RecordKeeping

News for Archivists and Records Managers

Contents

Introduction

We are very pleased to be able to bring you the second issue of RecordKeeping, which is packed full of useful and interesting news and articles on a variety of topics.

A strong theme in this issue is the role of records and archives in citizenship, accountability, democracy, human rights, and community. In her speech at the Records Management in Government Conference, Baroness Ashton explains how records management is vital for the effectiveness of Freedom of Information. Elsewhere in the magazine we hear about how archives can contribute to the social inclusion of disadvantaged people and reach out to local communities, how the Society of Archivists' Conference addressed issues of citizenship and accountability, and we see how the "Secret State" of an earlier era inspired a successful exhibition here at The National Archives (TNA).

We are pleased to bring you what we hope will be useful case studies on a variety of issues. Martin Rush of the Royal Mail Archive explains the reasoning and discusses the practicalities behind creating a

charitable trust. TNA colleagues explain how they launched a major online service, worked with volunteers, and made innovative changes to our document delivery system. If you have a practical case study which you think would be of interest to colleagues in records management or archives, do contact us.

It only remains to wish all of you the very best for the New Year, especially to those of you who will be dealing with Freedom of Information. As Baroness Ashton commented, records managers and archivists play an incredibly important role in this historic change. In fact, whether we are managing the records of ancient history or of current events, the evidence of our work will remain visible, like the rings of a tree, long into the future.

Catherine Redfern and Mary Wills Editors
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This is Catherine's last issue as co-editor, as she has left TNA for another post in the records/archives profession.

RecordKeeping can be viewed online at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/services/recordkeeping.htm

RecordKeeping is split into sections. *TNA Update* will give you news on our work and projects; *RecordKeeping news* contains information from the archives and records world; *Case studies* are practical examples of specific projects; and *Standards and guidance* will update you on the latest best practice.

We aim to publish *RecordKeeping* quarterly.

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TNA update

Interview with Chris Kitching

Chris Kitching, Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, retires from TNA on 5 November. He says that this is not to 'spend more time with his family', as politicians always seem to have to do, but rather to spend more time researching, thinking and writing, which the pressures of a busy administrative job have pushed aside. He plans to spend much of 2005 preparing a new edition of his book *Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom*, to cover the new buildings that have been opened in the past twelve years, including of course our second building at Kew. We subjected him to an 'exit interview'.

What changes or trends have you noticed in archive buildings since the first edition of the book?
First of all, it is remarkable how many new and adapted buildings have been commissioned in the past decade. I thought I might be hard pressed to find twenty or thirty cases to study, and in fact the list is already fifty and rising. That is a tremendous achievement nationwide. Archives are being taken more seriously, and the government, local authorities and universities, businesses and the private sector have all committed significant resources. Of course they have been hugely assisted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, whose grants have made a massive difference to the archival 'infrastructure'.

On the one hand there has been a tendency towards high tech and specialist facilities, such as The National Archives' automatic transit system for document production, the acclimatisation chambers for photographs passing from cold stores to the reading room at the National Monuments Record in Swindon, or the Faraday cage at the National Library of Wales to protect magnetic media from hazards that might wipe them. But even without the wizardry that only the largest institutions can afford, in many places there have been significant improvements in public facilities and the provision of computer terminals and online services. So even before I start the research in earnest for the book I can see that there is going to be much to celebrate. I do especially want to thank the Society of Archivists for giving me a travel grant to make it possible to visit most of the buildings on my list.

How have the archive world and its users changed during your career? Have you witnessed simultaneous changes in historical research?
I began my career at the Public Record Office in 1970, straight from a PhD which had involved extensive work on both public and private archives. There were no affordable personal computers, let alone laptops, at that time: everything depended on pencils, writing pads and index cards. Some early experiments had been undertaken to see what sort of impact computer data processing might have on archives, but for most of us this seemed a pipe dream largely confined to the back-room boffins. You only have to see where we are today to grasp what a revolution has taken place: an electronic National Register of Archives (NRA) searchable worldwide over the Internet, catalogues and digital images of archival documents available online, computer applications to underpin every aspect of the care and handling of archives in the repository and their communication and exploitation by a wide public.

That public itself has grown exponentially in the course of my career. Archives are not the domain of the academic researcher to the extent that they once were. Happily, they serve a great tranche of the population, and as our forthcoming conference with the School of Advanced Studies in

London University will show, they are useful well beyond the sphere of history, into the world of current politics and jurisprudence and the creative mind of artists and writers. This is a fantastic achievement, and it goes hand in hand with a multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approach to history (and of course to other disciplines) where 'post-Modernism' has led to a re-valorising of all kinds of information sources: in museums, libraries and archives, of course, but also in the built heritage, archaeology, the arts, and so on.

At TNA we have been very much alive to these trends as we seek to build an information network for the future which, with any luck, will cross-fertilise many of these currently disparate sources.

What are you most proud of during your time as Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission?

Oh dear, where to start? Perhaps it would be the extraordinary goodwill and support which HMC has been able to generate among owners, custodians and users of archives and manuscripts. And not only in this country: I have just been speaking at an Anglo-French round table on 'Archives, from private to public', exploring how the opening up of archives to public inspection has contributed to the writing of history.

Speaker after speaker from France as well as Britain, without any prompting, acknowledged the HMC and the NRA, and indeed TNA as a whole for the speed and efficiency of the services it provides. That sort of thing makes you very proud.

But I would have to say it is not an *event* that I'm most proud of, but a *team*. The Secretary of HMC steers the ship and provides the kind of environment in which both individual and team spirit can flourish. We have had some really frustrating times, usually related to lack of funding to do the things we dreamed of. But also some exhilarating times, sometimes achieving the very same things anyway on a shoestring budget with a measure of lateral thinking, creative imagination and sheer hard work. And some of those achievements have been impressive, such as our trail-blazing release of the NRA on the Internet in 1995, magnificent guides to sources such as those for the records of business and industry, and family and estate papers, and the completion only last month of the Reports and Calendars Series.

The challenge now is to build on these strengths from our new position within TNA.

And what about the merger of HMC and the PRO? Do you have any regrets?

Of course the yielding up of a cherished independence is a matter of regret to any enterprise. But it was made absolutely clear to us that the government would not continue to fund a small organisation like HMC on a separate basis, so we had to seek an imaginative and sustainable solution. It was impossible (constitutionally, financially or practically) for us simply to become a part of any of the existing bodies suggested as our future big brothers. The solution involved the creation of a new organisation, TNA, and the suppression also of some of the separate identity of the old PRO, so there were sacrifices on both sides. If it had not been agreed, I really do not know how our functions would have been continued, but I'm absolutely confident that the solution would have been less satisfactory.

I've said before that in many ways it is the 'HMC-ness' of the new organisation that puts the 'National' into TNA. We have a new mission, which I'm sure will be facilitated by the National Advisory Services. And we must hope that before too long the requisite legislation will be put in place that will turn TNA into a full legal entity. We are geared up to offer impartial advice on a wider range of issues than ever before, and we must work hard to maintain the confidence which our many existing clients and stakeholders have put in us, and build up that same confidence among new clients.

What advice would you give a new entrant to the profession?

1. Think big, and think outwards! The opportunities out there are absolutely fantastic. But, after the essential professional training in archives, records management or conservation, you need to keep an eye to how the wider world is developing and what impact archives might have on that.

2. As far as opportunity allows, mix with professional colleagues from different but related organisations. Join at least one membership organisation such as the Society of Archivists or the British Records Association, so that they can have the benefit of your fresh ideas and you can see what the issues of the moment are beyond the spheres of your employing institution. But look around too, and see what other openings there might be, perhaps alongside librarians and museum curators in your region, or user groups.

3. Don't assume that archives are somehow ring-fenced from everything else. Expect to encounter, one way or another, all kinds of information-seekers, and be aware of other sources of information besides archives.

4. Be a crusader! There isn't an aspect of life on which archives don't have something to say, but we need to blow our own trumpet more.

5. If you have it in you, Think. Even do a spot of research and get it into print. We have been very backward in the UK in undertaking research into archival issues compared with our colleagues in North America, for example.

6. Don't take any notice of advice given by elderly folk at the end of their careers: it's up to you now, and you will have your own ideas about the way you want to go!

Good Luck to you all, and so many thanks for all the support you have given me during more than 34 years of archives (to date).

National Advisory Services

Since the first edition of *RecordKeeping* was published, the new National Advisory Services has got off to a cracking start in laying plans for the future. We held a very successful away day at the Orangery in Kew Gardens, where we identified a number of key areas for development. As this goes to press, working groups within the new department are on the case.

What is already very evident is that the new service, drawing on the existing strengths of the Records Management Advisory Service, Archive Inspection Unit and the Historical Manuscripts Commission, should have an even greater impact than the sum of its parts. It is grounded in the strategic and outward-looking focus, the expertise and professionalism of its component teams, and is at the same time underpinned by TNA's practical experience in large scale service delivery and strong focus on users. It will of course be working closely with and on behalf of you, its stakeholders. I am very pleased to announce that to this end we have appointed Katie Woolf as our new Communications Officer, from whom you will be hearing more shortly.

Finally, Dr Christopher Kitching CBE, Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission since 1992, will be retiring on 5 November 2004. He has been an outstanding leader of HMC at a time of considerable change, and his vision and wisdom will be greatly missed by us all. We are however delighted that Chris has not succeeded in escaping entirely, since he will soon be starting work on the second edition of his book on archive buildings, for TNA. We all wish him well for the future.

Dr Elizabeth Hallam Smith
Director of National Advisory
and Public Services

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Members of the National Advisory Services at their away day. *From left to right:* Chris Kitching, James Travers, Liz Hallam Smith, Nicholas Langston, Richard Blake, Catherine Redfern, Ian Macfarlane, Katie Woolf, Rachel Bell, Steven Jones, Melinda Haunton, Andrew Rowley, Eleanor Russell, Alex Ritchie, Liz Brown, Ramona Black, Leah Chapman, Norman James, Mary Wills, Anthony Smith. Colleagues not pictured: Hazel Bagworth-Mann, Michelle Foggett, Michelle Kingston, Dick Sargent

The Restoration of BBC Domesday

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Original laserdisc
player with disc

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The unique collection of community data compiled by the BBC Domesday Project in 1986 has been rescued from its obsolete videodisc format and is once again available for the public to see at The National Archives in Kew, free of charge.

This "people's database" of life in nineteen-eighties Britain is something never attempted before or since. William the Conqueror's original Domesday Book of 1086, which is also at The National Archives, was a view from the top of the hierarchy. The BBC project, undertaken to mark its 900th anniversary, was a view from the bottom, put together by the community. Nearly a million people took part, from University professors to Women's Institutes – and above all thousands of schoolteachers and their pupils, most of them at primary level.

Collection of the community data was based on the computers that a Government programme had put into every school in the country. Most of these were BBC micros, a computer purpose-built for schools by Acorn to a BBC design. The Department of Trade and Industry had provided half the cost of first one, and then a second, micro for each school in 1980-81, and the Department for Education and Skills had provided the cost of training two teachers from every primary and secondary school. This bold attempt to build computer literacy through schools was a great success for the BBC, and caused many more BBC micros to be installed than had been dreamed of. It was this user base of compatible computers that made the Domesday Project practicable.

The UK was divided into blocks of 4 x 3 Km, the ratio of a TV screen. Each block was allocated 20 screens of text and three photographs. This was the base level of the pyramid, to be filled by the community volunteers and linked together by maps. Ordnance Survey maps at 1/50,000 scale were included to give complete coverage of the country at this level. Above this were more maps, more pictures (satellite and aerial) and more texts. Professionals, from schoolteachers to academic geographers, wrote the texts at the higher levels. The community data eventually added up to 29,000 photographs, 27,000 maps and millions of words of text.

The result was the world's first ever countrywide geographical information system. Since it was seen as a teaching resource for school children and libraries, it was designed to be very easy to use. A tracker ball, a robust form of mouse, was used to navigate around the country and to zoom in and out between levels, changing the level of geographical detail. At each level the user could view maps or pictures or text pages, one at a time, and switch between them. The monitor of the micro could be a TV screen, which imposed a limit on the amount of detail that could be shown at once.

The schoolchildren entered their own data on their school computers, and floppy discs or tapes were sent to the BBC for collation. The maps, which were actual paper maps bought from the Ordnance Survey, were laid flat under a rostrum camera at the Open University and transferred one by one to analogue videotape. Photographs were similarly transformed into still images on videotape. No digitisation then! The whole database was assembled on master videotapes from which the videodiscs were produced.

It was from those master videotapes that the data was eventually transferred to a modern digital broadcast medium in collaboration between The National Archives, the BBC and ATSF Ltd. This was one of a number of parallel rescue projects, and the one that secured the future of the data.

Independently, Adrian Pearce of LongLife Data Ltd had developed a new PC interface to the community data working in the same way as the original BBC interface, except that with the higher resolution of a modern monitor the maps, pictures and text could be displayed simultaneously. This interface now works with pictures transferred by ATSF and the BBC to modern computer graphics formats. Work is going forward on a Web version with the aim of making the data accessible in schools as an educational resource. Meanwhile, the new interface is installed in the Library at The National Archives for the public to see.

The Domesday Project gives a unique insight into life in 1980s Britain, and participation was a major event in the lives of thousands of community volunteers, subject experts and IT developers. For economic reasons, the original product did not achieve the wide distribution that was hoped for, so that many people never got to see the results of their efforts. The National Archives is proud to have taken part in the project that has assured the preservation of this resource for future generations.

