only remedy for the traffic in ►►

ABEOKUTA is a walled town some 12 miles in circumference and containing a population variously estimated at ^{from} 80,000 to 100,000, and I do not consider that its capture should be attempted with a less force than two English regiments, a Battery of mountain artillery and a Naval Brigade, in addition to the force recently employed against the JEBUS.

The notes are handwritten and typed. Here is the same section from each version of the text.
(Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Record Office D461/6)

in a naturally strong position
ABEOKUTA is a walled town some 12 miles in circumference & containing a population variously estimated at from 80,000 to 100,000 & I do not consider that its capture should be attempted with a less force than two English Regiments, a Battery of Mountain Artillery & a Naval Brigade, in addition to the force recently employed against the JEBUS.

human beings, it was argued, was to provide "legitimate" trade as a substitute – and by force if necessary. The force exerted against Ijebu clearly had a major impact on the decisions made by Egba's political leaders.

Dissenting monarchs

The treaty that followed Carter's expedition was signed on behalf of the "King and the Egba authorities". This is something of an anomaly because, although the various sections of the Egba people had long-established leaders, none enjoyed universal recognition as monarch. However, the British preferred, wherever possible, to deal with African populations through a single ruler, and within a few years, one claimant, the Alake of Abeokuta, was designated "paramount" chief. This position remains one of the most important "traditional" offices in Nigeria, even though the accompanying status is still controversial. In March 2008, *The Punch* (Lagos) reported that "dissenting monarchs" in Abeokuta were refusing to accept the supremacy of the Alake, and that the state governor would have to intervene. Clearly, the decisions made by both sides in Carter's day have continued resonance.

In Wole Soyinka's fictionalised accounts of his father's life and times in Abeokuta four decades later, these events are never far from the surface. At a key juncture in the book, an elder of Soyinka's town wallows in his memories of 1892/3:

[Carter] had demanded a powerful delegation to bring the humiliation of Ijebu to him and sign a treaty which

declared the routes open to every Christian riffraff and company agent. Ten sheep they took, [but] it only boosted Carter's pride, and what a tongue-lashing he had given them! Insults. Abuse. And then, most daring of all, his soldiers had pointed guns at them and ordered them to put their thumbs on the paper. What was in it? They could not read it. And anyway they did not care. Their mission which he ... had agreed to, and only with the greatest reluctance, was to present their peace offering and assure [Carter] that no one had wish to insult his king.

The reference to sheep is not from the author's imagination: the Times reported news of Abeokuta's representatives bringing "a number of sheep as presents in token of friendliness towards the Governor, and in acknowledgement of his kindness and regard towards the authorities of Abeokuta".

Principle of effectivity

As Colville observed, gaining control of Abeokuta would make a big impression. But why were the British so keen to advertise their presence? In short, because of the Principle of Effectivity established at the 1884/5 Berlin Conference. At the Conference, the European powers worked out the principles by which they



might formalise authority over their respective “spheres of influence” in Africa, without sparking off wars among themselves. If one of the powers could demonstrate that it had effective control of an area (by means of treaties of protection), then the others were bound to abandon any claims they had.

The Scramble for Africa is often portrayed as a series of conquests, involving nothing more complicated than the weak (in this case, the African polities) being beaten by the strong (the industrialised nations of Europe). While it is true that the British had overwhelming firepower at their disposal, expeditions such as that sketched out by Colville were expensive, and resources finite. Far better to become an established power by carving out a role as arbiter in an existing set of conflicts. Even after the Union Flag had been raised, the local leaders were far from mere appointees. The relationship may have been unequal, but there was still give and take.

In Soyinka’s work, the protagonists are alive to the dangers of mishandling their relationship with the new colonial power. Facing a community sharply divided over the choice of a new chief, the character based on Soyinka’s father urges his peers to consider the consequences of allowing the British to settle the matter for them. “Remind them of Carter’s war against the Ijebu,” he says. “If we use our own hands to open the gates to an army of occupation, our ancestors will curse us from their graves”. ■

References:

- The Punch (Lagos), 7 March 2008
- The Times (London), 20 November 1896 (Carter’s letter to the editor) and 18 January 1893 (the invitation of the Governor to Abeokuta)
- Wole Soyinka *Isarà: a voyage around Essay* (London: Minerva, 1994) p422, p438





There are many factors that must be addressed before agreeing to loan material from a collection, and the logistics and responsibilities involved in lending should not be underestimated.

