

Title: The National Archives' User Forum

Date: 18 May 2017

Location: Talks Room

Attendees (staff):

Emma Markiewicz (EM) Head of Advice & Records Knowledge (Chair)

Caroline Ottaway Searle (COS) Director of Public Engagement

Lee Oliver (LO) Head of Venue Management & Services

Tom Gregan (TG) Head of Document Services

Roger Kershaw (RK) Head of Audiences (Delivery)

David Priest (DP) Document Production Coordination Manager

Marcia Jackson (MJ) Head of Information Management

Foluke Abiona (FA) Accessibility and User Engagement Manager (Notes)

Attendees (users):

Anne Samson (AS), Ron Platt (RP), David Matthew (DM), Chris Eley (CE), Don Innskeep (DI), Jackie Speel (JS), Elaine Galloway (EG), P. Eismark (PE), Anna Poku (AP), Jeff Jefford (JJ), Sue Littledale (SL), James Young (JY), Michael Hill (MJ)

1. EM welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Matters arising – February notes

2.1 (Item 2.1) Reader still not entirely happy with the cups dispensing. She intends to contact LO to take the matter forward.

2.2 (Item 4.2) Seats in the restaurant area not practical - would prefer practical colours like brown. Are there plans to clean or change the current seats? EM responded that there are no plans to change the seats. LO to arrange a deep clean.

2.3 (item 3.1) Continued dissatisfaction from users' experience of Ancestry/Fold3. Difficulty in reporting issues as the images do not have TNA references on pages. It was suggested that photos can be sent in or users can make use of relevant icon on the page to report issues.

2.4 (item 4) Seating by the toilets – any plans to move them? EM responded that it is unlikely to be moved as it's a matter of personal choice.

3. User Advisory Group (UAG) update – Anne Samson, Onsite Personal Interest Delegate.

3.1 Further to item 2.3 above, AS encouraged readers to continue submitting identified errors in Ancestry/Fold 3 and suggested ways of reporting issues. This could either be by filling in the relevant form or contacting her when onsite with evidence.

3.2 (UAG 14/03 Item 3.3) AS informed the forum about the recent brainstorming session on the overall effectiveness of the UAG. This has revealed positive feedback and we are presently looking at how to take things forward.

4. Reading Room changes update – Lee Oliver, Head of Venue Management & Services

4.1 LO said the changes are nearing completion and thanked the forum for their continued patience during the building works. He reported that the new Events centre will be handed over to TNA next week and that the builders will depart over the weekend.

4.2 In response to item 5.5 regarding PREM 19 files, LO read out a response from our Information Management team: *Due to the transfer sequencing of the PREM19s from Cabinet Office, some numerical gaps have arisen within Discovery. We have already received records that will fill some of these gaps we have identified in the PREM 19 series and these are currently undergoing accessioning to add the descriptions onto Discovery. TNA is working with CO to transfer further records throughout this year.*

4.3 LO spoke about some imminent changes to the service provided by the London FamilySearch Centre (LFSC) at TNA. Following a large-scale digitisation programme, FamilySearch have decided to withdraw the LFSC microfilm collection. The last day of access to the microfilms at TNA will be 31 May. The LFSC staff and computer facilities will remain at TNA as now, until at least March 2019.

5. Open discussion.

5.1. Q. Treasury records listed in wrong series.

A. MJ responded that her team are aware and will also take it forward with HM Treasury DRO when she meets with them soon.

5.2. Q. Some readers seem to be not adhering to the rules. He cited instance of a reader with a pen as well as readers mishandling records in the reading room.

A. EM thanked him for bringing it to our attention, and will pass on to the relevant department.

5.3 Q. Reporting unusual/interesting finds among records e.g. photos/artwork

A. Various ways were put forward - to tag finds in Discovery so others can access it. Other ways are via social media blogs - copying TNA Twitter account or via Friends magazine.

5.4 Q. Clock in the Bulk order area of the Document reading room not giving correct time.

A.EM said we will report to relevant team.

5.5 Q. Issues with self-service scanners in reading rooms?

A. DP responded that readers are being encouraged to bring and make use of their own device. There are no current plans to update scanners as usage is reducing significantly. We are aware of the issues and will continue to monitor them.

5.6 Q. Webinars: it will be useful to have more information on what these are, how they work and how to sign up for them. More information is required. TNA's What's On booklet does not provide sufficient info on how to sign up for them.

A. EM responded saying we will take the comments on board and report to the relevant team. She goes further to mention that while we have in the past had a few technical issues with Webinars, and is still a work in progress, we are generally running webinars without technical difficulties.

EM thanked everyone for attending.

6. Date of next meeting: Thursday 17 August 2017, 12.30 – 13.45