Jeffrey Darlington
Digital Preservation Department
The National Archives

Publication of Report on the Finch Manuscripts

The National Archives is pleased to announce the publication of *Report on the Finch Manuscripts, Volume V*, edited by Sonia P. Anderson. The volume deals with the papers of Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham, in the archives of the Finch family of Burley-on-the-Hill, now on deposit in the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. These papers cover Nottingham's general correspondence as secretary of state to William III and Mary in 1693, his secret service papers 1691-3 and his naval and military papers to 1694.

Volume V is one of the largest and most fascinating volumes in the whole series, particularly in respect of its international scope and its coverage of the secret service papers of this period.

A full introduction and index ensure that this volume can be used independently of its predecessors. This volume also marks the end of the Historical Manuscripts Commission's Reports and Calendars series, some 240 volumes of privately owned material made available to historians by publication between 1870 and 2004.

Report on the Finch Manuscripts, Volume V is priced at £130 and published by TSO.
It can be ordered online (www.tso.co.uk/bookshop), by telephone (0870 243 0123), or by post at Marketing, TSO, Freepost, ANG4748, Norwich NR3 1YX (ISBN 0 11 440231 0).

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HMC's Secretary, Chris Kitching (right) presenting copies of Finch V to Professor Jean-Philippe Genet (centre) for CNRS and Professor David Bates for London University's Institute of Historical Research during a recent Anglo-French conference on the theme 'Archives, from private to public'

The Archives Portal

The Archives Portal is The National Archives' gateway to archive-related initiatives around the United Kingdom and beyond. Log on and search for archive projects by title, keyword or location. There are numerous subjects to explore, from archival care to historical collections to learning and access.

All profiled resources on the Portal will tell you about the project, relevant websites, related organisations and who to contact if you have more questions.

The Portal is a great resource for professionals, because it profiles projects and initiatives that are being developed, and may act as a springboard for ideas for other projects or provide models of best practice. The Portal also lists professional and training organisations and in that sense, the Portal is a great place to look for career development purposes.

Keeping up with new projects is now easier! Every month the Archives Portal features on our home page a fresh new project happening around the UK. Log on to the Archives Portal www.portal.nationalarchives.gov.uk to explore projects or add a new resource.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Michelle Foggett, Archives Portal Editor, michelle.foggett@nationalarchives.gov.uk

RecordKeeping news

Her Majesty's Government's FOI Implementation

Baroness Ashton of Upholland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs
Records Management in Government Conference 7th October 2004

Baroness Ashton was appointed as Parliamentary Under Secretary at the Department for Constitutional Affairs on 9 September 2004. Previously she held ministerial appointments at the Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Work and Pensions. She has also worked in the voluntary and private sectors.

Some highlights of Baroness Ashton's speech, given at the annual Records Management in Government Conference (for records managers in Central Government Departments), are excerpted here.

I am delighted to be with you this morning to discuss the Freedom of Information Act and the important role that all of you as government records managers are playing in that implementation.

I want to begin with a very heartfelt thank you. Do not underestimate the importance of the work you do, and will be doing. I don't, and you mustn't.

You have a key role in opening up access to information for the public and ensuring it exists and survives as the public record. You have been working very hard, I know, and it is greatly appreciated.

The importance of FOI to Her Majesty's Government and to the citizen

First of all, why does Freedom of Information matter? For me, there are three reasons.

First, the fundamental belief that citizens have a right to know – whether it is how their school determines which pupils will attend; how a hospital makes decisions about the treatment it gives; or how police forces decide to deploy officers: decisions that affect people's lives.

Second, that greater openness leads to greater confidence – in all of us, even politicians!

Third, and perhaps most importantly, greater openness raises the quality of government.

The Labour Government introduced and supported this important legislative change so that there would be a new culture of openness: a change in the way we are governed. The more there is a culture of openness, the better decision-making will be.

Frankly, if decisions have to be publicly explained, they will be better taken. Real informed accountability improves standards. The test of the success of the FOI Act will be the extent to which it raises the quality of government.

And it is change which will have a widespread effect on the delivery of public service.

But let me be clear too, that good government will require that some information must remain confidential.

Whilst it is right that schools admission policies should be open, the details of individual pupils should not. Whilst the policies which determine how patients are treated in hospital should be public, the details of individual patients should not.

So too in national Government there will be information that needs to remain confidential. But where we cannot be open we must make the case, from the starting point of openness: the "need to know" culture truly replaced by the "right to know" culture.

The importance of Records Management to Freedom of Information

But for Freedom of Information to be a success, public authorities must manage their information properly and efficiently. Our desire for openness will be measured on the quality of the information we provide and the efficiency with which we provide it.

That is why a Code of Practice on records management was issued by the Lord Chancellor in 2002. Issuing the Code in 2002 gave authorities three years to ensure that the correct information is created, that it is treated as a record where it has sufficient value and that proper additional information is created about its content.

Furthermore, the public need to have confidence that when an organisation says it no longer holds information that the information has been deleted as part of a transparent and agreed process: not simply that the information cannot be found.

Government cannot engage in and demonstrate evidence-based policy making if the recorded evidence of policy formulation is not sustained nor easily retrievable. Nor can the public or professional auditors evaluate past actions and decisions if the information isn't seen to be reliable or authentic. Failure to meet Freedom of Information obligations will be a public failure and will be failing the public.

Freedom of Information brings records management directly into the focus of public awareness. People will see its importance to the efficient handling of their requests. So, records management is in the front line. Any failings will be exposed quickly, so this is a real challenge.

Responsibilities for records managers

This is the challenge. What are the responsibilities for records managers?

As records managers in central government you are starting from a strong base with established personnel and practices in information and records management, with professional standards and guidance from The National Archives.

You already have procedures for reviewing whether historical information over 30 years old should remain closed to the public and this process is independently scrutinised by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on National Records and Archives.

Records Managers have already ensured that information can be managed and shared amongst colleagues through Electronic Records Management systems.

You have a key role in opening up access to information for the public but you also have a key role in protecting the quality of that information and ensuring that it exists and survives as the public record.

Authenticity

But it's no good supplying information to the public if it lacks authenticity and integrity. Authenticity and integrity are not just achieved by capturing the content of information at its time of creation.

They are also provided by ensuring that sound policies and procedures exist so that there is a trail of the actions which were taken on a specific document. People need to know whether it has been altered and if so how.

These policies and procedures do not happen by accident or from good will. They are the result of professional knowledge and practices provided by records managers together with skilled staff who manage the information assets of government departments.

Records Management in a digital world

Of course records management has long ceased to be merely about handling paper files in remote stores or basements. Modern government is about delivering online services to the public.

In the office, e-mail rather than the correspondence float file is the order of the day, and in this period of technological change the principles of records management are more pertinent than ever.

Changes to RM practices that FOI will bring

The Freedom of Information Act will mean changes in records management practices.

- Exemptions need to be identified when records are transferred to archives if the information needs to remain closed to the public.

- The end of the 30-year rule for public records means that this sensitivity review of documents selected for permanent preservation will need to be done on a case by case basis.

- Whilst ensuring that the right to know is maintained, records staff must also ensure that data protection principles are upheld when the Data Protection Act is extended to cover unstructured manual records held by public authorities.

Achievements to date

As you will know, my Department has been providing the lead across Whitehall for implementation of FOI. This work has been supported superbly by The National Archives, not least in producing the excellent Section 46

"Records management is in the front line – people will see its importance to the efficient handling of their requests."

Code of Practice on Records Management.

Freedom of Information legislation will only be as good as the quality of records to which access is opened. So I urge you to continue using the Section 46 Code as your key implementation document.

At DCA, we are in the final stages of producing clear and comprehensive guidance on the Act. This is already available in draft form to FOI practitioners across Whitehall and covers the exemptions in the Act – with two separate volumes tailored to desk officers and specialists respectively. Further guidance is to be published covering procedures for handling requests under the Act.

The guidance is the product of some of the finest brains across Whitehall, and is being structured to make the final document as user friendly as possible.

The guidance will be published before the end of this month on the DCA's "one stop shop" FOI website – www.foi.gov.uk. Web publication will ensure that the guidance is responsive and is kept fully up to date with emerging case law as "live" experience of FOI develops.

In partnership with the Information Commissioner and the National Audit Office, DCA produced a guide entitled "Countdown to Implementation", outlining practical steps public authorities should take in these final months. And, again, I urge you to use this document.

We've also produced a Model Action Plan, outlining the steps public authorities should take towards implementation, which the DCA's own plans follow.

We've produced a Training Guide which explores training options open to public authorities.

We've produced a Generic User Specification for IT systems to manage FOI requests.

And, most importantly, we will ensure that there is an enduring commitment to FOI beyond January 2005. If we are to make a success of FOI, we need a sustained commitment and we need to take a coherent and consistent approach across Government.

To achieve this, DCA has set up an Access to Information advice service. This facility will co-ordinate our response on round-robin, precedent setting information requests, and ensure that we act collectively on

"Access rights are of little use if the information is not recorded or cannot be found when requested."

difficult cases. It will be based in DCA, but Cabinet Office staff will handle all cases intrinsic to the operation of collective responsibility, Cabinet and the role of Ministers.

There has been a long established process for overseeing access to public records over 30 years old. The Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on National Records and Archives has worked very well and I know that the Council is working to adapt its procedures so that it will continue to play a vital role in the FOI world.

Records less than 30 years old are increasingly and rightly being transferred to The National Archives from government and I applaud the increased openness that this produces. I also know that earlier transfers of electronic records enables The National Archives to work with government departments to ensure that the vital but fragile information contained in electronic records is preserved for posterity.

The DCA and Cabinet Office advice service will be helping you to adopt the consistent and coherent approach to issues of access that we need across government. It will be in support of the statutory functions so ably and effectively discharged by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on National Records and Archives.

Achievements to date – Records Management field
In respect of records management, implementation of Freedom of Information has brought particular challenges.

Records managers will not only have to know what information exists not just for current business functions, but also what was inherited from predecessors.

Together with colleagues at The National Archives you have dealt with

some of these legacy issues. Both the Secretary of State and I welcome your review of records held at Kew which are closed under the 30-year rule.

I am pleased to announce that over 50,000 files less than 30 years old will be opened in January with more still under consideration. I would particularly like to congratulate officials from :

– Strategic Rail Authority
– Medical Research Council
– The National Archives
– Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
– Ministry of Defence
– Home Office
– Nursing and Midwifery Council
– Department of Health
– Cabinet Office
– Metropolitan Police
– Department for Work and Pensions
– Crown Estate
– Treasury

for the work they have already done on this review and each agreeing to release over a thousand files.

The National Archives has been a leading player in cross departmental initiatives to promote records management, not least by promoting the Section 46 Code of Practice which I commended to you earlier, but also by showing public authorities how to achieve compliance with the Code.

The Code is just part of the invaluable guidance that The National Archives produces for records managers. Other guidance includes Model Action Plans for the public sector, as well as guidance and toolkits such as those for managing e-mails and creating business classification systems.

The National Archives has also been monitoring the 2004 electronic records management target on behalf of the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs.

Leadership within own organisation

Freedom of Information, like electronic service delivery, requires a willingness to re-think established ways of working, an openness to change, and a commitment to the principle of better public service. The ability of organisations to manage this change is dependent upon strong leadership.

As records managers you all have a key role in providing that leadership within your departments and will be pivotal in determining how successfully FOI is implemented. Access rights are of little use if information is not recorded or cannot be found when requested.

Joining it up – Legislation affecting government information

Records management, especially that of electronic records, is central to enabling departments to meet their statutory obligations under the FOI Act.

Good records management makes it possible to answer with confidence the question whether particular pieces of information exist and to make informed decisions about their release and in turn to account for those decisions.

Good records management ensures that personal data is held securely and used for the purposes for which it was gathered within principles of the data Protection legislation. Good records management also provides assurance to the public that data sharing practices between departments are properly managed and controlled.

In addition to the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts, you will also be aware of the need to comply with the Public Records Acts and the Environmental Information regulations. The legal framework is not simple nor is it static – indeed in the context of the "Information Society", it cannot be. We will need to keep this area under close review, taking due account of the proposals that arose out of the public consultation exercise to review records and archival legislation.

Joining it up – working between departments

Co-ordination and co-operation between departments at one level and colleagues at another level will be essential. Information needs to be shared amongst colleagues to ensure that flexible personalised services can be delivered to the public from the citizen's perspective.

Shared information allows shared knowledge that leads to improved performance. To do this, information needs to be recognised as a corporate asset and not an individual's personal library.

It also needs to be managed throughout organisational changes and transfers of responsibilities between departments over time, for example, when responsibility for children's health moved from the department of health to the department for education and skills.

Being able to share electronic records underpins joined up government and

the reform agenda as well as ensuring corporate governance and detecting fraud. Records Management was key to the effective introduction of this underpinning technology and it is also the key to its effective operation and the public service and duties that FOI brings.

Joining up technology

Information needs managing regardless of its format. In today's organisations that means managing information on websites, intranets, transactions generated from online services, e-mail, structured datasets, and digital recordings as well as traditional media such as paper and microfilm.

Government websites are no longer places for information to simply be displayed but provide essential transactional services that are citizen focussed.

The future will see further changes in the way information is created, held and used so you must be up to speed with these changes and able to ensure that the sound principles of records management are applied whatever the format.

Joining it up – life cycle of information

Information is not static. It has a lifecycle from creation to disposal be it destruction or permanent preservation. At all of its stages it needs proper management.

From the creation of a record of a business transaction or decision; capture with appropriate contextual information, to secure storage and managed disposal under approved retention schedules or appraisal policies.

Information must be safeguarded as well as made available over time. Management of information, particularly of records, needs to be continuous and cannot be turned on and off depending on the volume of requests received.

Conclusion

In short: the better our records management, the greater success we will make of FOI come January 2005.