Many institutions will have a team of staff specifically to deal with loans but for a small archive or library here is some general guidance for dealing with the occasional request.

Lending to an exhibition

There are undoubtedly many benefits to exhibiting original documents or objects, seeing them in a fresh context, and potentially reaching a wider audience. However, for the items concerned it is a risky enterprise. There is a risk of damage resulting from all the physical handling that is necessary and damage can occur during transit. Exhibiting the item will also involve lengthy exposure to levels of temperature, humidity and light that are attuned to human comfort. Organic materials like paper and parchment are particularly at risk from unsuitable environmental conditions. Good exhibitions management is about managing all of these risks.

Resource implications

Managing exhibition loans requires both human and financial resources. It is standard practice for the borrowing institution to cover expenses such as conservation treatment, packing, transport and insurance. However, there will also be resource implications for the lender because administering loans can be complex and time-consuming.

When you first receive a loan request it is worth considering whether or not a facsimile would be appropriate. Not only would this be less expensive but also, in some circumstances, a facsimile can be substituted if the original is unsuitable for loan. Facsimiles also offer more possibilities for display because there is less need for stringent environmental control and security.

What is being requested?

In order to process a loan request you will need some basic information. Obviously, it is necessary to know exactly what the borrower wishes to exhibit. If it is a book then you need to know



which folio will be displayed. If it is a letter then will they display the front, with the name of the addressee, or the back, with the signature of the sender? You may also wish to consider the context of display. Is the requested item appropriate for the exhibition in question, and is it appropriate for your institution to agree to this loan? Be aware of potential sensitivities and reputational risk.

How will it be displayed?

Items can be framed and displayed on a wall, or placed in a display case. Preservation and security are important considerations here – the document should be fully supported, protected from the elements, and secure, so for example, framed items should be fixed securely to the wall. Exhibitions are usually designed with these considerations in mind and it should not be difficult for the borrower to supply details of display. If the loan is to be covered by the Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS) then there are specific security conditions that the borrower must meet. The Museums, Library and Archives Council (MLA)'s, National Security Advisor will be able to advise.

Assessing the item

The item itself should be examined to see if it is suitable for loan in terms of physical state, format and size. Make sure the borrower is aware of potential difficulties at an early stage so that there is plenty of time to resolve any issues. The examination is best done by a conservator who will assess the condition of the item, then if conservation treatment is required they can estimate how much work is needed. There may also be special requirements for packing the item for transport, and for display – again, a conservator can advise.

Duration of the loan

Temporary exhibitions typically run for three or four months but this is long enough to cause permanent damage to a historic object if the display conditions are inappropriate. The National Archives would not normally agree to a loan of more than three months. However, other options can be considered if necessary such as substituting a different item or a facsimile after three months.

Environmental conditions

As with security issues, the GIS has specifications for display that the borrower must meet. Further guidance and recommended environmental ranges for archival

documents can be found in BS 5454:2000. These environmental ranges should be taken as a guideline because the display environment must be appropriate for the condition of the item concerned. The National Archives requests that the temperature in the exhibition area should not exceed 20°C, the relative humidity should be 55% (+/- 5%) and the lighting should not exceed 50 lux. However, environmental requirements are more stringent for a vulnerable document, for example, a lower light level would be specified for items that are particularly light sensitive such as photographs. It is therefore essential to consult with a conservator.

Standard facilities report

The borrower should provide a Standard Facilities Report as part of their loan request. This form has been devised by the UK Registrars Group (UKRG) specifically to assist lenders with assessing loan requests. The form covers issues such as use of the exhibition area environmental ranges, security, and maintenance. Not everything on the form will be relevant to the request you are considering, but it offers a standardised way to present some of the more technical aspects.

