



## FORUM ON HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS AND ACADEMIC RESEARCH

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**Date:** Thursday 5 March 2020  
**Time:** 11.00 - 13.20  
**Venue:** The Swan Room, The National Archives, Kew  
**Chair:** Ms Hillary Bauer, OBE  
**Minutes:** Ms Asha Bagayat, Head of Governance  
**Members:** Ms Hillary Bauer, OBE (HB), Deputy Chair  
Dr Helen Forde (HF)  
Prof Leon Litvack (LL)  
Ms Lesley Ferguson (LF)  
Ms Adele Redhead (AR), Independent Forum Member  
Ms Jenny Shaw (JS), Independent Forum Member  
Ms Jeannette Strickland (JSt)

**Others in attendance:**

The National Archives (TNA)

Mr Jeff James (JJ), Chief Executive and Keeper (ex officio)  
Dr Valerie Johnson (VJ), Director of Research and Collections  
Resource Access & Advice Programme Manager  
Head of Standards & Improvements  
Senior Advisor (Manorial Records)  
Dr Emma Markiewicz (EM), Head of Archives Sector Development  
Mr Sam Whaley (SW), Head of Strategy and CEO's Office  
Ms Pip Willcox (PW), Head of Research

**1. Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 The Deputy Chair welcomed members and other attendees to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Deputy Chair congratulated and welcomed Professor Leon Litvack as a new member of the Forum.
- 1.3 Apologies for absence were received from the Master of the Rolls.
- 1.4 No declarations of interest were made.

**2. Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log**

- 2.1 Subject to incorporating comments pre-submitted by LL, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record.
- 2.2 The Forum reviewed the actions log.

- (i) **Action 39** – JSt provided clarification that the Archives and Records Association (ARA) Conference in September will hold a panel discussion on collaborative initiatives in the business archives sector, including the presentation of case studies which could benefit the wider archives sector. **Post Meeting Note:** Because of the impact of COVID-19 the conference has now been postponed to 2021.
- (ii) **Action 41** – JSt raised concerns about the sector using the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to destroy documents and suggested The National Archives (TNA) reinforce its line on this. EM and JSt agreed to pick this up after the meeting. The Forum welcomed TNA's awareness-raising toolkit for GDPR and asked to be kept updated. The Forum agreed to close the action.

**Action by: EM/JSt/AB**

2.3 The Forum received a verbal update on recruitment in the Research Team.

### **3. Key Stakeholder Organisations**

3.1 The Forum received and discussed an updated list of key stakeholder organisations and national networks.

3.2 The Forum:

- (i) Asked that SCONUL be added to the document;
- (ii) Agreed to further review the document and submit comments to EM outside of the meeting;
- (iii) Agreed to notify EM of any relationships/connections members have with organisations via the Skills Audit pro-forma; and
- (iv) Asked that once updated the document be added to Egress and kept live.

**Action by: EM/AB**

### **4. Skills Audit**

4.1 The Forum was invited to comment on the revised draft of the Skills Audit proforma following comments made at the last meeting.

4.2 The Forum:

- (i) Approved the draft pro-forma;
- (ii) Agreed that members should add connections under the miscellaneous section; and
- (iii) Asked the Head of Governance to circulate the finalised pro-forma to members for completion.

**Action by: AB/All**

### **5. Update on Cultural Property activities**

5.1 The Forum received an update on Cultural Property activities and were invited to participate in staff workshops and events on changes in archival practices in relation to born digital records, being more responsive to the growing diversity of the modern United Kingdom, and an examination of the current tax incentives.

5.2 There was a discussion on Conditional Exemption cases and the activities of the team to support this work.

5.3 There was also a discussion on the preservation and accessibility of records on obsolete and/or industry bespoke hard and software. VJ said UK Research & Innovation was holding a workshop around this issue. LF suggested a repository for architects to archive working documents and preserve architectural creation but added this would be a large undertaking.

5.4 The Forum:

- (i) Noted the update;
- (ii) Were invited to participate in the various workshops;
- (iii) Noted that the provisional programme for the Capital Taxes Workshop will be shared with members;
- (iv) Noted that the results of the Capital Taxes Workshop will be reported at its next meeting; and
- (v) Welcomed the workshop on Archival Significance Criteria and suggested holding a second workshop for Forum members to bring their experiences and insights.

**Action by: PG**

**POST MEETING NOTE:** Owing to COVID-19, the Capital Taxes Workshop has been postponed to September and will be taking place virtually.

**6. Proposal for the Manorial Documents Register 2022 Programme to mark the centenary of the Law of Property Act 1922**

6.1 The Forum received a paper setting out proposals and suggestions to mark the completion of the computerisation of the county projects of the Manorial Documents Register in 2022. The Manorial Advisory Panel were of the view there should be a variety of events and activities focusing on different audiences.

6.2 LH introduced the paper and outlined the aims of the different proposed events and their target audiences. She clarified that some activities were aspirational and went on to invite Forum members for their comments and suggestions, specifically checking if any audience group had been missed.

6.3 There was a detailed discussion on the paper; the following main points were noted:

- The list was long and needed clarity on how many events and activities the programme team were expecting to run, the size of the audiences for each, how they aligned to *Archives for Everyone* and which were in our gift or required a partner to deliver.
- Consulting the Master of the Rolls on his involvement in the programme.
- Approaching the Manorial Advisory Panel for key contacts and suggestions for potential partners to deliver the programme, including sponsorship opportunities.
- Ensuring there was firm commitment from partners early on and the need to be hard-nosed on dropping events and activities where a partner could not be found.
- The Royal Courts of Justice and Nottingham University were suggested as potential venues for hosting activities.
- Regional events and activities were welcomed, including making a push at local manorial courts to run celebratory activities with an educational benefit, such as creative writing workshops and animated films for school children with branding to tie it all together.
- Inviting local manorial courts to submit suggestions to the programme team.
- Tying in with Lincolnshire and Cornwall who were completing projects in 2022.

