

Developing access and participation

Guidance for archive services

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1. Introduction

Developing, sustaining and providing evidence of access and participation is increasingly important for archive services. In a time of exceptional financial constraint and competition for resources, the need for archives to demonstrate their value robustly and consistently has never been greater. Archive Service Accreditation will become the UK standard for archive services. Accreditation aims to help organisations become more adaptable, resilient and sustainable, by embedding a culture of sector-led continuous improvement. This will include a focus on best value for money and on the needs of users and stakeholders.

There are many examples of recent work by UK archives that can provide inspiration, creative ideas and practical pointers for others. This guidance is founded on their best practice. It aims to use it to clarify and illustrate some of the current theory relating to access and participation. Their examples demonstrate the relevance of the guidance to archive services and the people who work in them. They also build on models and research developed in other sectors.

This document is organised in four main sections, covering: Introduction; Process for development; Key issues; and Sources of advice and information. Section 2, describing the process, includes short vignettes illustrating the main points. These are all taken from discussion with people working in archives who have shared their own current practice and recent experience. A list of the colleagues who were consulted is at Appendix D.

1.1 Scope

This guidance aims to cover all the different ways in which people in archives communicate with others, have an effect on them and enable their engagement with archival material. The principles of access and participation are the same, whether this happens face-to-face, verbally or in writing. This includes electronic communication. For this reason there is no separate guidance document relating to digital access.

1.2 Evidence

It is always going to be vitally important to provide evidence to stakeholders of the impact archive services have on the communities they serve. Collecting, analysing and using evidence should be a normal part of any work with a focus on access and participation. In the past, ground-breaking, creative and innovative developments, projects and initiatives were not always given

recognition. They did not gain the validation that was needed for them to be sustained and embedded within the service. The energy that went into the delivery was not matched by the same enthusiasm for strategic planning, evaluation and advocacy. More recently, a considerable amount of published advice and a growing body of good practice has been developed that can help to redress this balance. This guidance highlights some of the most useful examples and references, with particular relevance to the archives sector.

1.3 Definitions

The detailed definition of wide-ranging and inclusive concepts such as access and participation is not easily contained within a few words. The process of deciding what these terms mean in practice for an individual archive service, within a framework of accepted principles, is in itself a valuable activity within the development of a strategic plan.

1.3.1 Access

Within this guidance, the base-line definition and the start point for this process is the concept of:

The right, opportunity or means of finding, using or approaching items and/or information about items within archives

This right is protected by legislation through the [Equality Act 2010](#), which brought together all the legal requirements relating to equalities for the private, public and voluntary sectors. In 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty came into force. For archives within the public sector, this means that it is necessary for 'equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services, including internal policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.'

1.3.2 Participation

Within this guidance, the base-line definition and the start point for this process is the concept of:

People being directly involved with and engaged in archives, in different ways and at different levels

Participation includes the involvement of volunteers and other internal stakeholders, such as friends' groups. The main ways in which participation can be developed, extended and deepened

are through offering opportunities for volunteering; proactively engaging with the community and reaching out to new users.

1.3.3 Community

Within this guidance, the base-line definition and the start point for this process is the concept of:

A group of people brought together by links that relate to their place, heritage, culture, faith, occupation or other interests

Community does not necessarily refer simply to the population of a political unit or physical area (such as a local authority or town). For many archive services the community extends beyond the formal boundaries of its responsible body (government, educational institution, private or voluntary organisation). The archive will probably serve multiple communities: local, national and international; different communities of researchers and of other types of direct and indirect users and of non-users. Different elements of the community may attract different priorities, types and levels of service. The community to be served is defined through the stated purpose of the archive service. Community embraces both 'stakeholders' and 'users'.

1.3.4 Outputs

Within this guidance, the base-line definition used is:

Products, services or facilities that result from the organisation's activities, for example a catalogue, a series of new interpretation panels, education packs, websites

1.3.5 Outcomes

Within this guidance, the base-line definition used is:

The changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from what the organisation offers

There is increased emphasis from governing bodies and funders for an outcomes based approach to planning and delivery, which the process outlined in this guidance note will help archive services to achieve.

2. Process for development

The process of developing, extending and sustaining improved access and participation can be broken down into five stages:

- Review
- Research
- Plan
- Deliver
- Reflect

This is a circular process. The summative (final) evaluation of one piece of work or project, in its fifth stage: Reflect, feeds directly into the planning of the next in its first stage: Review.

At each of the stages apart from the fourth: Deliver, the guidance suggests questions to encourage discussion and ensure reflective practice throughout the process. This questioning and discussion is an important part of the methodology. Organisations use this to ensure that the delivery and outputs of a project remain aligned to the strategic framework within which it was planned. It is not easy for a single individual within an archive to find answers to these questions through desk research. The process is built on a co-operative approach, both within the organisation and with external stakeholders and partners. This aims to ensure that the new relationships and successful outcomes of a planned project do not depend on the work of one person, but are embedded within the work of a team. This will make the project more sustainable and better value for money. It will also limit the risk involved in engaging with work aimed at widening access and participation as a short-term, externally funded activity.

2.1 Stage one: Review

The review stage of the process is the first element of planning. It requires an archive to spend time looking at the internal strategic context. The staff team must be confident, informed and united in their approach, before seeking to involve other partners and stakeholders.

Three archive colleagues demonstrate the strategic planning approach that guides their work:

‘Our community work is done under a social justice agenda.’ Sian Roberts, Birmingham Archives and Heritage

'We are planning for a service at the start of the 21st century, how could we justify opening hours set at least a generation ago? There's been unbelievable change in that time.' Pete Evans, Sheffield City Archives

'We are part of a much bigger organisation. It doesn't just have to feel right; it has to be a fit with the company's wider framework too.' Katharine Carter, M&S Archives

They can clearly identify the policy drivers and the importance of the wider context. The process of developing this clarity begins and is consolidated in the review stage, with internal conversation, discussion and debate. This internal discussion is likely to be wide-ranging. It may benefit from an external facilitator, if a team is not experienced in this way of working or has not worked together successfully as a group before.

These are some areas of discussion, with suggested questions that staff and volunteers might consider as a team in this part of the process:

Past success

Current strategy

- What is our organisation currently working on?
- What are its priorities and the key issues?
- Who are the key people it needs to reach?

Readiness for further development

- How does the proposed new work fit within the organisation's plans for the future?
- What support is there for development?
- What risks or difficulties might we foresee?

Next steps

- Who needs to be involved in taking these plans forward?
- Who will be taking the lead responsibility from this point?
- How can we work together to support them?

Organisation: Leeds University Special Collections (LU) and M&S Company Archive

Focus: Project success informs strategic planning

LU and M&S are engaged in a public-private partnership arrangement, which has several dimensions, including research and development in food technologies and business development. The high street retailer's first market stall was in the city. The company archive was housed above a north London store with no public access, poor collection conditions and a low public profile. It was recognised as a company asset that was not reaching its full potential.

What had LU and M&S done well in term of developing access and participation?

To mark the 125th anniversary of an M&S presence in Leeds, the company created an exhibition on campus, supported by collaborative outreach and engagement activity. This achieved visitor numbers of over 30,000 over an 18 month period, acting as a pilot to demonstrate the public value that could be achieved from the archive.

How did this inform LU and M&S's current strategy?

This led to the development of a joint strategy for moving the M&S archive into a purpose-built building on campus as part of the University's overall cultural offer. The rationale built on evidence that the archive offered the company a positive way to engage with the public, distinct from its other forms of communication. This complemented the Special Collections' aims to support the University's widening participation agenda and its increasingly important remit to have an impact locally, breaking down traditional perceptions between 'town' and 'gown'.

What are the priorities and key issues of the current strategy?

The partnership has very concrete manifestations, for example, two collaborative PhDs looking at food and consumerism and sustainability.

The key to the success of the partnership is that is grounded in projects that have practical implications, bringing benefits that add value to both organisations.

marksintime.marksandspencer.com

Organisation: Network Rail

Project: Virtual Archive

Focus: Creating access by making a case for supporting the overall organisation's strategy

Network Rail's archive holds the Engineering Inheritance Collection, containing original designs of nationally important structures by world famous engineers such as Brunel, in addition to extensive technical information.

However its main purpose is to support its operational functions and for this no public search room is required.

What was the archive's priority for developing access and who were the key people it aimed to reach?

Network Rail's staff, working with contractors, created The Virtual Archive. It aimed to provide online access to meet evidenced demand for both catalogues and images, from students, local historians and those interested in engineering.

It was designed as a showcase for celebrating the best of our railway infrastructure through specific themes such as areas, structures, engineers, companies and the links between them. Network Rail also has a contract with a private company to provide digital images of its collection on a pay-on-demand basis.

How does this support Network Rail's overall organisational strategy?