I am here because I recognise what an important role you play in what is an historic change in the way in which we serve this nation. I am very proud of the work you do, and as I began, thank you.

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Successful rm3 candidates Anne Riddy, Ann Smith, Joanna Dale, Michael Hill Pat Davey, Fiona Sims and Dave Evans, with Sarah Tyacke (second left), Julie McLeod (fourth left) and Baroness Ashton (fourth right)
(see page 13)

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Records Management in Government Annual Conference

Brighton, 6 – 8 October 2004

The theme of this year's conference –aimed at records managers (departmental record officers) in central Government – was Joining it up. In response to comments and feedback from the 2003 conference, the format this year included several workshops covering the major issues of appraisal, freedom of information and electronic records management – those issues that now need to be "joined up" as central Government enters a new era of openness and electronic ways of working.

We were lucky to have two eminent keynote speakers – Baroness Ashton of Upholland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Constitutional Affairs (the Minister responsible for public records), and Ann Abraham, Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

In her opening address Sarah Tyacke, Keeper of Public Records and Historical Manuscripts Commissioner, praised the tremendous achievement of records managers in Government in reaching extremely challenging targets this year. It had been a momentous period – with the Modernising Government agenda and the implementation of Freedom of Information legislation coming together at the same time. The presentations and workshops that followed reflected the next stages in this huge shift towards new ways of working. The Conference programme and copies of some of the presentations will shortly be available on The National Archives website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ recordsmanagement/news.htm.

Although a significant milestone had been reached, the Conference was by no means complacent about the achievements. There are still many difficulties and challenges ahead. Principally there will need to be many cultural changes – paper to electronic, individual ownership of information to corporate ownership, to name but two.

Almost all the presentations and workshops highlighted these changes.

There have been many external drivers for electronic records management in Government – Freedom of Information, Data Protection, as well as the 1999 White Paper – but e-working has the potential to improve quality and give better access to up-to-date information. The business aspects of e-working are bound to feature strongly in the coming year. Much of the new guidance issued by The National Archives reflected this:

- Business classification scheme design
- Guidelines on developing a policy for managing email
- Guidelines on the realisation of benefits from electronic records management

This new modus operandi will have significant effect in other areas of records management, and these were not forgotten during the conference. One important area – and this is also reflected in a new TNA publication – is that of records appraisal. A new policy has been developed in response to the changed conditions that records managers are experiencing, especially the development of digital records. This has emerged from a project which studied ways to streamline Grigg methods of review, the impact of digital records on appraisal methods, and the theory and practice of alternative methods used in archives elsewhere. The policy will be reviewed in 2008/09.

One of the highlights of the conference was the recognition of successful students from the rm3 programme. This programme has been running for five years and was set up to provide training for staff across government in the management of records and information. On the successful completion of programme modules, students are awarded either the

Certificate or Diploma in Professional Studies: Records and Information Management – a university accredited qualification. The programme has been highly successful in developing the professionalism of the records management community in Government. In this respect we should not forget the tremendous work put in by the programme's tutors – Margaret Procter (Liverpool University) and Julie McLeod (Northumbria University); their commitment has been instrumental in making the programme a success.

I would like to leave the last word to Baroness Ashton. In a recent debate in the House of Lords (on charging fees for FOI requests) she said:
"In my few weeks as a Minister in the department, I have seen ….. in my discussions with colleagues across government a desire to ensure that we have freedom of information – something which the Government have long aspired to and supports. It is good news for all our citizens. ……I met with the guardians of records across government last week at their two-day conference, where they were looking precisely at how to be as proactive as possible by releasing information and using technology cleverly to enable us to get ahead of the game on the information that is to be released. We met with huge enthusiasm there, as we have across government."

Kelvin Smith
Records Management Department,
The National Archives

Community Access to Archives Project

Best Practice Model for community archive involvement

> "Community archive projects can contribute greatly to social inclusion, community development, skills development and the preservation of 'unofficial' history, and are a means of encouraging non-traditional users to become involved with archives."
> **Gerry Slater, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland**

The Community Access to Archives Project (CAAP) is an innovative community-focused project led by The National Archives, in partnership with West Yorkshire Archive Service, Hackney Archives Department, The National Archives of Scotland, The National Council of Archives, The National Library of Wales, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and Commanet. The project aims to provide a framework for the development of relationships and activities with community groups by producing a Best Practice Model for community-based online archive projects, which is now available.

What are community archives?

The definition of community archives can be very broad, and CAAP has opted to examine a wide spectrum of community archive activity. In the simplest terms, community archives might be defined as collections of material that encapsulate a particular community's understanding of its history and identity. This will often be personal photographs, documents, ephemera and oral history; 'unofficial' records that might not normally be preserved, let alone widely available. The community itself might be geographically based, or relate to a cultural or thematic community of interest. CAAP is also considering archives generated by groups in the community in the course of their everyday activities.

For the communities involved, community archive projects offer a means to explore community identity and develop community cohesion and pride, and provide opportunities for capacity building, and learning and skills development. For mainstream archives, community involvement offers a mechanism for broadening audiences and combating social exclusion, developing mutual trust between the archives service and the community, and advising on the proper care of unique material. For everyone, they offer a chance to preserve and celebrate 'grassroots' heritage.

Commanet (www.commanet.org), a not for profit organisation that promotes, supports and develops community archives, has wide experience of the success of online community-archive projects in encouraging social inclusion. Patsy Cullen, Director of Commanet, has seen that community archives have met objectives associated with community development, cultural identity, regeneration, lifelong learning, reminiscence, inter-generational dialogue and training in information and communication technology skills. Speaking about one of more than 250 Commanet projects, she observes that "the *Bygone Oldmeldrum* community-archive project is a classic example of encouraging social inclusion and community development; the community have come together by way of events such as coffee mornings, fundraising stalls and photo exhibitions for educational purposes and reminiscence".

Evelyn Munro from the Meldrum and Bouritie Heritage Society explains that events such as these are when we see the best examples of people being brought together into a welcoming environment; "the people who come to our events are people who have always lived in the community, people whose roots lie in Oldmeldrum and who have returned to walk down memory lane, people who are new to the town and want to learn a bit about its earlier way of life." A community member has even commented that they find the events therapeutic.

What has CAAP been investigating?

CAAP's remit has been to encourage social inclusion and enable archives to be taken to new audiences, by investigating the development of relationships with new archive users across the UK and their UK Archives Network content requirements. The project aimed to empower potential archive users and archive professionals

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A young student working on West Yorkshire Archive Service's *Now Then Dewsbury* project, courtesy of West Yorkshire Archive Service and photographer Porl Medlock.

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to work together to identify the sources users require, whether for family, community and local history, for lifelong learning, for educational projects or for other purposes.

CAAP research has centred on case studies provided by our partners in West Yorkshire and Hackney, but has also included other relevant activity both within these areas and elsewhere in the UK. Investigations have addressed a wide range of issues, including concepts of audience development, building relationships with hard-to-reach groups, identifying user need, the resource implications of community archive involvement, and the evaluation of community-based projects. CAAP has also addressed aspects of project planning relating specifically to community archive projects, online content development and implementation, technical development and implementation, outreach and publicity, and funding possibilities for community archive projects.

How will the CAAP Best Practice Model help?

The CAAP Best Practice Model is the single most important product of the project. A clear message has been received from archives professionals that they feel the need for coherent, comprehensive and practical guidance on developing and sustaining community involvement, in order to engage with community archives with confidence. The CAAP Best Practice Model will help to fulfil this need by providing step-by-step guidance on the establishment and maintenance of community relations, and the development, implementation and maintenance of community archive projects. The CAAP Model provides a consolidation of the expertise in this area that has been developed within the archive community and within the wider heritage community.

The development of the CAAP Model has also been informed by a series of Creativity Sessions held throughout the UK, at which professionals with interest and experience in working with community archives were able to work with the model and provide feedback on its content, structure and presentation. The CAAP Model addresses the practicalities of developing community-based projects from start to finish and beyond, and is supported by commentary and analysis in the form of the CAAP Final Report, and accompanying outreach material, such as community surveys and case study summaries. Importantly, CAAP has also addressed the issue of the sustainability of community-based projects by investigating potential funding streams for such work. It is hoped that the CAAP Model will be adopted by other local or national archive organisations, and by organisations from other heritage sectors, and that the methodology will facilitate a wide variety of community archive projects.

The Archives Task Force report identifies connecting with communities as an important area of work and acknowledges that CAAP has contributed to the development of understanding in this area. The report goes on to state that 'The Task Force firmly believes that such initiatives should be a priority for publicly-funded services'.[1] Recommendation Four of the report is to 'Increase community participation in UK archive activities with particular focus on engaging hard-to-reach communities', and the suggested action on this point is to 'Investigate the establishment of, and pilot Community Archive Liaison Officers to support the development of community archives and foster links between existing archives and record offices and the wider community'.[2] It is believed that the CAAP Best Practice Model can play a vital role in facilitating such developments.

The CAAP Best Practice Model, Final Report and Outreach Pack are now available. For more information on the Community Access to Archives Project please see www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/partnerprojects/caap or email caap@nationalarchives.gov.uk

[1] Archives Task Force, Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future, 2004, p.43
[2] Archives Task Force, Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future, 2004, p.44

Society of Archivists' Conference 2004

Citizenship: the role of archives and records managers

> *'Citizenship education equips people with the knowledge, understanding and skills to play an active part in society as informed and critical citizens who are socially and morally responsible. It aims to give them the confidence and conviction that they can act with others, have influence and make a difference in their communities'.*
> **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority**

Concepts of citizenship were central to the Society of Archivists' annual conference that took place in Glasgow this year. Papers were presented on digitisation, rights of access and the future direction of the archival profession, and arguments were raised on how these could lead to the enforcement and promotion of citizenship.

The conference kicked off with a paper by Paul Duguid who advocated the use of original documents. Referring to arguments of the 1980s that digitisation would eventually render original archives obsolete, Duguid argued that the manuscript has a specific value, its context, which is vital to the source itself.

Despite the attempts of technological experts this important source of information cannot be captured in digital form. In one archive, for example, the scent of vinegar on envelopes – an attempt to protect the recipient of the letter from illness – enabled researchers to track the geographical spread of disease.

However, Duguid's paper raised questions about the mutual exclusivity of digitisation and archives. The digital form could not exist without the original manuscript or object, and the use of original documents, in turn, is promoted through the use of the digital form, which broadens access.

The response from the digital world was provided during the Information Market Place where the benefits of digitisation were demonstrated. *Moving Here* was able to show how forgotten and misrepresented histories can be created or reassembled without the loss of the original structure of collections. *Culturenet* highlighted the benefits that digitisation can bring in connecting sources from museums, libraries and archives set out in a range of thematic exhibitions.

Issues of accessibility were raised in connection with digitisation in the presentation of Marcus Weisen from MLA on making websites fully accessible, especially in light of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Issues of broadening access were also raised in relation to making archives learning spaces. Sally Bevan and Margaret McBryde, from London Metropolitan Archives and the National Archives of Scotland respectively, demonstrated the opportunities that archival documents can provide in stimulating learning. Examples were displayed of children and adults absorbed in the challenge of interpreting copies of documents that had been isolated from their context. The learning potential of archives was also addressed by Jonathan Douglas of MLA on the final day of the conference in a presentation on the Inspiring Learning for All framework, which seeks to support archivists in enhancing the learning potential of archives.

The notion of citizenship, in particular in relation to rights of access, was also explored in relation to Freedom of Information. There was a focus on the centrality of human rights to the creation of FOI Acts and the suggestion by Alan Miller from the University of Strathclyde that the Acts should be interpreted according to such values. Carol Ewart (Campaign for Freedom of Information, Scotland) and Susan Graham (Edinburgh University) presented papers on the similarities and differences in the rights of access offered in the FOI Acts of Scotland and the United Kingdom. Paola Casini from the European Union discussed the EU's Fundamental Rights of Access in connection with the EU's focus on transparency and governance. This was an issue that was also raised in light of the UK's FOI Act, which separates the proper creation of records from the management of and access to the information contained within them.

Examples of good practice in the EU were juxtaposed against the problems within certain African nations. Alistar Tough and Victor Kamto addressed the issues affecting Commonwealth Africa and Cameroon respectively and the impact of poor governance and transparency on records management and archives. These issues were also raised in Verne Harris' paper on the political impact of record making in South Africa. With specific reference to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Harris posed questions on how the lost black perspective could be captured.

In reflecting on Duguid's paper, Harris' presentation highlighted problems of essentialising the original context of an archival collection that meant an important history could be lost. Although the gaps in history often say as much as the documents themselves, Harris reminded us of the importance in recreating a lost history in validating citizenship for all.

Such global discrepancy in the rights and ability of citizens to access history strengthened the arguments advocated by Frank Rankin from the Department for International Development. He advocated a global view on access and transparency impacting government and international business in response to today's global society.

Whilst this forward looking perspective offered exciting and challenging solutions to international problems, Michael Cook from LUCAS advocated the use of rights that will soon be made available through FOI. He requested support in demanding the release of documents on specific cases, such as that of Stephen Lawrence, to

act as a check on the proceedings of government.

The practicalities of facilitating access to documents was discussed on the final day in a series of papers on the preservation of digital records by Richard Blake and David Ryan of The National Archives. The reality of our reliance on the digital form and the problems of preservation were clearly demonstrated. Whilst issues of transparency, governance and access are vital to citizenship, it was clear that the technological requirements of preserving documents are also

important if information is to be retained in usable form to ensure rights of citizens are maintained.

The position of record managers and archivists as central to enforcing and facilitating rights of citizenship was confirmed, especially in light of FOI. This incited discussions on the professionalism of archivists and the increasing divide between academic research and the development of essential skills. Whilst Mary Ellis from CyMAL highlighted the critical position of research, which was accentuated in comparison to Australia and America,

Margaret Procter from LUCAS proposed a more skills based education to suit the demands of the archival world.

