

Title: The National Archives' User Forum
Date: 18th August 2016
Location: Talks Room

Attendees (staff):

Lee Oliver (LMO), Head of Quality & Excellence (chair)
Jeff James (JJ), Chief Executive and Keeper
Caroline Ottaway-Searle (COS), Director of Public Engagement
Roger Kershaw (RK), Head of Audience Delivery
Tom Gregan (TG), Head of Document Services
Clarissa Angus (CA), Strategic Communications Manager
Anthea Seles (AS), Digital Transfer Manager
Katy Fox (KF), Modern Domestic Records Specialist
Mark Bell (MB), Big Data Researcher
Shah Chowdhury (SC), Reader Invigilation Team
James Hillery (JH), Reader Invigilation Supervisor
Foluke Abiona (FA), Accessibility and User Engagement Manager
Kristen Dilworth (KD), PA to the Director of Public Engagement Caroline Ottaway - Searle and Director of Operations Paul Davies (Minutes)

Attendees (users):

Sharon Hintze (SH); T A Adams (TA); David Matthew (DM); Pauline Eisemark (PE); Jackie Speel (JSp); Chris Eley (CE); Jasmine Belloni (JB); Joyce Hoad (JH); Mary Wallis (MW); Jeff Jefford (JJe); Stephen Benson (SB); John Seaman (JS); Kristina Bedford (KB)

1. LMO welcomed all to the meeting

Matters arising – August Minutes

1.1 Item 4.2 – LMO explained that the opening times in the Balcony café are the same as the public restaurant.

1.2 Item 4.8 - LMO confirmed that Andrew Payne will attend the meeting in November.

1.3 Item 5.5 – LMO stated that only staff from Collection Care are permitted to take the pins out. The counter staff in the Document reading room will contact Collection Care when they are needed.

2. Cataloguing Treasury Correspondence – with computer assistance – a presentation by Katie Fox and Mark Bell

2.1 LMO introduced KF and MB who gave the presentation.

2.2 The presentation can be found here:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/user-forum-18-august-2016-treasury-project-presentation.pdf>

3. User Advisory Group (UAG) feedback

3.1 KB advised that she was representing Anne Samson and has been a delegate since December 2014.

3.2 KB stated that a noise complaint in the reading room has been resolved. KB said that AS and herself walked around the reading rooms on different days and concluded that it is not a regular event. KB noted that TNA took the matter very seriously.

3.3 KB said she has been asked how to approach delegates when they are onsite. KB said that it had been suggested that delegates have a sign with their seat number on when they are at TNA.

4. The National Archives: highlights over the last 12 months – Jeff James, Chief Executive and Keeper

4.1 JJ went through TNA's highlights over the last 12 months.

4.2 The link to the annual report can be found here:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/our-role/plans-policies-performance-and-projects/our-performance/>

4.3 DM asked about the release of the FO Nazi persecution files, as it says the files have been released but they are not searchable, as names have been redacted.

4.4 JS asked if Companies House is not retaining information they previously retained.

4.5 JJ said we are in constant conversation with them

4.6 JJe asked if it is in our remit to get government departments like MoD to deposit documents.

4.7 JJ replied that we work closely with all government departments and MoD is one of the bigger transferring departments. The record transfer report is available online.

4.8 CE said some combat reports referenced in the 1970's seem to have disappeared and are not shown in Discovery.

4.9 LMO said that AIR 50 is known to be an incomplete collection of combat reports.

4.10 JH gave some feedback on the changes to the public restaurant; she said as a disabled user she did not feel welcome. JH said she likes to sit in the light and cannot get onto the high seats at the periphery of the restaurant.

She found the tub chairs – though old - very comfortable and easy to get into. Also they had tables by them so you could put your cup or food down.

She questioned what the purpose of the pouffes was – were they intended to be seating or tables

4.11 JJ said that much of the furniture was repurposed from previously and we would bear in mind the feedback in finalising the restaurant furniture and layout.

4.12 PE stated that the cups in the water dispenser are facing the wrong way. LMO said he will look into this.

5. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 22 November 2016, 12.30 – 13.45