In making a case for Virtual Archive, staff argued that it supports the business strategy of Network Rail (a public entity) by: demonstrating the business's commitment to transparency in the handling of its information; supporting the communication strategy of the business to connect with the travelling public; acting as an internal resource for marketing purposes; in addition to providing public access to local and personally relevant information.

www.networkrail.co.uk/virtualarchive

Organisation: West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS)

Focus: Reviewing an Audience Development Plan to inform future planning

WYAS's first Audience Development Plan (ADP) comes to the end of its five year lifespan in 2012. It was produced by the (then) Education and Outreach Manager and the Head of Service. All staff members of WYAS were consulted on the content of the ADP, barriers to access and their potential removal. Responsibility for different aspects of the plan was allocated to individual members of the (then) five-strong management team or to the team collectively.

What was successful about the ADP?

The thrust of the ADP was in outreach to local communities. The three year Our Stories HLF funded project sprang from this. It empowered community groups to play an active part in the conservation of their heritage by providing comprehensive archival training, promoting new projects and improving access to the WYAS collections. The project was in part about changing a perception of WYAS's role from 'traditional guardian of the historical record' to 'catalyst and broker of local community history'.

Reviewing the ADP, WYAS confirmed that it had made significant progress beyond Our Stories, particularly in terms of serving online customers better. This had been achieved through extensive digitisation, support for 'silver surfers' through the library network, partnerships with Ancestry.com, an e-shop and establishment of an e-service senior post.

How was the ADP less effective than it might have been?

Although it significantly influenced the overall service plan, the ADP was 'not used as much as it should have been' to guide the development of the service. This was because its implementation was sometimes seen as the sole responsibility of the Education and Outreach Manager and not sufficiently part of the objectives of the whole service's staff across all five West Yorkshire Districts.

How will current priorities change as a result of the review?

The latest iteration of the ADP will have an emphasis on change, reflecting progress made. It will focus on encouraging people within local communities, with whom new

relationships have been created, to become new users coming through the door to engage with a wider range of resources in a more sustained way.

www.archives.wyjs.org.uk/archives-about-us.asp

2.2 Stage two: Research

The Research stage is similar to and often overlaps with Review. Both stages are likely to continue needing work as the project progresses. It is important, however, that the third stage: Plan, does not begin too soon. It depends for its success on the previous parts of the process.

During the Research stage, the organisation will be looking outwards, considering the community, users and stakeholders and beginning to take a different perspective on its plans. It is possible for archives to produce effective outcomes and develop good working relationships without basing their plans on solid research. This is usually because people within the organisation use their practical experience and personal knowledge to underpin them and/or model their work closely on successful projects run by colleagues.

These elements are clearly useful and important, but the more research an organisation can undertake about the people it wants to attract, the more it can be confident that the project will meet their needs and interests. This will also reduce the risk of spending time devising a project that does not deliver its specific outcomes because it was planned using generic information.

See section 5 for tools that may be useful during this process.

The suggested questions to consider at this stage are:

Current users and stakeholders

- What do we know about our current users and stakeholders?
- How far are they representative of the community we aim to serve?

Potential users and stakeholders

- Who are our potential users?
- What do we know about them already?
- Who might be expected to participate but currently do not (or very little)?

From their perspective

- What are the barriers to participating with our service?
- What are the motivations?
- How could we find out?

Three archive colleagues show that they are looking at different perspectives, from users and volunteers:

‘Our external users don’t care about the format of our collections; they are something to help them explore and engage.’ Sarah Price, Durham University Special Collections

‘Virtual Archive is a product which celebrates the best of our collections online - but people still ask about a teeny tiny footbridge in the middle of nowhere. They want what’s local and personal.’ Vicky Stretch, Network Rail

‘People are busy in the garden in the summer, but they’re happy to help in winter at home when it’s cold out and there’s nothing on the television.’ Gill Parkes, Durham County Record Office

For two others this was in the context of their consultation:

‘In an informal meeting with our main user group over tea we explained the planned changes to our opening hours. They were shocked but we explained the context and within 15 minutes they understood it needed to be done. We didn’t want to drop a bombshell on them without talking it through first.’ Pete Evans, Sheffield City Archives

‘It’s important to make clear to what are sometimes termed ‘traditional’ user groups, what the direction of travel is and that without change, the excellence and sustainability of the service they have enjoyed won’t be there in the future.’ Kevin Bolton, Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

Organisation: Sheffield City Archives

Focus: Managing Change with User Groups

Sheffield City Archives operates archives and local studies as separate functions on two sites. Faced with a significant budget cut, it became obvious that the service could just maintain its

current 87 hours of opening per week. However, this would then swallow up all staff capacity, leaving no room for carrying out other functions.

The service decided to plan for a big change. This meant reducing opening hours by 40% (while retaining six days per week opening and one late night) and using the staff time released to undertake further cataloguing and digitisation work.

Clear ideas for other work areas were firmly based on the service's existing business plan that was informed by demand from stakeholders.

What did Sheffield know about the potential reaction of their current users and potential users?

The service understood that their current users would react strongly to a potential reduction in opening hours but that implementing change would result in a better and evolving service for online users, who were not that well served.

How did the service manage the change from the perspective of user and potential users?

Having agreed the principle with its Cabinet member, Sheffield undertook a brief consultation (three weeks) online and in its public search room. This explained the potential changes and what they would mean, in terms of other areas that would benefit users, new and existing. The consultation was carefully constructed to concentrate on enabling the service to decide which additional areas of work would best meet user demand.

Prior to the public consultation, Sheffield brought together its user groups to explain the potential impact of changes face to face and informally. Although initially shocked, once the context was laid out further, the groups understood the need for change and didn't feel 'as if a bombshell has been dropped on them'.

The management of change was smoothed by a transparent approach. The rationale for the changes is clearly articulated on Sheffield's website. A five month pilot phase is in operation to allow for assessment of success. Monthly progress against the nine additional areas of work is published online and in the search room.

www.sheffield.gov.uk/libraries/archives-and-local-studies/servicechanges.html

Organisation: York City Archives (YCA)

Focus: Reflections on Effective Consulting with Stakeholders

YCA are currently at the final planning stage for a new capital infrastructure project 'York: Gateway to History'. This will create a combined archive and local studies service with a new vision, focused on 'the people's story of York'.

This process has involved significant consultation with users and non-users of the current service over a two year period.

It aimed to determine their future needs, define target audiences and plan differentiated activities and resources. YCA shared some helpful advice based on their work:

How to find out about the views of the community you should be serving?

Go to the trouble of gathering objective factual information and figures (such as through local authority citizen surveys information) from a representative sample of the community the archive should be serving. This is key to presenting a robust case for change that cannot be dismissed.

What are the best ways of finding out the perspectives of potential users?

Use face-to-face contact and invest time in meeting potential audiences where they are and on their schedule. Newsletters and email groups might be more efficient means of communication, but cannot begin the process of relationship-building.

Develop relationships with groups of interest that might be most expected to use the service but don't at present, as YCA did with the heritage organisations that make up Timeline York Plus.

Focus groups with similar sphere of interest work well, but so can those that draw together different interests from same small geographical area.

When consulting with groups, try to involve more than one member of that group, to ensure that the views expressed are truly representative.

How can you make the most of your current users in researching and planning for broader access and participation?

Create a structure and forum by which your natural supporters, who might be hesitant to change, can be given an early role in the process.

Following initial consultation, a more informal open forum can encourage existing stakeholders to see the perspective of potential users.

What does effective consultation mean for archivists?

Consultation and relationship-building takes time, can be tiring and requires practitioners to have specific social skills.

Meeting potential audiences can often mean attending events where the social function of the gathering is important - but always be clear about your objective for being there and what you want to get out of it. Prepare what you want to say and rehearse.

www.york.gov.uk/leisure/Libraries/archives/02gateway_to_history/

2.3 Stage three: Plan

At this stage, information needed as a basis for planning has been collected, collated, analysed, discussed and shared. Prioritising and decision-making can now be more straightforward and strategic. The suggested questions to consider at this stage are:

Deciding priority in terms of users and stakeholders

- Who will be our priority target groups (in the next five years, for example, or during this current planning period)?
- Who might be able to help us to reach these people?
- Could we ask our current partners and other people in our existing networks, such as colleagues working in similar archives or in other parts of our own organisation?
- How could we identify the best 'gatekeepers' to introduce us to our target groups?

Meeting the needs of new users and stakeholders

- What barriers might we need to address? How could we do that?

- What activities might motivate them to participate? How do we find out?
- Who would be the best partner/s for working with these new users?

Shaping the plans

- What outcomes are we hoping to achieve (for our target groups and for our organisation)?
- How do we hope to make a (measurable) difference?
- What risks might there be?

Levels of participation

- What level of participation would be most appropriate for each of these groups? (See 3.8.1 for more information on levels)
- Does this level of participation match our capacity?