The overall impression from the conference was that citizenship is indeed central to records management and archives. This places records managers and archivists in an important position in maintaining the rights of all citizens.

Rachel Bell
Curatorial Officer
The National Archives

Cathedral Libraries and Archives Association Conference

Canterbury Cathedral International Study Centre, 16-18 June 2004

Norman James of TNA's National Advisory Services attended this conference, which coincided with the 50th anniversary of the rebuilding of Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library after the destruction of the previous library building in 1942. The National Archives is affiliated to the Association, which provides an important link to these ecclesiastical archives and libraries. Our contacts with these institutions form part of a network of relationships with archives in the private sector developed over a long period by the Historical Manuscripts Commission. Delegates included members of cathedral chapters, librarians, archivists and volunteers who help to run these distinctive repositories along with users of the collections in their care.

A stimulating programme had been put together by Heather Forbes, the Cathedral Archivist, and her colleagues at Canterbury with a wide range of papers on scholarly and professional topics. Sessions covered subjects as diverse as the physical setting of the medieval monastic library, emergency planning and the project to create a database of clergy of the Church of England 1540-1835. Heather Forbes

herself provided an interesting case study of the benefits of the joint archive service at Canterbury funded by the city, county and cathedral authorities.

One very positive outcome of the conference was the announcement by the Association's committee that a draft strategy would be drawn up for circulation and discussion early in

2005. This should help to underpin the achievements of cathedral libraries and archives in recent years and to map out objectives for the future. Many of these institutions benefited from major refurbishments with the assistance of the Pilgrim Trust and others in the aftermath of the Second World War but now require a further injection of funding if they are to keep up with current standards and expectations.

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Canterbury Cathedral International Study Centre

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Manorial Documents Register

Surrey and Middlesex available online

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Information describing the nature and location of Surrey and Middlesex manorial records can now be searched online. The National Archives (TNA) is very pleased to have been part of the collaborative project to revise the Surrey and Middlesex sections of the Manorial Documents Register (MDR) and make them available for consultation on our website. Computerisation means that information in the Register is now more readily searchable in a variety of ways that are not possible with the paper index. The successful completion of the project was marked by an official launch and reception at TNA on 24 September.

The project was led by Royal Holloway, University of London, with the active cooperation of London Metropolitan Archives and the Surrey History Centre, and the generous support of the Marc Fitch Fund which permitted the employment of a Project Officer based at TNA. A large amount of new information about hitherto unknown documents has been added to the Register, and we are very grateful to all those archivists and carers of records who have assisted the project by supplying information and providing access to records.

Further details about Surrey and Middlesex records, and the MDR generally, can be found on our website: http://www.mdr.nationalarchives.gov.uk /mdr/.

The MDR is a unique finding aid bringing together information about all known surviving manorial records wherever they may be found. It is one of the resources for researchers that TNA now maintains as a result of the Public Record Office's coming together with the Historical Manuscripts

Commission last year. The Manorial Documents Rules also continue to be administered by staff within TNA.

Surrey and Middlesex join a growing number of counties that have been revised and can be searched via our website. To date, all the counties in Wales, Yorkshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have been completed as a result of working with partners. The remaining English counties are in the form of a paper index in the Research Enquiries Room at TNA; however, we hope to build on the success of this collaborative venture and increase the number of counties available online.

TNA is always keen to hear of interest in and support for the revision and computerisation of the remaining English counties, and we would welcome the opportunity to explore proposals for future county projects with interested partners.

For further information please contact Andrew Rowley, andrew.rowley@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Case studies

Creating a Charitable Trust for the Royal Mail Archive

Charitable trusts have been promoted by the museum sector for many years as a way of safeguarding industrial heritage collections and drawing in public funding. The benefits of this have been made clear to companies and others holding important object collections, and as a result many have chosen to transfer them to not-for-profit trusts specifically created to safeguard, develop and promote public access to their heritage.

However, the use of trusts in this way is virtually unrecognised in the archive community. Archivists rightly argue that good management of an archive needs influence over internal policy and strategy, integration with records management, a strong understanding of internal culture and close links with employees at all levels in the parent organisation. Each of these could be jeopardised by transferring the archive to a trust.

Royal Mail began to look in detail at the possibilities of an archive charitable trust over three years ago. At the time, we were struck by the lack of guidelines, advice or stated positions on archive trusts by key bodies such as Heritage Lottery, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), the Charity Commission and, crucially, Inland Revenue.

The potential benefits were apparently clear: an archive trust could protect our archive from a volatile business environment; draw in external funding; provide a stable, dedicated platform to develop the service; increase focus on public benefit and even qualify for tax and other financial incentives enjoyed by charities. However, though a surprising number of archive services have considered creating a charitable trust, few have put it into practice.

Background
We carried out extensive research on archive and other charitable trusts before deciding which move to take, speaking to organisations that had created trusts, those that had considered and rejected the move, and other archive services managing records on behalf of parent bodies.

Our first revelation was the wide range of different organisational structures commonly referred to as 'trusts' – these included holdings charities, operating charities, joint-ventures, support trusts, registered charitable companies and various combinations of each. In the museum sector in particular, trusts have been adapted to suit both multi-million-pound operations and those run by volunteers with turnovers of hundreds of pounds. The most appropriate model depended entirely on what the organisation hoped to achieve. We also found a number of critical concerns, many of which were relevant specifically to archives. Under charity law, for example, the purpose of a charity must be *exclusively* charitable – in an archive this equates to educational activity, benefiting the community by promoting knowledge and public understanding.

However, we felt strongly that an exclusive or dominant emphasis on public and cultural benefit, at the expense of corporate governance, would weaken the service and jeopardise its sustainability. Royal Mail needed sufficient control over the archive to meet its corporate needs, and unless the archive could provide and promote services explicitly for the benefit of the business it would soon be perceived as irrelevant. Standard museum models did not address this.

Similarly, holistic approaches to record keeping could be destroyed if the archive was transferred to an independent trust. Many of the archive

trusts we spoke to had great difficulty securing accruals or influencing record keeping policy and process in the parent organisation. One archive specifically rejected becoming a trust because of concerns that its profile would be damaged in this way. This was a key concern – Royal Mail is too large to leave archival accruals to chance, and a properly integrated, trusted and well used records management programme was believed to be essential.

Function and structure

In an attempt to address these points, we looked closely at the function and structure of the trust and in particular its various relationships with Royal Mail. In the end we opted for three separate companies grouped together, with a series of operating, service and funding agreements between them.

A holding charity takes ownership of the archive and protects it from financial risk. An operating charity, which is entirely independent from Royal Mail, is permitted to use the archive for charitable purposes. It's therefore responsible for promoting public services and public access to the archive. The trading company then provides corporate services back to Royal Mail under a Service Agreement between the two companies.

Crucially, responsibility for managing the whole of the archive service has not been transferred to the charity, but has been delegated instead to the trading company. Royal Mail can therefore use the contract to keep appropriate control of the services it needs in support of the business, without affecting the charitable purpose of the trust. In practice this arrangement has worked well – the archive is jointly available for both public and commercial use, the trust has been able to focus and develop public activities while the Service Agreement has balanced priorities and protected Royal Mail's corporate interests.

Profile

The idea of delegation rather than transfer has also helped to manage internal perception of the archive. Responsibility for Royal Mail's archival policy and strategy was not transferred to the trust, and a professional records management post was kept in the business to manage internal strategy and contracts with the archive. This has successfully maintained a healthy relationship between archive and records management services and the executive function of Royal Mail.

In fact, the profile of the archive has improved considerably in the new structure. The internal Head of Records Management acts as an informed and trusted adviser to Royal Mail employees, acting exclusively in the best interests of the business. At a user level, the single-purpose nature of the trust allows it to function directly as *Royal Mail's* archive and record centre, rather than a general commercial provider with many customers and other agendas.

Trustees

One DCMS report concluded that the greatest single obstacle to trusts being widely taken up as a management model was the difficulty of securing skilled trustees, but this was not our experience. We did see it as a high risk: trustees are responsible for steering the trust, ratifying policy and strategy, offering input and advice and ensuring trust activities are performed effectively and appropriately. The wrong balance of trustees could quickly lead to dysfunctional relationships, poor decision-making and ineffective management.

We found considerable and useful advice from the museum sector on how to select and manage a board of trustees. Though the trust must be independent, the objects of the charity allow Royal Mail to nominate a small number of trustees and this has developed strong links with the business at a senior level. The current Chief Executive of The Post Office and the former Company Secretary of Royal Mail were both persuaded to sit on the board of trustees, and have proved highly effective.

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The new public search room at the Royal Mail Archive, Freeling House

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The remainder of positions were openly advertised, and we received over 100 applicants of an exceptionally high quality. A deliberate mix of experts was chosen, including business leaders, lawyers, a social historian and Helen Forde, President of the Society of Archivists. The expert knowledge, commitment and advice we've received to date from the trustees, on a purely voluntary basis, is one of the biggest successes of the project so far.

Funding

Charitable status of course brings several financial benefits. These include tax relief potentially from income, corporation and capital gains taxes, savings on stamp duty, 80% relief on business rates and benefits of Gift Aid. Rate relief alone has already provided the trust with a windfall of tens of thousands of pounds.

However, the financial situation is extremely complicated and expert financial advice is needed. It took considerable effort to resolve issues such as VAT, which nullifies many of the benefits, and Royal Mail encountered several financial problems when transferring assets to the trust. The situation is certainly not clear-cut and further guidance is needed from the Inland Revenue.

Many grant-giving bodies, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, operate not-for-profit criteria that exclude commercial organisations from major grants. Charitable Trusts therefore have a clear potential to unlock funding from these sources and secure much needed capital investment for business archives, for example. There is already some evidence of this: Cable & Wireless Porthcorno Trust has been successful in securing a number of grants including major funding for its current site, and The Postal Heritage Trust has secured several small grants for support of the collections that, as part of Royal Mail, it could not have received.

It is essential to recognise, though, that grant aid will not fund core activity and trusts must have a secured income stream before they can receive external grants. We found only a handful of heritage organisation that generated sufficient income to cover their costs, and the parent body must clearly recognise that archive and museum trusts will always need at least some funding from them. Trusts are therefore not a means of saving money.

With this in mind, Royal Mail approached the project on a 'neutral cost' basis. Rather than looking for financial savings, the trust was seen as a strategic move to increase service standards, improve stability and generate better value for money from funding already being put into the service.

Without sufficient funding there was clear evidence to suggest the trust would not survive or would be ineffective. In some examples, limited resources meant that creation of a trust was in fact a burden rather than opportunity for development. Proposals to guarantee existing levels of funding for limited periods can also be dangerous when the agreement comes to an end, though several organisations have already successfully seen through financial reviews of this kind. Sustainability of funding is therefore often cited as a primary concern for independent trusts, and a reason against their creation.

Funding for the Postal Heritage Trust is provided from Royal Mail on a 'business as usual' basis, while development of new public services will be funded through other sources such as grants, fund-raising or income generation. Deliberately, income from Royal Mail is primarily a payment for services rather than gift, generally equivalent to the cost of running the service in-house and covered by a long-term service agreement. As with all in-house archives, provided that the trust can continue to demonstrate its commercial and legal benefits to Royal Mail the business will continue to fund it.

The trust model is therefore appropriate for companies that want to ensure the continuation of their archive service and fully recognise the benefits it offers. This model is not suitable for orphaned collections or when the parent body is already in financial crises. Many wrongly perceive trusts as an option only used to salvage an archive when its future is in jeopardy. In these circumstances, revenue funding from the parent body has often already been cut and income from other sources is difficult, if not impossible, to secure within a short period of time.

The future

The trust is now working towards the first review of its service agreement with Royal Mail. Over the course of that period, it will aim to develop new income streams, improve services, secure new investment and build new partnerships. A new archive search room and open-access museum store have already been opened, with major outreach and exhibition programmes planned. Opportunities exist for resource sharing and other joint ventures, improved in part by the new charitable status of the archive. Some of this has already started.

Most importantly we will be working hard to consolidate relationships between the trust and Royal Mail, so that in five or ten years the trust can demonstrate, in business terms, that the archive service is value for money and should continue to be funded. It's this more than anything that we believe will secure the future of the service, and early signs are positive.

Martin Rush
Royal Mail Group

If you have a practical case study which you think may be of interest to colleagues in records management or archives, do contact us at recordkeeping@nationalarchives. gov.uk

Achieving Success: Publicising DocumentsOnline

www.documentsonline.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The National Archives' collection of over 1 million wills from the Prerogative Court of Canterbury 1384-1858 is one of the most popular microfilm sources with readers at Kew, attracting local, social and family historians and academics. In March 2004, after two years' preparation, we extended access to the collection by putting the wills – including those of William Shakespeare and Jane Austen – online.

The size of the collection and the proven appeal of the wills meant that their new availability online would be an ideal opportunity to formally launch our DocumentsOnline website to the media. We knew the famous wills section would grab the media's attention, helping us to raise the profile of The National Archives and making the public more aware of the other online services we offer.

We also wanted to ensure that all visitors who came to the site had a positive experience, from simply being able to access it to successfully searching the collection and finding something of interest. We wanted the launch to increase online visits, in turn improving the chances of images being purchased from the site and driving revenue up.

Planning ahead
To secure press interest we needed an attention-grabbing story, and Shakespeare's bequest of his 'second-best bed' to his wife fitted the bill perfectly. This story gave The National Archives a chance to tell a mass audience both here and abroad about our collection of wills, including those not normally interested in family history.