#### 6.4 The Forum:

- (i) Welcomed the opportunity to comment on the list of suggested ideas and proposals for the centenary celebrations;
- (ii) Asked the programme team to note its comments above and press ahead with firming up the programme; and
- (iv) Looked forward to receiving the outline programme at its next meeting.

**Action by: LH**

### 7. Collections at Risk Initiatives

7.1 The Forum received a paper providing an update on collections at risk initiatives, including discussions with the British Records Association (BRA) to host and administer a fund and a roundtable meeting on archival risk at the British Academy.

7.2 There was a discussion on the purpose of the BRA fund, who can apply to it and the risk of it being oversubscribed.

#### 7.3 The Forum:

- (i) Welcomed and noted the update;
- (ii) Asked to be kept updated on the governance of the fund and grant agreement with BRA;
- (iii) Asked VJ to circulate details of how the fund will work;
- (iv) Suggested TNA talk the Ballast Trust;
- (v) Suggested sharing details of the fund in the BRA newsletter; and
- (vi) Noted that booking details of the British Academy event on 18 May will be circulated to members in due course.

**Action by: VJ/EM**

**POST MEETING NOTE:** Owing to COVID-19, The British Academy event was initially rescheduled to 24 November, and is now looking likely to be superseded by a series of webinars.

### 8. Archives Sector Update

8.1 The Forum received a paper providing an update on Archives Sector activities.

8.2 JSt queried discussions with the Apprenticeship Trailblazer on the accreditation of the apprenticeship scheme. JJ said this was a matter for the Archives and Records Association (ARA).

8.3 JJ spoke about the work of the Archives Sector Development team in supporting business archives and staying connected to issues and trends.

#### 8.4 The Forum:

- (i) Noted the update;
- (ii) Noted that JJ would raise progress on accreditation of the apprenticeship scheme at his meeting with ARA; and
- (iii) Asked EM to circulate details of the 'Plugged in, Powered up' peer-mentoring scheme to members. **POST MEETING NOTE:** This is attached as an annex to the minutes.

**Action by: JJ/EM**

### 9. Historical Manuscripts Commissioner's (HMC) Update

9.1 The Forum received an update paper from the Keeper/HMC.

9.2 A discussion ensued and the following main points were noted:

- Programme of visits – JJ said he had found it particularly interesting to talk to archives which used volunteers and added he would be visiting Chatsworth House.
- Surrey History Centre – police records do not fall under the Public Records Act (PRA) 1958. Any decision to bring police records within the scope of the PRA would be a significant undertaking for the police and for TNA.
- Pandemic contingency planning – JJ provided a verbal update on TNA's pandemic planning and highlighted its risk on the International Council on Archives' (ICA) governance meetings scheduled to take place at Kew in April. **Post Meeting Note:** Shortly after this meeting the TNA site closed to the public and this event was cancelled and replaced by virtual ICA governance meetings.

9.3 The Forum:

- (i) Welcomed the update;
- (ii) Welcomed Jeff's intention to include Scotland in his programme of visits;
- (iii) Supported the current thinking on improving the management of police records and having them accessible for public examination and asked to be kept updated on TNA's dialogue with the Home Office on this issue; and
- (iv) Asked to be kept updated on pandemic contingency planning.

**Action by: JJ**

#### Document Ordering Service

9.4 The Forum received a detailed paper on the document ordering service trial.

9.5 JJ introduced the paper and said the changes were being implemented to promote advance ordering and reduce wear and tear on documents. The announcement of the trial had generated some negative social media commentary, however JJ said the impact of the changes on individuals will be monitored throughout the trial and key stakeholders would be kept informed.

9.6 The Forum:

- (v) Welcomed the update; and
- (vi) Welcomed a behind-the-scenes tour of the document ordering service. **Post Meeting Note:** Because of the closure of the Kew site this has been postponed to later in the year.

**Action by: DF/AB**

#### **10. Any Other Business**

10.1 The Deputy Chair announced this was Lesley Ferguson's last meeting as she was sadly retiring from the Advisory Council on National Records and Archives and its sub-committee the Forum after six years of service. The Forum thanked LF for her contribution and work and wished her well.

10.2 There being no other business, the Deputy Chair thanked members and attendees and closed the meeting.

Date of next meeting: 29 July 2020

Annex

List of peer mentoring organisations

<b>Mentees</b>
The Honourable Society of the Inner Temple

University of East Anglia
University St Mark and St John
University of East London
Special Collections, Newcastle University Library
BDP Architects
Museum of Croydon
Garden Museum
Amnesty International
Helen Dafter, The Postal Museum
Museum of Freemasonry
Horniman Museum and Gardens
West Yorkshire Archive Service
<b>Mentors</b>
<b>External</b>
Digital Preservation Officer, University of Warwick
Borthwick Institute for Archives
Gloucestershire Archives
<b>TNA</b>
Digital Development Officer, Archive Sector Development
Digital Development Officer, Archive Sector Development
Archives Sector Development
Digital Development Manager, Archive Sector Development
Digital Director
Digital Archivist
Senior Digital Archivist
Digital Preservation Specialist/Researcher
Senior Designer, Digital Services
User Experience Manager, Digital Services