Evaluation

- How will we know we have been successful?
- How will we measure the effectiveness and impact of our activity?
How will we build on what we learn from measuring?

An archive colleague commented on the approach he planned and used with new users:

Think about how to make your strategy mean something immediate to your audiences. I say that even if every historic building in York were to fall down and disappear, we would have the people's story of York.' Richard Taylor, York City Archives

Organisation: Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

Project Title: Archives+

Focus: Planning with Users and Potential Users

Archives+ will offer a purpose-built showcase and repository for Manchester's archive and family history, as part of the major redevelopment of the City's Central Library. Once initial funding for the project had been secured, Manchester undertook extensive consultation as part of the development of an Activity Plan.

How did Archives+ identify and decide on priority target groups for the future?

This began with an internal process of prioritising previously identified potential audiences for interpretation, learning, exhibition and activities. This process looked again at the city community which the archive could serve and at gaps in the representation of users. As a consequence, five groups were identified for targeting: young people; families; schools and teachers; heritage tourists and community groups (including BAME groups).

How did Archives+ find out about the barriers to participating and what activities would meet the needs of their target audiences?

The first stage of consultation involved a series of focus groups with each of these target audiences. The sessions were designed to test proposals for interpretation, exhibition and activities. They gave each of the groups an opportunity to react to a specific outlined idea. This method was recognised as likely to be more effective than offering a blank canvas. The format of the sessions was adapted to suit those invited. For example, one facilitated Somali families and their children to express what they might want from Archives+ through artwork, in order to minimise any language barrier.

How were 'gatekeepers' used to reach target audiences?

The consultation process used existing local authority cross-department channels to make contact with the audience groups. For example, young people were approached through the Young Person's Summer School, an established partnership between the City Council and youth groups.

How was did research influence the shaping of plans and decision making?

In addition to demonstrating a latent appetite and enthusiasm for involvement in archives, the consultation provided a clear steer to practical development. For example, there was an evidenced demand for a community exhibition space, not previously identified in the design plans, which has now been incorporated. The young people also demonstrated an excellent response to original as well as digital sources and this has led to a change in how the two formats will be presented for that audience group.

How will the Archives+ keep the perspective of users and target audiences at the forefront of its planning?

Manchester is now considering how best to maintain and develop lasting contact with its consultation groups. Its initial approach will be to form a separate representative 'Council' for each audience group. This will provide a sustainable forum for different interest groups to comment on and inform what Archives+ offers to them.

manchesterarchiveplus.wordpress.com/about-3/

2.4 Stage four: Deliver

At this stage the work is being implemented and activity is under way. It is still necessary to find time to monitor and reflect on the way the project is working, even though staff and partners are busy with delivery and practical logistics. Developing these skills of thoughtful and insightful practice will allow staff to keep the plans in mind as they work and prepare to inform the stage to come (Reflect).

Colleagues in archives have found that there are some key elements to delivering successful activities that helped them to develop improved and extended access and participation. Their advice for a successful delivery stage can be seen to reflect the previous three stages:

As an organisation and as a team

- Be ready for innovation and change within your own organisation
- Be prepared to adapt or update the physical environment and your service to provide a better and wider welcome
- Plan for proactive outreach to target user groups, including off-site activity and outside normal working hours

Two archive colleagues spoke about outreach to target groups:

'You need to go to them.' Richard Taylor, York City Archives

'The Manchester Time Machine brought us a different age group - young people who could interact with our film, and who loved that they need to go into a 'dusty' museum or archive to do it.' Marion Hewitt, North West Film Archive

Working in partnership

- Build on partnerships with other professionals
- Use existing contacts to help you to reach new ones
- Make sure there is clarity of expectation from all partners
- Work together to carry out consultation with potential users

An archive colleague comments on working with partners:

‘Our money was not crucial to getting partners to work with us, but their just wanting to do it was. One person in particular was massively up for it.’ Keith Sweetmore, North Yorkshire County Record Office

Sustainability and capacity

- Build on existing skills and successful past activity
- Recruit and provide training for staff and volunteers to work with new users, to ensure a consistent inclusive and accessible approach
- Be confident that your first small steps will begin the process of travel towards the outcomes you need to reach

Two archive colleagues comment on the way a project can influence future work within strategic aims:

‘The thing is the project is remembered by staff and by councillors, many of whom are magistrates. It cut the ice.’ Keith Sweetmore, North Yorkshire County Record Office, on the Changes in Society Youth Offenders project

‘It was a painful journey but very worthwhile. We now have a good reputation with our Commissioner for Older People with some potential for bidding for commissioned services.’ Jill Shonk, Gloucestershire Archives

Organisation: North West Film Archive at Manchester Metropolitan University (NWFA)

Project: Manchester Time Machine

Focus: Innovation through partnership

NWFA wanted to experiment with mobile devices and apps, using GPS to offer location- based historical film clips of Manchester's city centre.

How did NWFA build on partnerships with other professionals?

As part of Manchester Metropolitan University, NWFA worked with the Head of Media at Manchester School of Art and a member of the Computer Science team within the Faculty of Science and Engineering. This partnership brought together the raw resources, the design skills and the knowledge of apps, their coding and structure. The project gained small scale funding of £5000 through the University's Directorate for Research, Enterprises and Development.

How did the NWFA offer proactive outreach to target users?

The project used historic films that had already been digitised and each of the 80 brief clips was carefully selected and described. The thrust was to offer a new and innovative way of accessing the material, in order to attract a different audience. The product did not involve significant interpretation or searching. It relied on people's interest - wanting to see how the place where they currently stood had once looked.

Manchester Time Machine has been downloaded (free of charge) over 7,000 times from the i-Phone app store. Reviews show that it is highly regarded and there is demand for an Android version and for other local content. A bulletin by Granada news interviewed young people on the street, demonstrating the app bringing archival material to a younger audience. It was shortlisted for the How-Do awards 2012.

The most labour intensive element of the project, from NWFA's point of view, was ensuring the GPS location points were accurate, which required a lot of legwork!

www.nwfa.mmu.ac.uk/mcrtimemachinev4.html

Organisation: Westminster Archives

Project: Westminster Memories

Focus: Proactive support for community archiving groups

Westminster Archives developed, with community groups, a network of community archive web micro-sites (initially three). Each has a distinct feel, look and content. The aim was to support community groups to pursue their own interests and to address the Web2.0 agenda for user participation and engagement.

How did the archive need to change from traditional working practices?

The archive staff became enablers, assisting with content, funding, support and training. This allowed the community groups to take control of development and management of their own micro-sites.

What proactive outreach was involved?

The archive service responded to a recognised need for community development and cohesion within the particular area of Church Street. This was in receipt of regeneration funding and has a significant Bangladeshi population. Westminster supported a three month project officer post, working alongside staff of the new local library to establish a local group, train them in IT skills and maintain their impetus.

The other two initial community sites were developed with existing local groups in Soho and St John's Wood.

What role does Westminster Archives play in the sites?

It offers a basic site structure with 20-30 pages of initial content, as a taster for the groups to start them off. The archive service maintains editorial control over content but has never yet had to exercise it. It hosts the micro-sites free of charge for a three year period and may do so for longer. It has negotiated with the British Library's Web Archiving project to take a snapshot of the sites as a preservation backstop

2.5 Stage five: Reflect

Reflection is vital because it produces evidence that can be used to improve the project as it is still going on and keeps the focus of the work on the planned outcomes. Partners should check back with the participants and with each other as the work progresses to make sure that the project is on track to meet its outcomes. This is sometimes known as 'formative' evaluation. The outcomes (for participants, staff and volunteers, the wider organisation and the funders) will have been agreed in the planning stage of the process (see 2.3).

An archives colleague takes an outcomes-based approach:

'It's about outcomes. We might open less but we deliver more and reach more people.'

Pete Evans, Sheffield Archives

The evaluation methodologies and tools, the way the outcomes are measured and the data required, will also have been planned. Data collection and monitoring will have been ongoing through the previous delivery stage (see 2.4).

At the end of the project, the final stage requires a more detailed reflection, including analysis of all the data collected and further consultation with partners, staff, volunteers and participants. It is important for plans to include enough time for this stage. It must be possible for everyone who needs to give feedback, including staff and volunteers, to be able and available to participate.

Once this feedback is organised and understood, it will be vital for planning more work in access and participation. It can also become part of a powerful tool for gaining further funding, advocating for more staff time and building future partnerships.

This part of the process is sometimes known as 'summative' evaluation, because it reflects on the whole of the completed work. Its importance means that it is commonly carried out or assisted by external facilitators.

There are many sources of advice and training in evaluation. The museum, library and archive sector was encouraged by the former MLA to use an outcomes-based approach to planning, represented in Inspiring Learning (formerly Inspiring Learning For All).

The website www.inspiringlearning is still current (November 2012) and includes resources, such as downloadable questionnaires and templates. Local authorities are also using frameworks of

outcomes-based measures. There is more information about evaluation in this guidance, including examples of evaluation tools used by archives colleagues (see 3.5 and 3.6).