The loan agreement

All loans must be documented from the moment the loan request is received. The Collections Trust has put together detailed guidelines on what should be recorded based on the SPECTRUM documentation standard. These guidelines are available on the Collections Link website. The loan agreement itself must state all relevant terms and conditions so that these are clear to both sides. Terms and conditions will vary but as a minimum should cover:

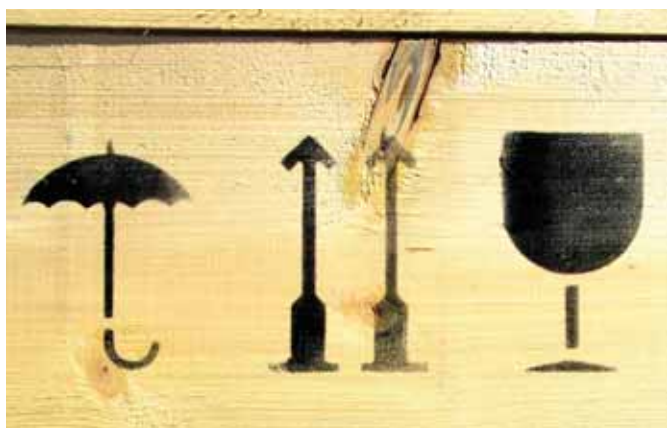
- Costs (who will pay);
- Standards of care during preparation, transit, storage and display;
- Valuation, and details of insurance;
- Rights for photography and publication.

Remember you have the right to withdraw your consent if you are unhappy about the borrower's conduct. This should also be stated in the loan agreement.

Preparing objects for display

It goes without saying that the conservation treatment of an object for display should be carried out by a conservator. However, a range of specialists may be needed, such as framers and mount makers. It is not unusual for a complex object such as a parchment





with pendant seals to require a specially-made mount. Of equal importance is the packaging of the item for transport. Some companies specialise in the packing and transport of objects and the borrower may have a company that they use regularly who will pick up the item. A professional company should have secure cases for transporting items and they should be fully insured.

Documenting the object

Before packing an object for dispatch it is essential to document it thoroughly for insurance purposes. This should include a photograph of the item, annotated as

necessary to indicate physical condition. This can be done by a conservator. It is just as important to document condition even if the item is undamaged. Likewise, when the item is returned at the end of the loan a full condition assessment should be carried out, and the condition documented. Always keep documentation of the dispatch and receipt of the item when it is sent out and when it returns. Lastly, at the conclusion of the loan, be sure to confirm with the borrower that all conditions have been met.

Managing loan requests

A loan request should be submitted well in advance so as to allow enough time to get all the arrangements in place. You may require a lead-in time of three to six months, although this will vary between institutions. If a request arrives at the eleventh hour then you might have to turn it down simply because there is not enough time to carry out the necessary checks and preparatory work. Institutions which receive loan requests on a regular basis should have a written loans policy which includes standard conditions. Places of Deposit should follow The National Archives' conditions which are available on the The National Archives' website. ■

Further Information

Much has been done by the Museums, Library and Archives Council (MLA), the Collections Trust, and the UK Registrars Group to standardise loan procedures between institutions. These standards and guidelines are available on the Collections Link website.

General advice for lenders, which includes the UKRG's Standard Facilities Report:
www.collectionslink.org.uk/manage_information/doc_loans_out/loans

Detailed guidance on documentation for loans:
www.collectionslink.org.uk/manage_information/doc_loans_out/loans_out_factsheet

Loans pack, which includes a template Loan Agreement:
www.collectionslink.org.uk/manage_information/loanspack

Details of the Government Indemnity Scheme and the National Security Advisor are on the MLA website:
www.mla.gov.uk/what/support/security

The British Standard for archival documents is
BS 5454:2000 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents.