The publicity campaign therefore needed careful planning to maximise its impact. This began more than four months before the event itself and involved the expertise and input of many teams across The National

Archives. Identifying and harnessing the resources available within our different departments meant we were able to enjoy the advantages of working together, in terms of shared experience and knowledge. Joint aims and expectations were defined and good communication within the project team was established. Making use of the range of expertise available meant we were able to manage the project as a whole, for example we were able to provide experts for any in-depth media interviews about the records we were making available on the site.

Technical issues
The website itself was vital to the success of the project. We needed to be confident that the site would function effectively, and that the main risks had been identified, and tested contingency plans were in place. We reviewed past online launches such as those for our 1901 census and Moving Here websites to help identify potential problem areas. The primary concern was that the system would crash or impact on other National Archives websites as the traffic increased following the launch.

We consulted our in-house IT experts about the technical capabilities of the system. A load test was carried out in which a high level load well beyond daily usage was simulated on the system. The series of two tests, involving both automated testing tools and manual users, confirmed that a potential bottleneck was bandwidth, which potentially would have created problems with access to DocumentsOnline or our other online services.

We decided to double our bandwidth temporarily to allow more traffic in and out of our webservers. We also prepared for the worst case scenario, that the website was still unable to cope with demand. We wanted to guard against unfriendly error messages

giving users a negative impression of our site. Although we hoped we would not have to use it, a message page was created to which users could be redirected if the site was too busy. As well as ensuring that visitors to the site would receive an effective service, these preparations could then go on to serve as a proven strategy and model that could be used for any future online launches.

Staggered approach

Another result of reviewing previous National Archives website launches was the planning of a staggered approach to releasing the story. This would ease pressure on the website and help our press office to try to stay in control of the media interest. Selected online publications were to be approached in stages, with us first offering national 'exclusives,' since we knew that these would have the highest conversion rate. When we knew the site was coping well with the initial rush of visitors we gave the story to the UK daily press and then to the international media.

We monitored the site's performance during this process to ensure it was coping with the number of hits, with the release timings ready to be adjusted if necessary. The staggered publicity approach also provided an indication of the level of interest in the story. If it seemed to be high, the press roll-out schedule could be slowed; if there was low demand, we could speed up the rate of our activities. This worked in combination with the increased bandwidth to prevent any overloading of the website.

Conclusions

With all the preparations in place the launch of DocumentsOnline went ahead, and was an enormous success. Shakespeare's will was downloaded 170,000 times during the week of the launch and the project received over 150 printed and online articles and 26 radio broadcasts.

Staggering the release of the story even generated its own publicity. In some cases the story was picked up from the publications which had received the story in advance, reaching the international media by the following morning. The publications ranged from tabloids and broadsheets to the ethnic media and *Gay Times,* confirming our belief that the project, led by the Shakespeare story, would allow us to reach far beyond the traditional family history audience.

Several newspapers included our key messages and particularly the fact that the wills had only previously been available on microfilm before the two-

year project that led to the online launch. Publicity such as this is invaluable for letting the public know about the kind of work we do at The National Archives, and getting them interested in exploring it for themselves. Nearly all these articles gave the DocumentsOnline website address, making it easy for people to look up the wills and helping increase the number of visitors to our website by six times the typical value.

Most notably, prior to the launch, international users made up 35% of visits, but by the end of the week following the launch international usage had peaked at 80%. Traffic in total peaked at 100 times the average of that before the launch, reaching its maximum peak as the American east coast logged on at lunchtime. Website monitoring showed the site coping effectively with the help of the extra bandwidth. We had hoped this project would increase revenue, and it did, threefold, despite there being no charge for downloading Shakespeare and Jane Austen's wills.

The process of preparing and launching DocumentsOnline showed the importance of using a PR strategy from the beginning of the project. Forward planning and communication were critical to its success. In the weeks leading up to the launch the key

people from each department involved were working as one team.

When the launch arrived we made sure we had experts available to talk about the project to journalists, and answer public queries. By having spokespersons on standby in the press office ready to do interviews we could take advantage of any publicity and communicate a correct and consistent message. Having images on offer to supplement the story made it even more media-friendly.

Pre-prepared responses to common email enquiries meant a greater number of users would receive a more prompt reply. But equally as important was the work done beforehand to ensure the product itself was user-friendly. Identifying potential problems early meant plans could be developed and put in place to deal with them if they occurred.

Our aim with the DocumentsOnline launch was to let everyone know about the fantastic resource that was available to everyone online. Using our past experience and the skills of our team we succeeded in delivering a product that works well for the user and for our organisation.

Emma Allen
DocumentsOnline Manager

What did we want to achieve?
- A positive user experience
- An increase in online visits
- Revenue up
- Good publicity for The National Archives
- A successful online launch

How would we achieve it?
- Talking early and often, with clear aims and expectations
- Taking time to listen and respond, finding and exploring solutions
- Reviewing previous websites launches and developing a new publicity strategy to stagger hits to the website
- Anticipating scenarios and making technical contingencies

Launch statistics
- Over 150 printed and online articles
- Over 25 radio broadcasts
- Visitors up x 6
- Traffic up x 100
- Revenue up x 3
- Shakespeare's will was downloaded 170,000 times in one week

PR tips
- Consider PR at project inception
- Use an easy web address that people can remember when they hear it once
- Find the media-friendly hook
- Think about your users' experience— make it easy for them to use the site
- You need to have staff ready to answer public queries
- Have a spokesperson for interviews
- A good picture tells a thousand words
- Think about bandwidth implications
- Be prepared for the worst.

Begging for Mercy: Working with Volunteer Editors

There is a long history of volunteer groups working with record offices to list selections of records. What I would like to do in this short article is to explain one approach to this which has been developed and adopted by Research, Knowledge and Academic Services department at The National Archives in relation to a project to list in detail a set of records from the Home Office. The archives relating to this project document the process of state pardoning as it operated in the criminal justice system in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The records relating to pardons are amongst the most intimate of social historical sources. A quick introductory run through the records and their historical context is therefore probably in order.

Historical Context of the Records
At the beginning of the nineteenth century the criminal justice system for England and Wales had developed as a particularly bloody one. The number of capital offences had increased from around 50 in the late seventeenth century to some 200 as the nineteenth century opened. The extensive use of royal pardon in the second half of the eighteenth century prevented a similar rise in scale in the number of executions.[1]

The resulting 'pardoning archive' of the Home Office is consequently of an extensive nature. At the close of the assizes the judges would send lists of capital prisoners to be pardoned (usually for periods of transportation) to the Home Secretary and these lists can be found in record series HO 47 and HO 6 at The National Archives. The administration of each pardon recorded by the Home Office are in record series

HO 13. Those left for execution (or their supporters) could petition the King for a lesser sentence (a conditional pardon) or that most sought after prize – the free pardon. Indeed this was not restricted to capital convicts; anyone under any sentence could petition for a pardon and so non-capital convicts dealt with in King's Bench, assizes, quarter sessions, petty sessions, etc. could petition for mercy.

On receipt of these petitions the Home Secretary (who acted as the executive officer in these cases) would send them to the judge or magistrate who had dealt with the case asking for a report on the prisoner.

These reports, often (but not always) giving great detail on the case, are now to be found in HO 47. At some point in the early nineteenth century the Home Office began to reduce the proportion of references sent to judges as increasingly the Home Secretary made decisions on individual cases himself. Petitions for mercy with no reports can be found in several Home Office correspondence series but the main series for the

period from c.1819 to 1854 are HO 17 and HO 18.

The 'Pardoning Archive'
We therefore end up with a non-exhaustive list containing a set of records deemed as essential for research for anyone undertaking any kind of work in the criminal records of the time but which were inadequately listed:

- HO 6: Judges and Recorders Returns: 1816-1840.
- HO 13: Criminal Entry Books: 1782-1871.
- HO 17: Petitions for Clemency: c. 1819-1839.
- HO 18: Petitions for Clemency: 1839-1854.
- HO 47: Judges' Reports on Criminals: 1783-1830.

What brings these records together (as well as the fact they inter-link) is the inadequacy of the current state of the lists for each record series. As they relate to thousands of criminal cases, include tens of thousands of petitions, reports and pieces of correspondence they were outside the remit of an individual archivist to work on them.

[1] This does not mean we should take the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to be particularly 'merciful' as although the proportion of capital convicts who received a pardon increased so also at times did actual numbers; see V.A.C. Gatrell, The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1770-1868, Oxford UP., 1994.

Although ripe for a volunteer's project it was too large to approach in one go and we decided that HO 47 followed by HO 17 and HO 18 would be a sensible 'project' with others left as future potential proposal. Notwithstanding our narrowing of the project to three record series, a conservative estimate to have these records calendared and available via our electronic catalogue stands at something in the region of 15 to 18 years.

The National Archives Local History Research Group

The National Archives Local History Research Group (Research Group) was formed in late 2001. It was important to give ourselves an identity as a research group – an active group doing work in the archives and not a loose collection of individuals never meeting each other or sharing information which we had gleaned from the records.

The Research Group got together with a specific cataloguing project in mind; to calendar the judges' reports on criminals in HO 47. These 75 bound volumes of criminal reports and associated correspondence is one of the most detailed sets of criminal records in Europe for the period. Much detailed information on the background of the crime and the criminals themselves are given. As a consequence of this the material is of much interest to anyone with an interest in social, economic, labour, gender, (or any other) history; hence the popularity of

criminal records. This was our starting point for a volunteer's project – these were interesting records. In a way the point I am going to make now is quite obvious, but the more interesting the documents the more motivating the project is for the volunteer editors who will be working on them. The detail of the human stories told in the records has been a major factor in keeping the Research Group together effectively.

After securing a physical place for volunteer editors to work we began recruitment by contacting local history societies and advertising in local studies libraries etc. and outlining the basic plan and the type of documents they would be working on. The rich nature of local information made the records immediately relevant for local historians. Recruitment consisted of an initial workshop where we introduced potential volunteers to the documents and illustrated some of their uses for family, local and academic historians. We emphasised the 'story like' qualities of the records taking examples through from the commissions of the crime, the court proceedings, sentence, punishment (and if fortunate) through to any pardon.

However, the success of the recruitment campaign led us to the problem of how to manage data collection from such a sophisticated set of records undertaken by 15 to 20 volunteer editors. With the records containing much detailed information, and us wishing to calendar the records (rather than a straight forward listing),

we devised a paper form or 'data sheet' to which the raw data would be transcribed. This would then be entered systematically (sometimes by staff or by volunteer editors themselves) into a word table before being handed to colleagues in the Online Content and Partnership Department of The National Archives, where the material would be converted and uploaded into The National Archives electronic catalogue.

Continuous Development and Retaining the 'Hard Core'

Setting up such projects as this is of course resource intensive; space to work with documents, access to computers, and so on, but it is the daily and continuous support that has set the Research Group in good stead. The project is led by Paul Carter and Chris Heather with sterling help from Ann Morton, Marion Edwards and Janet Dempsey (more recently Jane Brown has taken over much of the editing work). Daily support consists of practical guidance where it is unclear what information the document contains (cutting through the legal jargon) as well as ensuring the practical administration of document allocation runs smoothly.

To help to bind the group together, as well as provide real practical help in understanding the context of the records, we have had several 'away days' to visit the Galleries of Justice in Nottingham and the Southwell Workhouse (again in Nottinghamshire). We have also held workshops on crime,

1

1
TNA staff and volunteer editors at the 'Galleries of Justice' in Nottingham.
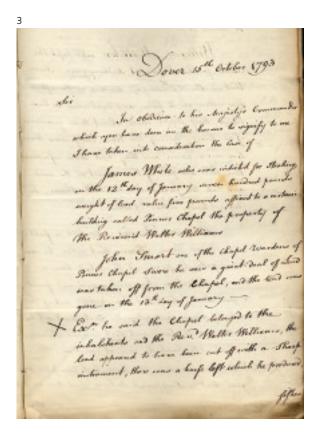
2
HO 17/59 (Kp 27). Opening page of a letter/petition from Henry Drummond suggesting that James Warner be pardoned (sentenced to transportation for life) for giving information on 'his accomplices' who had taken part in an attack on a mill in Guildford in Surrey in 1830.

3
HO 47/17 fol. 191. Opening page of a report by John William Rose, Recorder of London, on James White; no mercy was recommended.

mercy, poverty and the poor laws for the Research Group on site, usually by staff but more recently we have used external speakers such as Professor Peter King from the Open University to give a broader appreciation to the records.

In addition several members of the staff associated with the project have written articles based on the records researched by the group and have published in journals/magazines such as *Archives, The Local Historian* and *Ancestors*. Furthermore, the first of several volumes of calendars is due to be published in November 2004 with a full listing of all members of the Research Group listed with their history society affiliations.

This activity of meetings, workshops, seminars, outings and publications are designed not only 'nice things to do', but to give the group a real cohesion and sense of group feeling. Volunteer editors want the time they put in working on the records to mean something. The various 'get togethers' engender the group or team feeling, the various publications and entries in the electronic catalogue provides the feeling of achievement – and rightly so. Any volunteer archive project which leaves an individual feeling isolated, taken less than seriously and/or whose work leads to nothing really happening, can simply walk away to another project which offers these things. Volunteers who feel they are not being taken seriously by the organisation they are giving time to, will soon let you know – they stop turning up.

Although there will be a turnover of volunteer editors on any project of this length we have actively sought to keep such turnover to a minimum. This is because an understanding of criminal history is a necessary requirement of the work and we cannot afford to lose too many of the group at any one time. Our self defined 'hard core' members are essential to the continuity of the work and the line between too many and too few volunteer editors is one we have worked hard to keep in check.