As the final fifth stage: Reflect will lead into and contribute to the Review stage of the next piece of work.

Some questions to consider at this stage are:

Outcomes

- How far were the outcomes met?
- Were the outcomes realistic, easily achieved or over-ambitious?
- Were there any unexpected outcomes? Are these useful to our organisation?
- Was the project more successful for some people than others?

Process

- What worked well?
- What would we do differently next time?
- What happened unexpectedly to change the project?
- How effectively did the partnership work?
- What do we learn from this?
- How can we continue to build on this project?

Dissemination

- Who needs to know about this project and why?
- How can we make sure our successes are recognised by the people we want to influence?
- How could our partners use this project as an example, to help us to reach further out to new partners, users and stakeholders?

Several archive colleagues have learned from their work with a specific target group: schools and were happy to share their experience. Their comments show that by reflecting on their past work they have gained useful learning to inform future plans:

'We don't produce education packs anymore. We are user led, schools come to us and we work with them to plan and develop something together.' Sian Roberts, Birmingham Archives and Heritage

'Look for subjects that teachers find difficult to teach.' Sarah Price, Durham University Special Collections

'Don't overegg the amount of material: it's like too much food on someone's plate. Less is more. Drip-feed it and skill up the teachers as well as pupils as you drip-feed' Sarah Price, Durham University Special Collections

'Drop-in sessions are not productive. The first reaction is "that's nothing to do with me."' Sarah Price, Durham University Special Collections

'Writing to schools doesn't work. Try and get to the teachers' CPD days - they generate a lot of bookings for us.' Sarah Price, Durham University Special Collections

'Sometimes it's worth just finding a school and having a go.' Sara Bird, Newcastle University Library and Special Collections

Organisation: Newcastle University Library and Special Collections (NCL)

Focus: Online Education Outreach Service

NCL has developed archives alive: a free, online interactive educational resource for pupils at Key Stages 1-5. It is part of its strategy to bring children and young people into contact with its collections.

How is the online education service structured?

Each themed resource puts a National Curriculum topic into the local context, offering interpretation, digitised original sources, video and audio content, tips for source evaluation, cartoon images, games and teachers' notes. The aim is that the topic can be taught online in the classroom using an interactive white board. Themes covered so far include: Cholera; Authors Alive - Creative Writing focussed on the Victorians; and History of Mining in the North East.

NCL also offers access to The Learning Arc Image Bank, in collaboration with Tyne and Wear Archives, to provide low-resolution images from their collections for use in a classroom setting.

How does it relate to what schools can do on site and in other parts of the University?

The online resources are supported by on-site workshops, which tend to attract students in Year 5 and above. Links are also made with other parts of the University. For example, pupils can interact with the original sources, visit a University lab to see the cholera bacteria and then consider which of the patients described in the sources had contracted the disease.

NCL is also involved in online project work with Year 9 pupils, offering original resources and support for them to create their own website about the history and present day of a local quayside.

www.ncl.ac.uk/library/resources/outreach/

Organisation: Birmingham Archives and Heritage

Project Title: Connecting Histories

Focus: Learning from Evaluation

Birmingham Archives and Heritage's major project Connecting Histories and its follow-on Birmingham Stories were devised to make West Midlands collections accessible and realise their potential.

The aim was that the people of Birmingham could make connections between the past and the present, encouraging local and national debate about shared identities, common sense of belonging and multiple heritages. It also aimed to provide users with the skills to engage with these multiple histories.

How was Connecting Histories evaluated?

The outcomes for people of Connecting Histories were independently, comprehensively and effectively evaluated using the Inspiring Learning framework and its Generic Learning Outcomes and Generic Social Outcomes.

What did the evaluation show about the outcomes?

Connecting Histories met its intended outcomes for people and exceeded expectations in some areas. The evaluation demonstrated the effectiveness of trialled ways of working with different communities. It showed an unmet demand for support, in order to train community groups in archiving techniques and skills, help them to access funding and enable them to nurture their own projects.

What did Birmingham learn from this?

The evaluation's analysis of what made a difference to people (and what didn't) has influenced the practice of the service today. For example, Birmingham no longer produces education packs for schools. Instead the education provision is 'user-led', responding to the interest and demand of the school, helping to shape and develop something with them.

How has the evaluation enabled Birmingham to continue to build on the success of Connecting Histories?

The main practical use of the evaluation was that it provided the evidence Birmingham needed to argue for the project's Community Engagement Officer to become a permanent part of the staff complement.

This has meant capacity, skills and the current application of the tried and tested methodologies for continuing the social justice agenda embodied in Connecting Histories.

www.connectinghistories.org.uk/

www.birminghamstories.co.uk/

3. Key issues for archives planning access and participation

3.1 Partnerships

Archives need to develop and sustain mutually beneficial partnerships with their communities. This will enable them to plan and deliver services shaped by communities' own definitions of their

needs. Archives for the twentieth century: Refreshed 2012-15 highlights the importance of partnerships in the cultural and learning sector:

‘Active participation in cultural and learning partnerships promoting a sense of identity and place within the community’

Partnerships are a foundation for strong access and participation. They can give an archive:

- staff and volunteers with strengths of skills and experience that are different from and complementary to those within the archive’s staff team
- contacts and networks that include people who have no previous links with the archive sector
- a different perspective on the community with which the archive wishes to work
- data, information and knowledge about that community, including some that may not previously have been recognised or made accessible outside the partner’s area of interest
- a different perspective on the archive’s own plans from an external partner committed to shared outcomes
- opportunities for archives to raise their profile within the community and dispel unhelpful preconceptions
- ability to draw from different and complementary funding streams, including those not primarily aimed at heritage

These benefits have to be balanced by a commitment to invest time and support staff to achieve them. A partnership, like any other relationship, needs to grow and evolve and this requires patience, as well as enthusiasm and determination. This is particularly important for developing sustainable access and participation. Successful working partnerships often include organisations, community groups and individuals who do not have ‘culture’ or ‘learning’ as their main reason for existence, or for becoming involved in an archive-centred project or initiative.

Their motivation for becoming partners will be driven by the outcomes and impact of the work that they hope it may achieve. For example, for some organisations, it may be more important that a project enables individuals to practise working together more closely as a group than it would be to encourage them learn the skills of historical research. For the archive service, the reverse may be the case. Both these outcomes would then form part of the partnership’s plan

and could be measured through evaluation. Taking an outcomes-based approach to planning is key to effective partnership work.

Organisation: North Yorkshire County Record Office (NYCRO)

Project Title: Changes in Society

Focus: Partnership

NYCRO undertook a project to work with young offenders. It was designed to show the ways that archives could be made relevant to people in a wide variety of contexts. It aimed to demonstrate that archives can be a vehicle for education, skills development and confidence building. It was originally envisaged as a history project, but it developed into a wider skills-building project, linked to accreditation from City College Manchester and within the institution itself.

How did NYCRO partner with?

NYCRO developed a key partnership with a Young Offenders Institute (YOI) through the Young Offenders Education Service, part of the library service.

How did the partnership develop?

Reflecting on the early days of negotiation and planning, it was clear that the dynamism and enthusiasm of one staff member of the YOI was crucial to the project getting started on the ground.

She could see many potential avenues to be explored and the NYCRO staff went with the flow, trusting her judgement about what would work.

What were the two partners aiming for?

NYCRO's aim was to engage a disadvantaged group with history. The YOI member of staff was very clear about the importance of the process in developing the participants' confidence, communication and presentation skills.

She also recognised the potential of connecting this to a formal accreditation scheme.

What did the partnership unlock for NYCRO?

The project was faced with a raft of barriers to participation and interaction, including issues of security, physical movement and the low level of access to the Internet inside the Institute. These were overcome by the passion and drive of the staff member to make the project succeed.

Equally, NYCRO staff had to adapt to creating a relationship with 'the lads' and deal with a degree of hostility and mistrust. Money was not critically important to the project but 'wanting to do it' was. The evaluation and video recording of the event were very positive and moving.

It led directly to a further strand of work with the magistrates' court, as part of the 2010 Youth Justice Commemorative Year. Since many of the County's Councillors are magistrates, it has raised the profile of the record office within the local authority, showing what it can offer to the rehabilitation process.

3.2 Gatekeepers

A 'gatekeeper' is a short-hand term for someone who can give others an introduction to a specific group. This is a well-known and basic method of outreach to a group or set of individuals who have not been in touch with a service in the past, who may have little information about it or understanding of the benefits it offers.

By working through a trusted intermediary, staff and volunteers from the 'new' organisation are able to break through some of the initial barriers that are commonly present, due to this lack of previous knowledge and acquaintance. They use the gatekeeper's familiarity with the group to identify what these barriers may be and agree practical ways of mitigating these, without having to go in 'cold' from the outset and risk heightening the barriers inadvertently.