The National Archives' full loan conditions are available on the The National Archives' website:
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation/loans/default.htm



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Recently released useful publications

Publications from The National Archives

National Strategy for Business Archives (England and Wales)

The National Archives and its partners, the Business Archives Council, Society of Archivists, Museums Libraries and Archives Council, the Welsh Assembly Government (through CyMAL), Economic History Society and Association of Business Historians, have developed a strategy for business archives arising out of a series of round table meetings of interested parties. It is intended to raise the profile of such archives and to promote their value to business and researchers alike, ensuring that future collections are more representative of economic activity and are more valued by businesses themselves for commercial purposes, and are therefore better cared for and utilised in the future.

The partners issued a draft strategy for consultation earlier in the year, and the strategy in its final form will be published shortly on the Business Archives Council website. Information will also be published on The National Archives website.

Publications from outside The National Archives

30 Year Review

The review was announced by the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, on 25th October 2007. The Prime Minister announced that he had asked Paul Dacre, working with Professor David Cannadine and Sir Joseph Pilling, to chair an independent review of the '30 year rule', under which government records are transferred to The National Archives and places of deposit and made available to the public by the time they are 30 years old. The National Archives provided administrative support to the review.

The consultation ran from January to April 2008. The review team's final report was published on 29th January 2009.

The review of the 30-year rule can be found at www.30yearrulereview.org.uk/default.htm

Department of Culture, Media and Sports Records Management Policy

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has recently released a guide to good records management in DCMS.

The policy under which DCMS operates in order to meet its business needs and legislative obligations in this area can be found at:

www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/5766.aspx

Contacts

Tel: 020 8876 3444


Staff email addresses are of the format  firstname.lastname@nationalarchives.gov.uk

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National Advisory Services

General enquiries to  nas@nationalarchives.gov.uk

 020 8392 5270

 020 8487 1970

Advice on Places of Deposit and Public Records

Including disposal, legislation, standards for storage and access:

 Andrew Rowley, Senior Archives Adviser (Repositories) ext 5318

Advice on Non-Public Records

Including standards for storage of and access to private archives, advice to councils and regional agencies:

 Norman James, Principal, Archives Advisory Services ext 2615

Regional archival liaison

Scotland

- Alex Ritchie

Wales

- Andrew Rowley/
Norman James

Eastern region

- Anthony Smith

South East region

- Melinda Haunton

Yorkshire and the Humber region

- Andrew Rowley

North West and Northern Ireland

- Kevin Mulley

East Midlands and West Midlands

- Nick Coney

North East region

- Catherine Guggiari

South West region


- James Travers

London

- Melinda Haunton/
Rosie Logiudice

Information Resources Team

Manorial documents register enquiries to

 mdr@nationalarchives.gov.uk

National Register of Archives enquiries to

 nra@nationalarchives.gov.uk


Electronic Records Management

Enquiries to  e-records@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Records Management Outside Central Government


Enquiries to  rmadvisory@nationalarchives.gov.uk


Advice on developing effective information and records management systems for paper and electronic records:


 Richard Blake, Head of Records Management
Advisory Service ext 5208


Records Management and Cataloguing Department


Enquiries to  records.management@nationalarchives.gov.uk

 Adam Blackie, Head of Information Management and
Practice ext 2430

 Howard Davies, Head of Information Management
Consultants ext 2357



 Stuart Abraham, Access Manager ext 5346

 Louise Craven, Head of Cataloguing ext 5232


 Teresa Bastow, Head of Freedom of Information Centre
ext 5380

Key contacts in other National Archives departments

Information legislation advice and guidance


- Copyright and intellectual property issues
-  Tim Padfield, Information Policy Consultant,
Information Policy Division ext 5381
- Data Protection and its impact on records management
and archives
- Freedom of Information and its impact on records
management and archives, including the current
review and revision of the Code of Practice
-  Susan Healy, Information Policy Consultant,
Information Policy Division ext 2305

Digital Preservation Issues

Enquiries to  digital-archive@nationalarchives.gov.uk

 Adrian Brown, Head of Digital Preservation Research ext 5257

Conservation and Preservation of Traditional Materials


Enquiries to  collectioncare@nationalarchives.gov.uk

 Nancy Bell, Head of Collections Care ext 5283

Advisory Council on National Records and Archives

 Lale Ozdemir, Secretary ext 5377


Education, learning and access, schools and undergraduates

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