The final point is of course one of resources. Managing a cataloguing project with help from volunteer editors is not resource light. Working space, access to computers and access to staff time itself etc. is of course a cost to the organisation. However, a mutual respect between The National Archives and volunteer editors has enabled a large cataloguing project to begin – only another 18 years to go!

For further information contact paul.carter@nationalarchives.gov.uk or chris.heather@nationalarchives.gov.uk jane.brown@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Paul Carter
Research, Knowledge and Academic Services
The National Archives

Checklist of motivating features of the project:

■ run regular workshop sessions on records and their context

■ give notification when their cataloguing work is incorporated into the electronic catalogue

■ let people know/have access to production of published articles

■ organise onsite meeting to bring the group together to discuss cases, issues, problems etc.

■ invite external historians to speak to the group

■ produce newsletters for dissemination of information

Thinking about Social Inclusion at TNA

In 2003 I was appointed as The National Archives' first Social Inclusion Manager and asked to develop a Social Inclusion Strategy for TNA as a whole. This article looks at what we have done so far and some of the resources and issues that we have come across.

A great deal has been written about social inclusion[1], the government's short-hand term for tackling the problems of people who have become isolated from opportunities because of multiple disadvantage – poverty, disability, discrimination, unemployment, issues of health, housing, education and child care.

Although this is the government's definition, the term "social inclusion" is used in a number of different ways depending on context. It has come to be a short-hand, on occasion, for a whole agenda of opening up services to a broader user base. This is encapsulated in the DCMS report "Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All" which points out:

> "The journey towards social inclusion will have a number of stages:
>
> First stage — Access – becoming inclusive and accessible organisations;
>
> Second stage — Audience development – reaching out to new audiences, and creating events and exhibitions that are relevant to them;
>
> Third stage — Museums, galleries and archives as agents of social change."

This perspective makes it clear that work towards tackling social exclusion needs to be based on policies and procedures that will support it. Different parts of our organisation may be working at different stages of development along this road. For this reason, I include in this article several points that are not directly about projects "tackling social exclusion". Ensuring that we have the capacity to sustain our relationships with new users, through good customer care, a diverse and well-trained staff, and careful evaluation of what users tell us is essential if we are to take on the responsibility of acting as agents of change in people's lives.

Making sure that the services we offer are appropriate, and the value of archives' collections in meeting a broad social agenda are available, to as wide a range of users as possible in a rapidly changing culture is crucial for the future public support of the archival heritage. The NCA report "Taking Part: an audit of social inclusion work in archives"[2] showed what a range of opportunities there are for archives to work with new audiences and increase their role in developing a sense of identity and belonging for many communities at risk of exclusion. No less importantly, archives are a powerful resource in developing active citizenship.

Nationally, addressing these issues has been identified as a high priority. The Archives Task Force report makes "effective, universal access" to archives its first priority and calls for "new strategies and techniques that will engage those who currently benefit least from the archival heritage."

The NCA report "Archives in the Regions: An Overview of the English Regional Archive Strategies"[3] identified some common themes that are emerging in archives development plans around tackling social exclusion:

- articulating the contribution of archives to specific communities and potential partners
- research into impact on users
- developing collections to ensure they represent the full richness of diverse communities
- conducting non-user research to assess needs and develop links with local communities.

These issues are high on the agenda for The National Archives too, with the additional requirement that "the nation's memory" should interact with communities both locally and nationally. TNA has a number of exciting projects already in hand that are working with groups at risk of social exclusion. Our Outreach Co-ordinator develops projects to meet the needs of a wide variety of groups including housebound people, people with mental health issues and sensory impairments, as well as a range of minority ethnic groups and groups

from disadvantaged areas. The Moving Here project (www.movinghere.org.uk), which is led in partnership by The National Archives, has worked with a wide range of community groups to publish their own experiences of migration on the web. The "Your Caribbean Heritage" project is making available newly catalogued records that cover everything from family history to mental health through workshops for general interest audiences.

However, without a strategic approach to joining up these initiatives, opportunities for cross-promoting our services to contacts of different projects will be lost. Building new audiences from such activities requires sustained planning. Resources are not infinite and we need to address the many potential opportunities for tackling social exclusion in a prioritised way.

One thing I am very certain of is that there is no one right way to tackle social exclusion. Colleagues will have their own approaches, appropriate to the needs of their area, and there is much to learn from work that is already going on in archives. There are a number of resources available that have already helped me and I am sure there are more that I have not yet found.

Talking to each other

This raises one of the central points about work to tackle social exclusion – it needs to be based on the best possible communication, internally, with potential partners and allies, and, most importantly, with the communities we serve. Strategies for action to broaden the user profile, encourage new audiences and identify areas where our services can make a real difference to the quality of life of particular groups, cut across traditional professional boundaries. Networking and developing good contacts across internal department structures, with other public bodies and with voluntary sector organisations based in the community is essential.

Virtual networking is a great help here and I would recommend "The Network" at www.seapn.org.uk as a good place to start. The Network Newsletter, edited by John Vincent, is a great contact point and offers extensive updates on social inclusion activities in libraries, museums and archives. The last issue of *RecordKeeping* carried an update on the Diversity Register of archives activities being developed by Rachel Bell in our National Advisory Services, which has the capacity to become a great resource for skills sharing in this area.

TNA has set up a quarterly Social Inclusion Forum to which staff of all grades who are working on any project that addresses social inclusion issues are invited. Sharing information and ideas across specialisms is leading to some useful connections and giving support to all our individual efforts.

Talking to archive users and potential users

Consulting with users and potential users is a vital part of effective work to become a more inclusive organisation. TNA has set up a User Advisory Group to monitor the progress of our social inclusion programme and this includes a range of members with experience of research, archives management and educational use of archives from groups whose voices are not yet regularly heard in our other user consultation processes. The group looks at areas where we are not providing access to our collections through cataloguing projects, advice to users, education and events.

In the last year, this group has led the creation of a guide to researching gay and lesbian history at TNA[4] and a public seminar "Out of the Past: Stories from the Archives" to promote it. The group members were able to call on leading academics to present short papers at the event, alongside novelist Sarah Waters talking about her re-invention of gay and lesbian lives in historical fiction. We achieved good coverage in the mainstream and gay press and the event was booked out. Take up of the guide has doubled since then. TNA could not have achieved any of this without the User Advisory Group.

Its not what you do but the way that you do it

Having said that social inclusion strategies will differ considerably according to the situation of each organisation, the process of developing the strategy at TNA has helped me to identify some core values which need to be considered in developing an action plan. I would suggest that effective social inclusion work aims to be:

People centred

- Projects start from the real needs and interests of people we want to work with.
- There is a strong link between the Diversity and Equal Opportunities practice of organisations and their ability to work with diverse social groups. Encouraging and respecting diversity in our staff is an important way in which we show our values to potential users.[5]

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Evidence based

- Basing our plans on the best possible evidence about who our current users are and who is not using our services.
- Identifying priority areas where we will focus our research on why certain groups are not using us and plan to overcome barriers.

Customer-focused

- Talking to users and potential users about what is important to them in developing our services and acting on this – or explaining why we do not.

Collections aware

- Looking realistically and creatively at our holdings and whose histories they address. How accessible are these? How can we best increase the "ways in" for people?
- Reviewing our collecting practices to ensure we will continue to reflect the diversity of society in our collections.

Strategic

- Setting priorities for the use of resources against evidence of need – rather than trying to tackle every issue at once.
- Setting measurable targets for action so that we can evaluate our progress and learn from our experience.

Sustainable

- Avoiding "bolt on" activities and trying to ensure that we are looking at how we do our work as much as what we do.
- Being clear at the start about what we can support and when an exit strategy is needed – not raising expectations amongst new users only to drop them later.

Involving the whole organisation

- A cross-departmental, thematic approach – social inclusion is everyone's business and we need to work together to make a difference.
- Building an integrated corporate strategy for action, based on evidence of need, through the regular annual planning process and the Business Plan.

Marketing minded

- Seeking opportunities to tell new audiences about archives in new ways because we know they are fascinating and fun!

What practical steps can we take to achieve this?

I have mentioned earlier some of the projects with a direct emphasis on social inclusion that are underway at TNA. Laying solid foundations for future work to tackle social exclusion will always mean some "behind the scenes" work needs doing as well as the more immediately exciting public access work. In the coming year TNA will be:

- reviewing the collection and analysis of user statistics to ensure we have a strong evidence base for planning social inclusion work.
- identifying specific groups of non-users that we need to find out more about – researching the barriers to use for selected groups.
- making sure that our public consultation channels are open in both directions – that it is easy to contact us effectively, TNA is sharing and acting upon what we hear and telling people about it .
- identifying how we can best encourage diversity in the pool of candidates available for professional archives posts.

- conducting a Managing Diversity training needs analysis for all senior managers and identifying a training programme to support their work.

And how will we know when we get there?

Clear aims are essential to avoid a strategy running into the ground. What are the aims of the TNA strategy?

- To achieve the widest possible access to our holdings
- To reflect the cultural and social diversity of the UK population
- To reinforce individual and community sense of identity

We will measure our success by monitoring the profile of users on site and on line. This is a core priority of the TNA Business Plan, which states "Our aim is to alter our reader profile so that groups that are currently under-represented (for example, the ethnic minorities) account for a larger share of our total readership, on site and on line". This isn't going to be a short-term project and I have no doubt that the social inclusion strategy will develop and change over time.

Rachel Hasted
Social Inclusion Project Manager

Footnotes

[1] For the cultural sector, see in particular: "Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future: the report of the Archives Task Force, MLA March 2004. "Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All" DCMS May 2000, and "Libraries, museums, Galleries and Archives for All: Co-operating Across the Sectors to Tackle Social Exclusion" DCMS Jan.2001.

[2] National Council on Archives, 2001

[3] National Council on Archives, 2001, 5.2.4

[4] http://www.catalogue.nationalarchives.gov.uk/RdLeaflet.asp?sLeafletID=357 Domestic Records Information 116 "Gay and Lesbian History at The National Archives: An Introduction"

[5] See "The Strategic Significance of workforce Diversity in Museums" Richard Sandell, in International Journal of Heritage Studies Vol.6, No.3, pp.213-230, 2000 and also "Not for the Likes of You" Phase 2 Final Report "How to Reach a Broader Audience", Morton Smyth Ltd for the Arts Council May 2004
http://www.newaudiences.org.uk/feature.php?news_20040901_4

The Secret State Exhibition

Drawing together previously top-secret documents from The National Archives, discovered by Whitehall expert Professor Peter Hennessy, the Secret State Exhibition shows how and why 'the bomb' was built; what the British government actually knew about the Russians; who would have gone underground with the Prime Minister and what towns were thought to be targets. A chilling behind-the-scenes picture of the corridors of power at a time when the world teetered on the brink of disaster, the exhibition also gave visitors a chance to say whether they would have retaliated.

On the evening of 31 March 2004 the Secret State Exhibition in the Museum at The National Archives was formally opened in a blaze of publicity. During the day, film crews and newspapers had descended on Kew drawn in by a fascinating subject matter.

With 200 invited guests in attendance a lecture was given by the curator Professor Peter Hennessy and chaired by the current co-ordinator of security and intelligence across government Sir David Omand. Lively discussion and debate followed the lecture with John Scarlett and Dame Stella Rimington amongst those taking part. The exhibition opened to the public the following day and has received a record numbers of visitors. The three associated events run in the following months, which featured figures from the period recounting their experiences, were a sell out.

So what had created this stir at Kew and attracted so many visitors? It all began with a conversation with Peter Hennessy where it was agreed his recent popular book *The Secret State* could form the basis of an exhibition as it was based on documents from The National Archives. We first began by translating the themes in the book into sections within the planned exhibition and the tough process of choosing which documents to display. As the curator, Peter was central to this process and also undertook the writing of the captions and panels.

The challenge was then to make this into an interesting and engaging visitor experience, which is never easy with official documents as your main exhibits. The content of the documents is fascinating and tells an amazing story, but they are not especially stunning to look at.

Getting the interpretation right and providing objects to compliment the documents is therefore crucial. We engaged a number of methods to achieve this. The hunt immediately began for objects, which ranged from Aldermaston to former government bunkers. Our most notable item was a nuclear bomb

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Nuclear bomb displayed in the lobby of The National Archives

(WE177) which was displayed in the lobby as it would not fit in the museum, which then acted as a successful profile raiser for the exhibition.

Alongside objects we decided it was key to have interactivity and enhanced interpretation. With this in mind we installed a set of screens above the cases, which showed film of Peter talking about the content and relevant archive footage. These have been extremely popular and bring the space to life; the only issue has been the sound from the films crossing over.

In addition we commissioned an interactive push button map, showing where it was forecast Soviet nuclear strikes would land and life size cut outs of some of the early atom bombs developed. The result of combining the documents with these various elements has been to create a lively but authoritative look at this frightening but compelling subject matter.

As the exhibition was being put together a publicity campaign was constructed and a high profile launch planned. The key to getting press interest is to give them a story; and we found one. During research a document emerged which contained a suggestion to use chickens to keep a nuclear landmine at the correct operating temperature. We immediately recognised this as the hook to get the press in to see the exhibition.

Deciding to release this document on 1 April added to the attraction of the story, and as hoped the fact that this was not an April fool became a story in itself. The story spread across the world and National Archives staff found themselves on radio and TV denying it was a windup. A quote about the civil service 'not doing jokes' even made it onto the front page of *The Times*. The tabloid press also had a field day with headlines. This all added up to priceless publicity for the exhibition and general awareness raising.

The opening event was also an important element of raising the profile of the exhibition and indeed the relatively newly formed National Archives. A variety of stakeholders and interested parties were invited to the opening lecture and reception. They included a number of current and former policy makers and members of the intelligence community who we were very pleased to welcome to The National Archives.