3.3 Volunteers

One of the key ways for an archive to develop and increase participation is through volunteers. There are clear mutual benefits for the volunteer and the archive that can go far beyond an interesting occupation for one and the provision of free labour to the other. This is the foundation of good partnership work and should be used from the start of any development of access and

participation. Volunteers can often act as a bridge between employed staff and the communities they aim to reach. It is common for volunteers to volunteer with more than one organisation concurrently, so they are well-placed to act as gatekeepers into other local groups, for example. They may also find it easier to pick up on what is important within a locality as they are moving within different networks.

If they are well prepared and informed of the archive's development aims, they can act as ambassadors to user groups who have less background knowledge or understanding about the opportunities archives can offer them. They may live more locally and/or be available outside office hours, for example, to attend an evening meeting.

Volunteers coming from specific cultural or social backgrounds may have a different and relevant perspective on particular parts of the archive's collection.

Organisation: Durham County Record Office

Project: Mining Durham's Hidden Depths

Focus: Proactive outreach to target groups through volunteering

This six month project, focused on the archives of the Durham Miners' Association, involved recruiting, training and supporting 106 volunteers from the local community to create online indexes.

Who were the volunteers?

Among the volunteers 75% had no previous experience of archives. Participants were drawn from a broad range of backgrounds, including a group of adults with learning disabilities and older people from a residential care setting.

How did Durham's planning enable these volunteers from target groups to participate?

The project successfully trialled a working process grounded in outreach work. It offered flexible home-based learning to allow people to take part who would not normally visit the record office. Although most volunteers worked from home, they came together about every two weeks, to share their experiences and to get any support they needed.

How did Durham know that their process for developing participation had made a difference?

Each volunteer kept a Learning Journal in which they documented their experience, skills development and learning journey. Evaluation showed that the flexibility of the process, which allowed people to work at their own pace, in their own home or other chosen environment (such as the local library) was a major factor in encouraging and enabling people to take part.

The fact that the project, by chance, took place over the winter months, also had an influence on people deciding to volunteer and the amount of time they would contribute. Half of the volunteers expressed a wish to continue their work beyond the life of the project.

www.durhamrecordoffice.org.uk/Pages/MiningDurhamsHiddenDepths.aspx

3.4 Considering barriers to access

Barriers to access can be many and are differently defined. They usually include:

- physical
- sensory
- intellectual
- financial
- cultural/social
- attitudinal/emotional

Organisational barriers are sometimes considered separately, to give more emphasis to the changes in roles, working practices and management that could help to address other barriers.

This focus on barriers is based on the social model of disability, which looks at access difficulties in terms of the way the organisation provides it, rather than describing problems in terms of needs relating to impairments, medical or other conditions an individual or group of people may have.

It can be extended to cover a model of inclusion that puts the responsibility for 'reaching out' on to the organisation. In this model, people and groups are not seen as 'hard to reach'. The emphasis is reversed, with a focus on the organisation's ability to reach people effectively.

Note that more than one barrier can be experienced by the same person at the same time.

Extract from Audience Development Plan, West Yorkshire Archive Service, 2007

Types of Barrier				
Organisational	Physical	Sensory	Intellectual	Cultural
Lack of knowledge of the services	Locked doors and buzzers are intimidating	Signage is not clear in the building	Collections not fully listed	A lack of understanding of what archives have to offer and their relevance can act as a barrier
Opening hours are limiting	Inaccessible buildings	Posters are cluttered and difficult to distinguish between	New users may need extra help getting started	'not for us' attitude
	Lack of car parking at Leeds and the positioning of the building	Lack of tailored information/posters	Lack of interpreted material	

3.5 Digital access and participation

As digital technologies become ever more embedded within the way people communicate, learn and seek to find information, the distinction between 'digital' or 'virtual' and other 'physical' projects are seen to be less meaningful. Users may be able to have access and participate with the archive in a number of ways and will engage at different levels in both digital and 'real-world' scenarios.

While digital communication will offer access to and by different sets of users, the archive can still apply the same principles of best practice in terms of engagement and consultation. The process of identifying the level at which a target group might participate should for example, include decisions on the best ways to communicate with them. Different outcomes and outputs would be planned and research undertaken.

While non-traditional archive users may find it easier to access and take part in projects remotely, the level at which they engage and participate may be less deep. See 5.1 for more on levels of participation.

The archive has to ensure that there is a balance between outputs, such as the number of catalogued items and outcomes, such as a better understanding by users of the significance of the collection or a commitment to support it.

An archive wishing to extend its access and participation needs to make and develop relationships with users, new and existing, near and far. As with all relationships, some will work better, more quickly, more intensely or more sustainably than others. Communication is key but is only one part of the process.

Organisation: The Met Office

Project Title: OldWeather

Focus: Online volunteer transcription through crowdsourcing

OldWeather is one of the Zooniverse projects that brings together academics and other partners around the world, harnessing the effort and ability of volunteers to help scientists and researchers manage information more effectively.

Oldweather is a project run by The Met Office in partnership with other national and international archival and academic institutions. It aims to collect historical data about weather variability, as recorded in ship's logbooks, in order to form one small element of the data used to identify historic weather patterns. This may help to improve climate projections on the future.

How do volunteers participate?

Through the OldWeather website, volunteers from all over the world participate by transcribing information from historic ships logbooks. Once the data contained in them is digitised, it can be read by computers. The volunteering is virtual, with all activity taking place online. The process follows the principle of crowdsourcing: offering tasks to be done to an undefined group of people outside your organisation.

How are volunteers supported?

The website has an online tutorial system. There is a forum for volunteers to keep in touch, ask for help, share experiences and make suggestions, with a constantly updated set of FAQs. There are about 100 active members.

Who is volunteering?

Since its launch in October 2010, 16,400 different people have been involved in transcription. About a third of these come from the UK, another third from the USA and the remainder from the rest of the world. From monitoring the project, it appears that most volunteers are not experienced archival users and are coming into contact with historical original sources for perhaps the first time.

What is the quality of transcription like?

The accuracy of individual transcription is 97% but this rises to over 99% because at least three people examine each page.

What has been achieved?

In the two years since launch, 7% of all the logbooks have been transcribed including all 3,500 of the Royal Naval World War I logbooks of ships not in port.

3.6. Evaluation

Evaluating success and measuring impact and outcomes are important for all service development and forms a strong link in the cycle of improvement by learning from activity. It is good practice to agree on the evaluation's aims and methodology as early as possible in the planning process.

There are three main stages to evaluation: Front-end (during which the team checks, before going too far into the detailed planning, that this is a project worth pursuing); Formative (during which the team takes time during its activity to make sure things are still on track); and Summative (when the team finds out whether the activity has met the aims and produced the desired outcomes). For anything other than a very short-term project, formative or mid-way

evaluation can be a useful and cost-effective way of reducing the risk of the project missing its mark.

All relevant staff members should be aware of the rationale behind the need to measure the impact of the work. There will be a need to collect and analyse data, both quantitative and qualitative and the process can be time-consuming. This means that it is very important to collect only the data that is necessary in order to answer specific questions. It is likely to be necessary to consult with people and collect verbal or written feedback from them, when the activity being measured relates to improving access and participation.

There is a danger of 'consultation fatigue' if participants, particularly regular users, are too frequently faced with long lists of questions. By taking a more thoughtful approach to data collection, it can be made easier for all concerned. For example, there may be members of staff, partners and volunteers present who would, without any prompting, be observing how a new activity is working and reflecting on the way users are reacting. These observations and reflections are useful sources of qualitative data, which are often not recorded. A simple system such as a staff log or a minuted meeting can capture this evidence and further encourage reflective practice.

Access and participation work commonly involved working in partnership. Partners will need to collect data in order to measure their own effectiveness. Some of their outcomes may be different but there should be discussion in the planning stage about the data each partner requires to be collected and the methods they plan to use. This avoids duplication and gives the archives staff the opportunity to learn from the ways in which other sectors evaluate their projects.

There is a wide range of evaluation tools that can be used to collect evidence of outcomes. It is advisable to consider using more than one tool, matched with the users and activities involved. For example, the leader of a community group might fill in a different form from the participants themselves or a teacher can give verbal feedback on the success on an activity in terms of learning outcomes for pupils, while they fill in a quiz sheet.

The most basic evaluation methods will broadly fall into feedback that is verbal and collected by talking to people, for example in a group discussion or a telephone interview, and feedback that is collected in writing, for example in an electronic survey through a website or on a simple comment card. The methods chosen should be appropriate for the people being consulted and

also for the people who will be collecting and dealing with the data. They will vary according to the activities involved and the environment in which they take place. A useful way of making evaluation more interesting to those being consulted is to integrate it with other activities and consider what incentive there may be for them in helping you with your research. This could be as simple as offering a free cup of tea while you talk to them or a tour behind the scenes or an interesting free activity for their children.

Whatever tools the team decides to use, a trial should be made using a sample on a small number first, which would include the ability to extract meaningful data. See 4.0 for examples of evaluation tools used by archive colleagues.

Organisation: University of Sheffield, University of Hertfordshire and The Open University

Project Title: Old Bailey Proceedings Online (OBPO)

Focus: Evaluating user experiences to develop a better service

The OBPO is a fully searchable edition of the largest body of texts ever published detailing the lives of non-elite people. It contains records of 197,745 criminal trials held at London's central criminal court from 1674 to 1913.

In 2010, the project partners undertook an impact evaluation, in light of JISC-funded site enhancement, to assess user experiences. The aim was to improve functionality and user engagement.

What evaluation methods were used?

The team used methods which were similar to those deployed for non-digital resources. Ten interviews were undertaken with academics and two focus groups were conducted with undergraduates, using OBPO as part of a study module. An online survey was posted which focused on user experience of the search facilities, background material, and the site's wiki. It also asked for views on proposed improvements to the site. Website analytics (the equivalent of physical visitor information) were used to analyse general user trends. A bibliometric analysis looking for citations of the OBPO completed the picture, although this was less successful.

What did the evaluation show?

It revealed that the OBPO has a wide range of users beyond academics and students, with family history research being as popular as academic research. Use by non-academics has increased significantly since the second launch in 2008. Satisfaction with the core search facility was high, but only about 50% of users accessed other material on the site (for example background information). The wiki was only used occasionally by 12% of users.

What general lessons about users and their experiences were learnt?

OBPO generates new audiences for the material beyond traditional historians of crime and justice. However there is less evidence that it opens up completely new avenues of research. It is possible that simple-to-use structured facilities for user activities, such as bookmarking, transcription and tagging, may offer better Web2.0 models for user engagement. These could be integrated into the resource itself, but with the capability for sharing and exporting.

www.oldbaileyonline.org/index.jsp

Appendix A: Examples of evaluation tools

1. Surrey, East and West Sussex Mental Health Project final evaluation (2010)

Questionnaire filled in independently by group leaders on behalf of their groups (participants' views were also collected separately)

Questions for group leaders on behalf of their groups

We would like to find out how museums and heritage organisations can make a difference to people's lives. We need to collect as much evidence as possible of:

1. people getting enjoyment from museum and heritage collections and services
2. people developing creativity and feeling inspired by them
3. people feeling that the project helped them socially
4. people feeling that the project contributed to their health and wellbeing
5. people feeling that the project supported their recovery

Please answer as many questions as possible, having checked back with your group as appropriate. Thank you.

1. Would you say that your group got some benefit from this project? If yes, please explain

2. Were there noticeable benefits for particular people? If yes, could you give any examples (names are not needed)?

3. Were any of these benefits relevant to your group?

Please rate on a scale of 5 (most important) to 1 (not at all important), or tick not applicable

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
A Doing something creative	<input type="checkbox"/>					
B A sense of achievement	<input type="checkbox"/>					
C Keeping mentally active	<input type="checkbox"/>					
D Practising life/social skills	<input type="checkbox"/>					
E Trying out something new	<input type="checkbox"/>					
F In touch with arts/the past	<input type="checkbox"/>					
G Meeting new people	<input type="checkbox"/>					
H Working closely with others	<input type="checkbox"/>					
I Other, please explain below	<input type="checkbox"/>					

4. Are there any other comments you would like to make about the project and its impact?

Evaluation carried out by Sonia Rasbery and Jocelyn Goddard on behalf of Renaissance SE

2. Birmingham City Council: Connecting Histories evaluation (2007)

Question schedule used for group meeting with participants in 'What Makes a Brummie?' intergenerational project

1. What was involved in the 'What Makes a Brummie' project?
2. Initial reasons for getting involved in the project?
3. Were you involved in community archive/heritage projects before?
4. Were you aware of the archive resources at Central Library before?
5. Who was involved?
6. What have you managed to learn/gain from the project?
7. How did it feel to discuss memories?
8. How did it feel to work with other generations? What are the benefits of this?
9. Have you gained a better understanding of your background and heritage/local community?
10. Have you increased the number of contacts you have amongst your community and wider?
11. Have you had contact with people in your own and other communities that you otherwise would never have worked with?
12. Any further activities created as a result of the project?
13. If you wanted to research your own family history/local community are you now aware of how to find the resources and information?

3. MLA South East, Strategic Commissioning Education Programme (2008)

Questionnaire used with teachers to inform future planning of similar partnership projects

Complete and return this feedback form in the SAE by **Friday 13th June 2008** and receive a **£20 WHS** voucher for your class plus a **£10 M&S** voucher for you!

- We are gathering feedback on your experiences of the Strategic Commissioning Programme and using it to influence the planning for the direction of its future promotion. We want you to continue to benefit and for this success to carry on
- Please help us understand more about how this funding has been useful to you
- You have been sent this feedback form because you have taken part in a Strategic Commissioning funded project with a museum or an archive
- We are evaluating the project, not you! So, please be honest

Your name/ job title:

Your school/telephone number:

1. Please tell us what you consider to be the top three successes of your project and why

2. We are interested in finding out how the process was for you. Please circle any of the following which you felt were particularly difficult.

time/timescales –
having enough time to
do projects in school

scheduling trials of
resources

scheduling class
visit to museum

finding a museum to
work with

scheduling
meetings
with museum staff

accounting -
claiming supply
cover costs

making contact and
communicating with

fitting project into
school planning

Other.....

identifying relevant
museum artefacts,
specimens

reporting
procedures

evaluation

3. Can you suggest how any of these might be made easier next time?

4. What would you say to another teacher who was thinking about getting involved in the next round of Strategic Commissioning funded projects?

5. Please circle your top two methods of communication regarding the programme

Email

Post

Presentation

In person (one-to-one)

Telephone

Other.....

Thank you for filling in this feedback form. Please return in the enclosed SAE to xxx by xxxx

Evaluation carried out by Nicky Boyd, Sonia Rasbery and Jocelyn Goddard on behalf of MLA South East

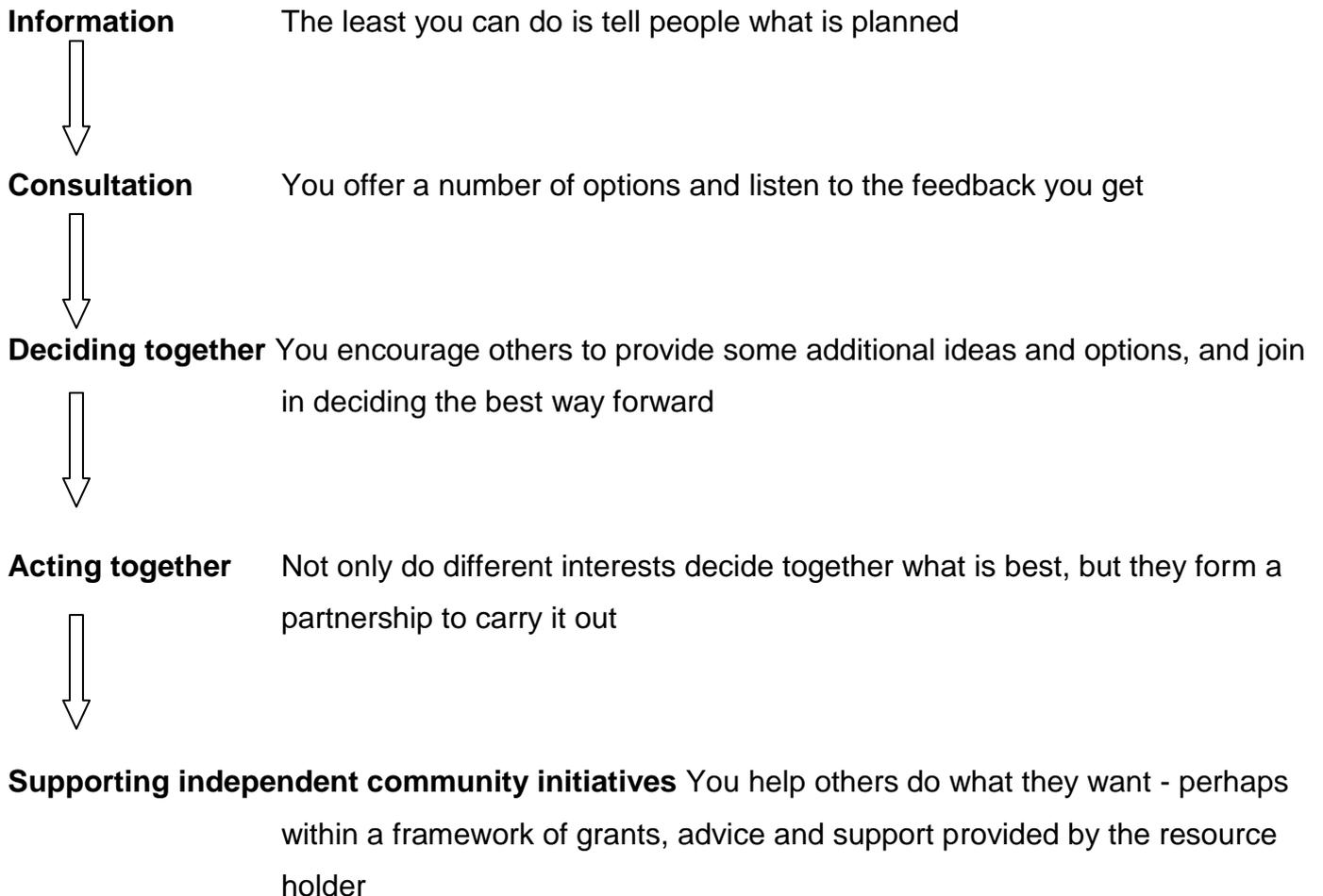
Appendix B: Useful analytical tools

The tools in this section are widely used within other sectors, particularly those with a focus on outreach and working with communities.