Once open to the public the exhibition attracted our highest amount of visitors to date and the feedback has mostly been very positive. As the exhibition has now closed, it is possible to reflect back. The crucial factors in making this a success were having a high profile curator, engaging and relevant content, a creative approach to interpretation and a subject matter to engage the press.

It is not always possible to get this combination, but when it does happen a momentum is created. However, underpinning all of this was the hard work and dedication of National Archives staff from across a number of departments who worked together with a common aim.

Tom O'Leary
Education and Interpretation
Department
The National Archives

A New Look for our Document Collection Area

The National Archives is always looking at ways of improving our services to readers and ensuring the most efficient way of streamlining our work processes. With this in mind the decision was taken to introduce a self-service system in the Document Reading Room. The main aims were to reduce queues and introduce a more user friendly atmosphere with more flexible support for our readers.

We initially asked readers to complete questionnaires to gauge their reaction then this was followed by a pilot system involving 16 self-service lockers. The pilot system proved to be very successful and was well received by the readers involved. There were very few teething problems and any security or preservation concerns were unfounded.

Readers are now responsible for selecting the documents they have ordered from their lockers without the need to queue at the counter as before. There are Help Points located on the public side of the new locker area and Document Production Advisors available to assist readers with document queries and enquiries.

There are no changes to TNA distribution and document handling rules. Both of these are on display in the Reading Rooms. TNA staff are on hand to provide guidance if readers are unsure of procedures.

Early reaction from readers has been very positive.

1 & 2
Self-service lockers in the Document Reading Room at The National Archives

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Standards and guidance

Freedom of Information and Culture Change

The period for implementing FOI has been long but there still seems so much to do before January 2005. It is just one of numerous issues that records and information managers are having to deal with but it is one which it is crucial to get right. Underpinning almost everything connected with FOI implementation is a change in culture – or more precisely three changes in culture.

Firstly there is the obvious one of **Secrecy to Openness**.

The presumption of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is that all information held by public authorities is made available to those who request it. There are, of course, exemptions, as there must be if public authorities are to operate effectively. This is a major change from current attitudes – which vary slightly between different parts of the public sector.

This openness issue is nothing new. Those of you working in local authorities will be only too aware of the need to make available minutes of local council meetings, reports and papers (since 1985); and there has been access to various types of environmental information since 1988. There have also been codes of practice on openness in the public sector for several years – some will say they are among the best kept government secrets. The White Paper *Open Government* – published in July 1993 – set out proposals for new legislation and for a *Code of Practice on Access to Government Information*. In subsequent years similar codes of practice were introduced for the Welsh Assembly, Scottish Executive

and the National Health Service. These codes of practice all have the same basic premise – that people have access to available information about services provided, the cost of those services, quality standards and performance against targets; they are provided with explanations about proposed changes and have an opportunity to influence decisions on such changes; and they know what information is available and where they can get it.

The last of these commitments is crucial to the effective implementation of freedom of information, and indeed to all three cultural changes that the new legislation requires. Under the Code of Practice for the Management of Records under Freedom of Information public authorities should be taking the following steps for effective records management:

The Records Management Function – coordinate approach to the management of information

Roles and Responsibilities of Records Managers – relevant staff must understand their responsibilities and acquire the necessary skills

Records Management Policy Statement – manage business information effectively by providing an authoritative statement on the management of records

Training and Awareness – ensure that records staff are appropriately qualified, trained or experienced, and that all staff understand the need for records management

Records Creation and Management – keep information in a well structured records management system so that it can be identified and retrieved when required

Record Maintenance – maintain authentic records over time by providing appropriate protection of records throughout their life cycle

Record Disposal – ensure that selection and disposal decisions can be explained by careful documentation of the appraisal and disposal of records

Tracking – track and document access decisions so that they are consistent, and can be explained and referred to

Performance Measurement – identify whether information is being managed

effectively through monitoring of compliance with records management policies and procedures.

The need for consistency in information handling has never been greater. These records management requirements lead to the second change in culture – **Individual to Corporate**.

Records management has long been considered a low priority for most organisations. Paradoxically, while the last decade or so has seen a greater emphasis on corporate planning and corporate targets, the supporting records and information sources have remained set along traditional lines. In a paper environment records were often centralised but managers and operational staff needed live records to hand and often needed them immediately.

In addition, the low grade staff manning the perceived low grade work in registries and record centres meant that many staff did not believe that they would ever see their files again if they put them away in the file store. When computers were introduced into the office environment those live records were increasingly stored on individual hard disks. When local area networks were introduced it seemed natural to maintain those folders that had been created, or at least duplicate them on the network. The concept of sharing information is struggling to emerge from these traditional attitudes. It is only in recent years, with the *Modernising Government* agenda and the greater availability of systems designed specifically to manage records corporately, and – lest we forget – with the introduction of freedom of information legislation, that the change in culture is quickening.

These two initiatives – e-government and FOI – have led to a great increase in the formal guidance on records management produced by The National Archives. This is aimed principally at central government departments and agencies but can be adapted and used by anyone. The guidance, available on the website – www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ recordsmanagement/ – comprises a set of standards, currently undergoing revision, on major aspects of the management of paper records (such as file creation, tracking records and disposal scheduling), retention scheduling guidelines for those records that most, if not all, organisations create and manage – records relating to buildings, accounting, personnel, health and safety, internal audit, etc. – and publications on particular records management issues, such as human resources (which includes a competency framework for records management staffing), information surveys, access to public records, and a guide to the Data Protection Act 1998).

Other organisations have also produced importance guidance to the management of records and information, not least the Records Management Society – www.rms-gb.org.uk.

One crucial aspect about the implementation of freedom of information is its link with other developments in information management – most importantly with the strategy for e–government. The electronic delivery of services to business and the citizen will depend on good management of electronic records. This is the third culture change, **Paper to Electronic**.

Up to now new information systems do not always generate electronic records that fall under any formal corporate control and management. Meeting government targets on modernisation means that we have to look carefully at the processes of managing information in this (and other) formats. We must:

- know what records are out there in the organisation
- develop a policy for the effective management of the records
- evaluate the records for retention
- prepare sustainability strategies for maintaining access to, and reliability of, electronic documents identified as having continuing value

It hardly needs saying that many of the processes under freedom of information are similar to, if not the same as, those required for effective electronic records management. Records managers, therefore, must work closely with IT colleagues. We do not want to risk duplication of effort or the re-invention of principles and procedures.

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Kelvin Smith,
Head of
Cataloguing and
Accessions in
the Records
Management
Department

It is, however, not just about electronic records management systems, functional requirements and meeting the needs of business managers. We should not forget the change in culture that has to be embraced to make cooperation and joint working effective. There are still many, many people who do not trust electronic records – and this is not just something that will be overcome with the age generations; it has to be taken on board now if we are to meet our business targets and discharge our legal obligations. There are two examples that might illustrate these points: Destruction of records – some organisations still insist on having written (and signed) certification when records are destroyed. Why was this laid down in the first place? – to prove that destruction had taken place and had been undertaken by an authorised person. An electronic communication, perhaps in the form of an email, will do just as well. Electronic audit systems can prove – probably more conclusively – that that email was sent and sent by the person it says sent it.

There is a common misconception that email messages are an ephemeral form of communication but they are increasingly becoming the primary business tool for both internal and external working. The types of email that might need to be managed as a record include discussions, information distributed to groups of people, agreement to proceed, and other exchanges relating to the discharge of business. Email messages can provide evidence about why a particular course of action was followed which means that it is necessary not just to capture the email relating to the final decision but discussions that might indicate why one decision was made as opposed to another.

This is certainly important in a business context but may also be vital in answering freedom of information requests. As soon as an email message needs to be forwarded for information purposes, it should be considered as a record. Furthermore, as soon as an email message has been identified as a record of a business transaction, it is important that the message is retained with other records relating to that particular business activity – this might be on an electronic records management system or another appropriate corporate system.

The way in which e-mail messages are used and managed can either help staff organise their work effectively or cause problems in terms of missing deadlines. In addition to the immediate benefits and disadvantages staff encounter with using e-mail there are more serious consequences if e-mail is not used appropriately, including litigation and undesirable media attention.

For the past four years much has been said and written about what public authorities need to do to prepare themselves for the implementation of freedom of information. Some actions have already been taken – such as the introduction of publication schemes (although some are difficult to track down) – but it is only in the past few months that it has dawned on many authorities that FOI will be a reality in three short months from now. Many are not prepared for it and will not be fully in tune for months, sometimes years, to come. It is vital to ensure that record keeping systems are set fair to handle requests for information – succinctly put by the Code of Practice on the Management of Records, under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act:

> *"Any freedom of information legislation is only as good as the quality of the records to which it provides access…Consequently, all public authorities are encouraged to pay heed to the guidance in the Code."*

and, of course, it is vital that the legislation itself is fully understood. But, as I have tried to emphasise here, we need changes in culture to make it really happen.

Our records and information management procedures need to be of a very high standard in the modern world of increased accountability, expectations of the public and greater business efficiency. Records and information managers are crucial to ensuring that these targets are met.

Kelvin Smith
The National Archives

Kelvin Smith is Head of Cataloguing and Accessions in the Records Management Department at The National Archives. Over the past few years he has been heavily involved with developments in freedom of information (FOI) legislation and more particularly its effect on records management. He has been largely responsible for development of the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records under Freedom of information and with the subsequent issue of model action plans for developing records management compliant with the Code. He has recently had published Freedom of Information: A practical guide to implementation of the Act (Facet, 2004).

Secrecy to Openness will satisfy public demand

Individual to Corporate will ensure consistency

Paper to Electronic will ensure timely responses

Pathways to the Past

Developing our first online tutorial

Pathways to the Past is The National Archives' web resource for the lifelong learner and currently has a total of eight online exhibitions. In 2000, Pathways to the Past was awarded funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), recently re-named the Big Lottery Fund (BLF), and produced three online exhibitions in partnership with other organisations:

1. Family History
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/familyhistory/

2. Local History
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/localhistory/

3. Uniting the Kingdoms? 1066-1603
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/utk/

4. 1901: Living at the time of the census
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/census/

5. Trafalgar to Korea: 5 British Battles 1805-1951
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/battles/

NOF funded:

6. The First World War: Sources for History. In partnership with the Imperial War Museum.
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/firstworldwar/

7. Black Presence: Asian and Black History in Britain, 1500-1850. In partnership with Black and Asian Studies Association.
   www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/
   pathways/blackhistory/

8. Citizenship: A history of people, rights and power in Britain. In partnership with the House of Lords Record Office.
   http://www.nationalarchives.
   gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/

Each of our online exhibitions is aimed at a wide and varied audience with a common goal: the desire to learn about history from its original sources. Whether the user is attending university or an evening class, pursuing the history of their own family, or just curious about an historical topic, Pathways to the Past has something for everyone.

With a total of eight completed online exhibitions, the Pathways to the Past team decided to produce something very new and very challenging: to develop an online tutorial and take responsibility for publishing learning tools for TNA's current and future readers.

This exciting change of direction seemed, in fact, an obvious decision, given the academic expertise employed at TNA and the technical prowess available to us. The Pathways team is made up of staff from the Research, Knowledge and Academic Services department (RKAS) and therefore, we have the expertise at our fingertips to write and research academic packages - like online tutorials. Our Project Support officer within the Pathways team researches copyright ownership and obtains any licence agreements required to use the images online. Copyright clearance is of the utmost importance and requires sufficient project time to ensure we receive the necessary permissions to publish.

We also have the expertise of our partners on this project, University College London (UCL). We are delighted that UCL are in partnership with us and value input from the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies (SLAIS). Our relationship is managed by keeping UCL informed of progress. Any major decision about the structure, content or design of the tutorial is relayed to UCL for their opinion and input.

We decided that the TNA's first online tutorial would be palaeography (the study of old handwriting). The period 1500 to 1800 was chosen because documents are more widely written in English by 1500 as opposed to the earlier period, where Latin is more commonly used. We finalised our decision to develop a palaeography tutorial after we had carried out our market research. Many researchers we met at exhibitions, conferences and Family History seminars showed great concern about not having palaeography skills.

Imagine the scene. After weeks of research you finally discover a crucial document only to find you cannot identify even the first sentence! You sit in the reading room, willing the document to become legible so you can identify exactly what the past has to say.

This is not an uncommon scenario – one which most readers will have encountered.

Our palaeography tutorial is made up of ten lessons of progressive difficulty. Each lesson is accompanied by: a comprehensive palaeography lesson; the image of the document; an alphabet; transcript and glossary. The tutorial allows the user to transcribe each document interactively and receive their score or mark immediately. A section within the tutorial entitled Further Practice consists of 30 documents and transcripts, which the user can print out or transcribe from the screen. This section will be updated with additional documents to correspond with seasonal and commemorative events.

A pilot version of this project was developed and completed on 1 December 2003 giving us a working tool to test the site interactively. With the pilot version we were able to arrange several user group sessions at TNA and one at UCL where we invited a cross section of users to test the pilot and complete an anonymous questionnaire. Valuable comments from

these groups informed us where we had got it right and, most importantly, where we had got it wrong. The prototype highlighted technical and navigational issues which, together with our partners UCL, we corrected in preparation for the forthcoming launch on 31 March 2005. We have also introduced the public who visit TNA to the online tutorial by conducting learning sessions with them from the pilot version.

Along with the knowledge expertise in RKAS and Reader Information Services (RISD), the Pathways team also requires the co-operation of other departments within TNA. The website team plays an enormous part in producing our online exhibitions and turning our ideas into technical realities. Not only do they need to meet the wishes of the Pathways team, but also ensure that design, format and structure meet current government guidelines. When we plan for an online exhibition, we are safe in the knowledge that the website team take responsibility for these important issues.