They are increasingly used by cultural and heritage organisations who work in partnership with them, as these partners welcome the shared approach and common understanding.

1. Levels of participation

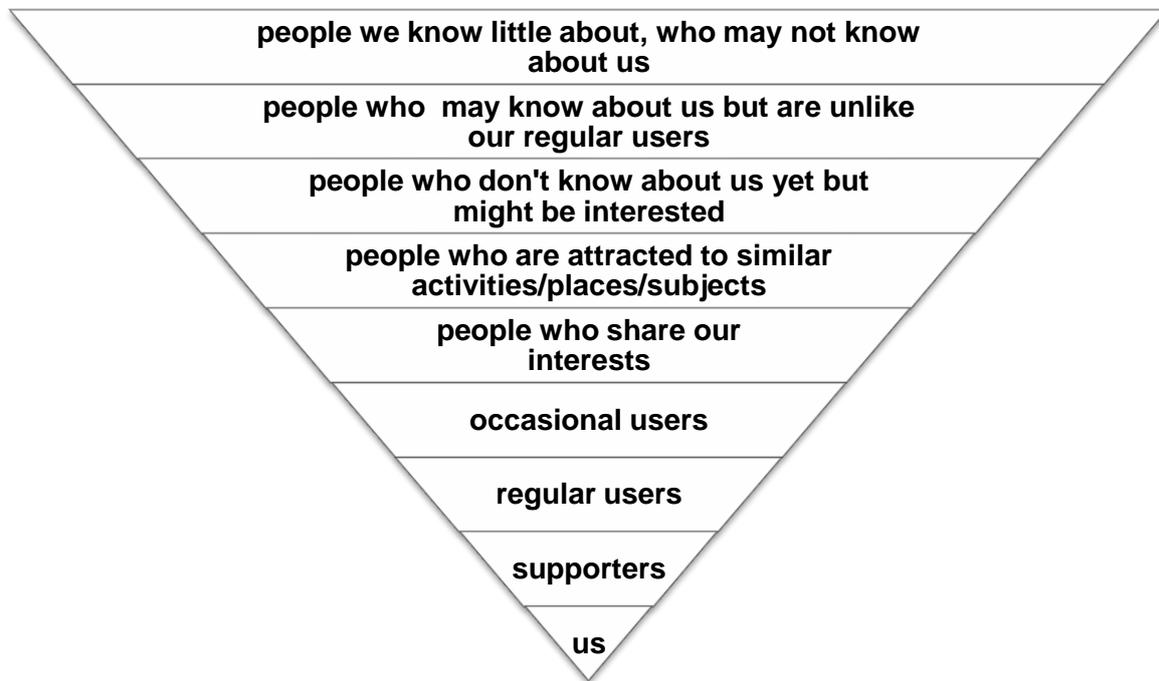
David Wilcox has identified five levels of participation that offer increasing degrees of control to a community:



Guide to effective participation, David Wilcox, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 1994

www.partnerships.org.uk/guide

2. Widening participation - a pyramid of people



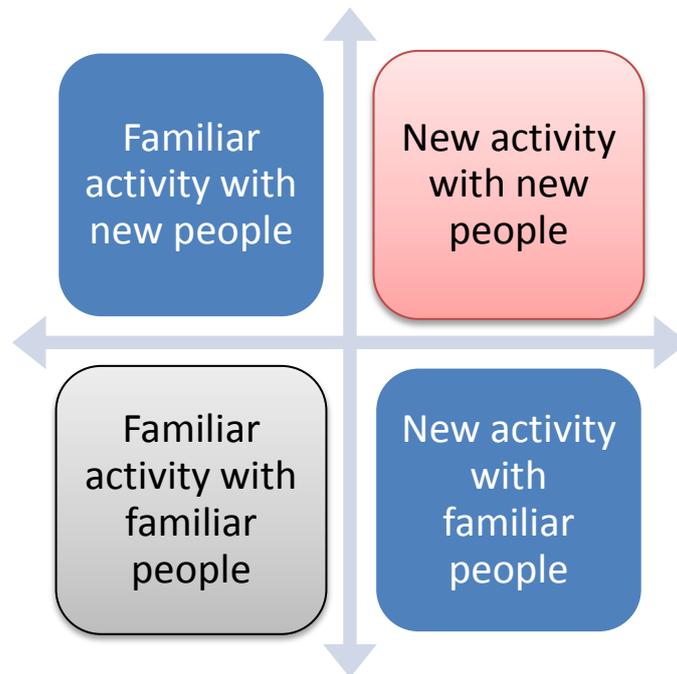
To move up the scale, we use the section we are in to help us to reach out to the one above.

Single steps are safest, larger jumps are more risky but can have quicker results.

Work should aim to bring people towards us by helping them to take a step or two nearer.

Check first to see if the segments all apply or can be customised to make them more specific to the organisation or the planned work.

3. Planning new work



The level of effort and confidence needed will be greatest when trying out new activity with new people. There will also be a greater risk of failing to meet planned outcomes. One way to make this more likely to succeed would be to work in partnership with an organisation or individual for whom the matrix is different (either the activity or the people are familiar).

Familiar activity with familiar people is safe, but even if the frequency is increased, it is unlikely in itself to lead to improved or extended participation.

This diagram is based on Ansoff's matrix, designed by Igor Ansoff (1918-2002) for marketing growth strategy, first published in Harvard Business Review, Sept 1957.

4. Stages people go through when deciding whether to engage



This diagram is based on the model developed for Arts Council England, Culture and Sport Evidence programme, headline findings 2008-2010.

The key challenge identified was to shift people from 'aware' to 'interested'.

www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/case_headlines_2010.pdf

Appendix C: Sources of advice and information

1. Background research

Taking Part 2012/13 Quarter 1: Statistical release

The Taking Part survey has run since 2005 and is the key evidence source for DCMS. It is a continuous face to face household survey of adults aged 16 and over in England and children aged five to 15 years old. www.culture.gov.uk/publications/9324.aspx accessed 31 October 2012

Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) regional insights

CASE is a joint programme of strategic research led by DCMS in collaboration with Arts Council England, English Heritage and Sport England. Building on the successful collaboration with Arms Length Bodies, developed through Taking Part, to extend and enhance our evidence base, the CASE programme strengthens our understanding of how best to deliver high quality culture and sporting opportunities to the widest audience, bringing valuable benefits to society.

www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/research_and_statistics/5698.aspx accessed 31 October 2012

Measuring the value of culture: a report to DCMS (Dec 2010)

www.culture.gov.uk/images/publications/measuring-the-value-culture-report.pdf accessed 31 October 2012

Measuring social value the gap between policy and practice (Demos 2010)

www.demos.co.uk/files/Measuring_social_value_-_web.pdf?1278410043 accessed 31 October 2012

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) guidance documents

Archives intending to seek funding for developing access and participation from external funders are advised to consult the relevant guidance as early as possible in the planning process. As well as improving the plans, this will make the following application process much more straightforward.

In addition, whether or not an archive intends to approach HLF for funding, several of their publications can be useful for planning programmes, services and projects.

HLF's guidance is under review, but currently these titles may be the most relevant for archives planning to develop access and participation:

- Thinking about audience development
- Thinking about community participation
- Thinking about volunteering
- Evaluating your HLF project
- Planning activities in heritage projects

www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/Pages/allourpublications.aspx accessed 1 November 2012

2. Access and equalities

Equalities Office: now within the Department for Culture Media and Sport

The Equalities Office has responsibility across government for equality strategy and legislation. Since September 2012, it has been based within the Department for Culture Media and Sport.

www.culture.gov.uk/equalities/index.aspx accessed 31 October 2012

Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

EHRC has 'a statutory remit to promote and monitor human rights; and to protect, enforce and promote equality across the nine 'protected' grounds - age, disability, gender, race, religion and

belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.’ www.equalityhumanrights.com accessed 1 November 2012

RNIB: Accessible information

‘Access to information is the key to participating in society, achieving in education and gaining employment.’ The RNIB’s guidance aims to ‘help you understand a little more about making information accessible, provide key information to get you started, and to signpost additional resources to help you achieve the goal of ensuring any information you create is as accessible as possible.’

www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/accessibleinformation/Pages/accessible_information.aspx

accessed 31 October 2012

Talking Images

Talking Images is a project to improve access for people with sight problems to museums, galleries and heritage sites. The project also has relevance to archives, particularly as it involved blind and partially-sighted people in extensive consultation in order to develop guidelines for improving access.

www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/solutionsforbusiness/leisure/museumsgalleries/pages/talking_images.aspx accessed 31 October 2012

Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID)

For advice on making a service more accessible to 10 million people in the UK who have a hearing loss. www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/supporting-you/products-and-equipment/how-to-make-your-service-accessible/why-provide-access.aspx accessed 1 November 2012

3. Widening participation

Not For The Likes Of You, Morton Smyth, May 2004

Morton Smyth Ltd researched cultural organisations (including an archive service) that had changed their overall positioning and achieved broader audiences as a result. The research included an analysis of the key criteria that enabled their success. The report is aimed at ‘organisations that want to attract a broad public, and are willing to go through a process of

change to achieve it.' www.takingpartinthearts.com/content.php?content=943 accessed 31 October 2012

The guide to effective participation, David Wilcox, 1994

This guide was developed for 'the growing number of people who say "I believe in the idea of community participation - but how do you do it?"'. It includes many useful ideas that can be put directly into practice, with resources, problem-solving suggestions and signposting.

www.partnerships.org.uk/guide accessed 1 November 2012

People and participation.net

Peopleandparticipation.net aims to 'help people who work in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors and who need to involve a wider group of people in their work. The site provides information, advice, case studies and opportunities to share experiences with others.'

www.peopleandparticipation.net accessed 1 November 2012 but will be re-directed to ParticipationCompass.org (link not live)

Participatory Museum, Nina Simon 2012

Nina Simon is a museum consultant based in the USA. Her book aims to be 'a practical guide to working with community members and visitors to make cultural institutions more dynamic, relevant, essential places.' Although it is primarily aimed at museums there are useful sections that have wider relevance. It is available to download free from www.participatorymuseum.org.

There is a growing movement in the US and other countries, including the UK, based on the principles of the Participatory Museum.

4. Evaluation and impact measurement

Inspiring Learning (formerly Inspiring Learning for All)

Inspiring Learning was originally developed and later adapted by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, to offer a self-help improvement framework for museums, libraries and archives. The website is still live and although some of the material is now out of date, it contains useful resources. One of the most successful elements of the framework has been its focus on outcomes-based planning and impact measurement. Work on five Generic Learning Outcomes

(GLOs) that could apply across the sector was extended to develop an additional three Generic Social Outcomes (GSOs). The website contains resources and tools, including research methods and guidelines; templates and examples, such as surveys and action plans.

www.inspiringlearning.gov.uk accessed 1 November 2012

London Cultural Improvement Project: Measuring Social Outcomes

The Measuring Social Outcomes website was developed as part of the London Cultural Improvement Programme to support local authorities and cultural organisations to evaluate their programmes and projects. The toolkit was devised by Nicky Boyd, Museum Learning and Evaluation Consultant, in association with peers from across London Boroughs and building on MLA's work on GSOs. It is free to use for all local authorities and cultural organisations.

lciptomso.weebly.com/index.html accessed 31 October 2012

Culture and Sport Local Outcomes Framework (Jan 2011)

This web resource provides guidance for councils and their partners on how to create a local outcomes framework for culture and sport. This will help you measure and evidence the difference your service makes and its contribution to local priorities. It will also help you make the case for continued investment of public money. www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/culture-tourism-and-sport/-/journal_content/56/10171/3510559/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE

accessed 31 October 2012

Evaluation resources pack, Paul Hamlyn Foundation

This pack was produced in association with the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education (NIACE) and is primarily aimed at third sector organisations. There is an extensive section on approaches and methods, which as 'weighted towards the participatory'.

www.phf.org.uk/page.asp?id=764 accessed 1 November 2012

Monitoring and evaluation on a shoestring

This guide from Charities Evaluation Services is also aimed at third sector organisations. Designed as a practical guide it seeks to help organisations to develop their monitoring and evaluation approach and improve their effectiveness on a limited budget. www.ces-vol.org.uk/Publications-Research/publications-catalogue/next-steps-monitoring-and-evaluation-on-a-shoestring

accessed 31 October 2012

Archival Metrics, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of Toronto

This project 'seeks to promote a culture of assessment in the archival domain by creating standardised user-based evaluation tools and other performance measures'. There are downloadable resources on the dedicated website, including a toolkit: Focus Groups for Archives. This contains 'an administration guide to design and run your own focus group, a script for a sample focus group on 'Social media and Archives', a ranking exercise to use during the focus group, and two versions of a demographic survey'. www.archivalmetrics.org

5 Digital projects and programmes

Jodi Awards

The Jodi Awards are run by the Jodi Mattes Trust. They aim to inspire best practice cultural accessibility in the UK and internationally. They were first given in 2003, which was European Year of Disabled People. The mission of the Trust is 'to promote the cultural equality of disabled people through the use of accessible digital media; the provision of accessible information and learning content; the involvement of disabled people in the process of creation, design and evaluation of digital media.' The site includes case studies of award winners (since 2009). www.jodiawards.org.uk/home accessed 1 November 2012

Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)

A useful study on the usage and impact of a selection of online digital resources, which were funded as part of the JISC Phase One Digitisation Programme 2004-2007, containing helpful lessons for all kinds of digital projects.

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/digitisation/evaluation.aspx

As a follow on from the above study, JISC developed a toolkit for to help practitioners to evaluate their created digital resources. It includes advice on:

- web metrics (quantitative techniques for tracking and evaluating the impact of web sites and online ideas)
- running focus groups and conducting interviews
- collecting user feedback

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/digitisation/evaluation/impactandembedd.aspx

JISC Strategic Content Alliance offers several pieces of good guidance, especially toolkits for online access.

For help in conducting audience and engagement research, to identify what your online target audience may want and how to involve them in your online resources, there is a series of presentations, briefing papers and reports:

sca.jiscinvolve.org/wp/publications/#audience-development

A report by JISC on Funding for sustainability: How funders' practices influence the future of digital resources - with implications for planning for outcomes which meet users needs -as a prerequisite for long term availability of the resource.

A series of case studies analysing the impact and embedding of individual projects within JISC's digitisation programme; including a synthesis report on digitisation projects to build on the toolkit:

www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/digitisation/impactembedding.aspx

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)

In July 2012, HLF introduced a change of policy to allow the creation of digital materials, and public engagement with them, to be the main focus of a project it funds.

This means that HLF will now fund a **stand-alone digital project** provided it meets its strategic aims and the criteria of the specific grant programme to which application is made.

HLF has issued a guidance note - Thinking about good digital practice - which covers:

- planning to meet the needs of your target audience
- using appropriate technology
- compliance with relevant standards and value for money
- storing and sharing digital files and long term maintenance
- managing user generated content

www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/furtherresources/Pages/Thinkingaboutgooddigitalpractice.aspx#.UKYwb4W5KHk

Appendix D: Consultees

We would like to thank the following people working in archives who shared with us their current practice and reflections on developing access and participation:

Isilda Almeida-Harvey, Outreach and Learning Officer, East Sussex Record Office

Adrian Autton, Archives Manager, Westminster Archives

Terry Berry, Public Services and Access Manager, West Yorkshire Archive Service

Sara Bird, Special Collections, Newcastle University

Kevin Bolton, Archives+ Manager, Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives

Philip Brohan, Science Lead, oldWeather, The Met Office

Katharine Carter, Company Archivist, M&S Company Archive

Pete Evans, Archives and Local Studies Manager, Sheffield Archives

Alexandra Everleigh, PhD research student, University College London

Katy Goodrum, Head of Special Collections, The Botherton Library, University of Leeds

Marion Hewitt, Service Manager and Public Engagement Fellow, North West Film Archive

Melinda Haunton, Programme Manager (Accreditation), The National Archives

Gill Parkes, Principal Archivist, Durham County Record Office

Sarah Price, Durham University

Sian Roberts, Head of Collections Development, Birmingham Archives and Heritage

Jill Shonk, Gloucestershire Archives

Keith Sweetmore, Archives Development Manager, North Yorkshire County Record Office

Isobel Siddons, Head of Engagement, The National Archives

Richard Taylor, Archives and Local History Development Manager, York City Archives

Lorna Williams, Assistant Archivist, Bank of England Archive