We also have an excellent Record Copying department at TNA which digitises documents to a very high standard. It is crucial that our images are perfectly clear for the palaeography online tutorial because an integral part of each lesson is to read and transcribe the document. If the quality of the scanning fails, then the entire tutorial would be almost pointless.

The marketing of any new project is very important. Our launch date is not until March 2005 but we are already planning a comprehensive marketing strategy. Moreover, we have included the palaeography online tutorial into our new Pathways flyer as a 'coming soon' to inform the public what they can expect in the future. The Marketing department and Press Office are very encouraging and will give us the coverage such an important project deserves.

The first stage of this project was the development of a workable tutorial to pilot stage, which we have utilised to test the site interactively. We are now in the final stages of editing all the text, which will be passed to the website team in preparation to build the full version. From the positive comments we have received about the pilot we are confident that palaeography is a very worthwhile tutorial and will be enthusiastically received by our users. We are so confident about this palaeography tutorial that we have written 75% of our next online tutorial – *Latin 1066 –1733* and making plans to develop a second palaeography tutorial, 1200 –1500. These and subsequent tutorials will provide the ideal tool for those users who wish to improve their research skills and enhance their understanding of documents found online and in the archives. In turn these newly acquired or improved skills will go some way to provide greater access to the past.

Michelle Hockley
Pathways Project Manager 2004
The National Archives

Freedom of Information: Guidance on implementation in places of deposit

The National Archives' draft guidance on handling Freedom of Information (FOI) enquiries for information in deposited public records was released for consultation on our website in July this year. We have received a very supportive response from a wide range of individuals and organisations, and have incorporated your suggestions and comments into a revised final draft which is now available on our website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/foi/. This version has been revised following discussions with the Information Commissioner's Office, with whom TNA met on 10 June to discuss FOI and archive services (see Addendum to *RecordKeeping* issue 1[1]).

It also benefits from the continued input of our FOI working group members, with whom we have met three times since May to progress this guidance.

The guidance will shortly be expanded to include draft guidance which should be followed by public records bodies when transferring public records to places of deposit for permanent preservation. This part of the guidance has also been drafted by TNA staff with support from our representative working group. The full final draft of both access and transfer procedures will be available, initially on our website, by 29 November.

I would again like to thank everyone who has taken the trouble to respond to our drafts to date. All feedback suggests that the guidance is accessible, practical and helpful, and I hope that you will continue to find it a valuable source of information as you prepare for and implement FOI. The working group will be reviewing the effectiveness of the guidance in February 2005 and we will seek your feedback before then in support of this.

Standard for Access to Archives

The National Standard on Access to Archives, prepared by the Public Services Quality Group (PSQG), has now been finalised and prepared for release on TNA's website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/psqg/. The standard was overwhelmingly endorsed by archivists and representative bodies as being a suitable guide for archives and local studies services in their provision of public access facilities and services.

As reported in the Addendum to *RecordKeeping* issue 1, The Information Commissioner's office has indicated that the recommendations set out in the standard would be a good benchmark for the level of service to

be provided if an archive office wishes to claim the section 21 exemption (ie. that the information which they hold is reasonably accessible). Compliance with the access standard is not the same as compliance with FOI, but the Assistant Information Commissioner's views confirm that the former is a very positive step towards the latter. It is also hoped that those archive services and custodians not covered by the FOI Act, or by TNA's inspections of places of deposit and other repositories, will also find the standard a valuable source of guidance and support.

As announced at the Public Services Quality Forum in November 2003, the

PSQG, through its parent body the National Council on Archives (NCA), has agreed that TNA should take on the work of promoting and managing the standard under the umbrella of TNA Framework of Standards. The NCA will retain ownership of the standard and will work with TNA and the wider archival community on its periodic review. All enquiries about the standard should be sent to Steven Jones (steven.jones@nationalarchives.gov.uk) in the first instance.

[1] www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/services/recordkeeping.htm

Recently released useful publications

Publications from The National Archives

"A New Gateway to British history" – Annual Report 2003/04

The first annual report and resource accounts on the work of The National Archives has now been published, along with the first report of the Advisory Council on National Records and Archives. In her foreword to the report, the Chief Executive, Sarah Tyacke, highlights The National Archives' achievements during the year in reaching new audiences, preserving digital records, bringing history alive and supporting colleagues across government.

Particular highlights during the year include:

- The successful move of the staff and services of the Historical Manuscripts Commission to Kew and the setting up of a new computer system for the National Register of Archives
- The launch of the pioneering website Moving Here and the continuing success of the Access to Archives programme and the Community Access to Archives Project in widening our appeal to new audiences
- The launch of our Records Management Advisory Service
- The extension of our digital archive to include historical government websites
- The visit of First World war veterans and HRH the Prince of Wales to The National Archives in Kew
- The launch of our Secret State exhibition of the Cold War
- Our work in preparing for full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act
- Our support for colleagues across government on electronic records management
- Our public consultation exercise on the possible provisions of new legislation for records management and archives

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/operate/reports.htm

Framework of Standards for inspection of archive repositories and services

Our new framework of standards has now been drawn together. This framework of standard will inform and support a new National Archives standard for records repositories. We hope that this framework of standards will be helpful to all archives, regardless of their size, holdings, audiences or objectives. It is intended to be of as much use to the smallest community archives as to the largest local authority record office; and as much to a specialist media repository as to a business, private or charitable archive.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/

Standard for Record Repositories

This standard for inspection and approval of record repositories will shortly be published on our website:
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/

Report on the Finch Manuscripts, Volume V

The final volume of the Historical Manuscripts Commission's Reports and Calendars series, dealing with the papers of Daniel Finch, 2nd Earl of Nottingham.
See page 8 for more information

Accessions to Repositories 2003

The National Archives' annual 'Accessions to Repositories' survey for 2003 is now available on our website:
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions/

Realisation of Benefits from Electronic Document and Records Management

This document provides a comprehensive guide to realising benefits from an EDRM programme. The intended audience is primarily those in central government or local authority organisations who have responsibilities in or for EDRM or wider e-government programmes.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/advice

Appraisal Policy

The Appraisal policy defines the methods used to determine which government records are worthy of permanent preservation. This policy has been developed in response to the changed conditions for records management within UK government, especially the development of electronic records. TNA recognised the need to investigate whether the 'Grigg system' should be modernised and, if so, how.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/appraisal.htm

Preservation Policy

The purpose of this policy is to state and communicate the principles that guide the preservation activities of The National Archives in fulfilling all preservation aspects of its statutory duties. The policy has been developed in accordance with existing preservation policies from the archival and preservation community.
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/prespolicy.htm

Freedom of Information – guidance for Places of Deposit

This guidance gives advice for places of deposit for public records on how to handle FOI enquiries for information in public records and how public records should be transferred to places of deposit from public record creating bodies.
Draft guidance is currently published at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/news/stories/30.htm
The final document will be published elsewhere on the website: check the news pages for location of final document.

Future publications from The National Archives

OSP 29: Records created by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and records related to the MPS created by the Home Office

This Operational Selection Policy is intended to ensure the continuing growth and quality of an archive which constitutes a key resource for police history and a significant source for history of the capital and the nation; clarify the disposition of records between TNA, the Metropolitan Police Service historical store and the local authority record office (the LMA); provide guidelines on historical value for MPS to use in drawing up revised disposal schedules.

Publications from other organisations

Facet Publishing – Freedom of Information: A Practical Guide to Implementing the Act by Kelvin Smith

A practical guide to the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including descriptions, checklists, models and practical examples will enable all those involved in the discharge of this important enactment to do so without fear or worry.
www.facetpublishing.co.uk/foi/index.html

Digital Preservation Coalition – Contracting Out for Digital Preservation Services

The Guidance leaflet on contracting out is intended to provide a source of practical guidance and a checklist of issues to consider before drawing up a service contract.
www.dpconline.org/graphics/guides/index.html#outsourcing

Records Management Society of Great Britain – Records Management Toolkit for Schools

The Toolkit contains a sample records management policy and retention guidelines, as well as some other records management advice, including a policy about dealing with e-mail. The intention is to provide schools with the documents they need to comply with the legislation with the minimum of duplicated effort.
www.rms-gb.org.uk/index.cfm?SECTION=SERVICES&PAGE=RESOURCES

Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research (FARMER)

This website provides details of the archives and records management courses and an excellent, jargon-free introduction to the archive and records domain.
www.liv.ac.uk/lucas/FARMER/
Archival awareness guide:
www.liv.ac.uk/ lucas/ archaware/intro.htm

JISC – Records Management Toolkit for the FE and HE sectors

The 'Records Management infoKit' is a toolkit aimed at FE Colleges and small institutions who do not have a professional records manager. It provides a step by step guide to managing all aspects of the records lifecycle and ensuring legislative compliance.
www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/InfoKits/edrm

International Council on Archives – International Standard Archival Authority Records for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families: ISAAR(CPF) 2nd Edition

This standard provides guidance for preparing archival authority records which provide descriptions of entities (corporate bodies, persons and families) associated with the creation and maintenance of archives. The second edition has now been published.
www.icacds.org.uk

International Council on Archives – draft Workbook on Electronic Records

Launched at the ICA Conference in Vienna, this draft workbook will be formally published in December 2004.
www.ica.org/biblio.php?pdocid=163

National Audit Office – FOI Guidance

A good practice guide produced by the National Audit Office.
www.nao.org.uk/publications/foiguidance.pdf

UK Information Commissioner: FOI Awareness Guidance

Awareness Guidance 1
– Personal Information

Awareness Guidance 2
– Information provided in confidence

Awareness Guidance 3
– The Public Interest

Awareness Guidance 4
– Legal Professional Privilege section 42

Awareness Guidance 5
– Commercial Interest

Awareness Guidance 5 – Annex Public Sector Contracts

Awareness Guidance 6
– Information Reasonably Accessible to the Applicant by Other Means

Awareness Guidance 7
– Information Intended for Future Publication

Awareness Guidance 8
– Records Management FAQs

Awareness Guidance 9
– Information contained in court records

Awareness Guidance 10
– Defence Exemption

Awareness Guidance 11
– Time for Compliance

Awareness Guidance 12
– When is information caught?

Awareness Guidance 13
– Relations within the UK

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=1024

UK Information Commissioner: Exemption Guidance

Audit Exemptions
Court Records (section 32)
The Economy(section 29)
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=1024

Contacts and staff news

Staff changes

National Advisory Services Department:

Katie Woolf has been promoted to become the Communications and Advocacy Manager for the National Advisory Services. **Chris Kitching**, Secretary of the HMC, has retired. **John Gurney**, Curatorial Officer and Regional Liaison Officer for the North West, has left The National Archives to live and work in the North East of England. **Karen Muldoon**, working as Archive Inspection Officer, has left The National Archives to join the Church of England Record Centre. **Catherine Redfern** has left TNA to join Barts and the London NHS Trust.

Records Management Department:

Rose Ashley has been promoted to FOI Implementation Manager. **Teresa Gerrard** will shortly become the Head of FOI Implementation Unit. **Stuart Abraham** is now Access Manager. **Jo Lancaster** has joined the FOI Implementation Unit for six months on a full-time basis while **Adam Bigg** and **Nick Pinto** have joined the Unit on a part-time basis. **Anne Macadam** is on a secondment to the Treasury. **Julie Skipp** has joined RMD as Business Monitoring and Communications Co-ordinator. **Simon Kitching** is currently working in RMD on an Archive Internship.

Contacts

Enquiries about records held at The National Archives and elsewhere
Tel: 020 8876 3444
enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

National Advisory Services
Katie Woolf, Communications and Advocacy Manager
katie.woolf@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 2380)

Records Management in Government Departments
records.management@nationalarchives.gov.uk
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/

Meg Sweet, Head of Records Management Department
meg.sweet@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 5315)

Kelvin Smith, Head of Cataloguing and Accessions Unit
kelvin.smith@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 2303)

Howard Davies, Head of Inspection and Client Management Unit
howard.davies@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 2357)

Malcolm Todd, Project manager: Sustainability of electronic records
malcolm.todd@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 5340)

Stuart Abraham, Access Manager
stuart.abraham@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Tel: 020 8876 3444 (x 5346)

Records Management outside central government
Advice on developing effective information and records management systems for paper and electronic records
Richard Blake, Head of Records Management Advisory Service
Tel: 020 8392 5208
rmadvisory@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Electronic Records Management
Ian Macfarlane, Head of Electronic Records Management Development Unit
Tel: 020 8392 5366
e-records@nationalarchives.gov.uk
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords

Information legislation:

- Advice on Freedom of Information and its impact on records management and archives
- Information on proposed records and archives legislation
- Guidance on data protection and its impact on records management and archives

Susan Healy
susan.healy@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 2305)
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy

Social inclusion and diversity issues:

Including online and cataloguing initiatives and The National Archives' User Advisory group
Rachel Hasted
rachel.hasted@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 2531)

Conservation and preservation of traditional materials:

Mario Aleppo
conservation-preservation@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8392 5263
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation

Digital Preservation issues:

David Ryan
digital-archive@nationalarchives.gov.uk
david.ryan@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8392 5257
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation

Copyright and intellectual property:

Guidance on copyright and other intellectual property issues
Tim Padfield
tim.padfield@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 5381)
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/legal/copyright.htm

Advisory Council on national records and archives:

For information on the remit and meetings of the Advisory Council
Tim Padfield
tim.padfield@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 5381)

Inspection of repositories and related archival standards:

Advice on standards for storage of and access to private and public archives:

Dr Norman James
norman.james@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 2615)

Steven Jones
steven.jones@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8392 5318
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives

Public records in places of deposit:

Advice on issues relating to the management of public records in approved places of deposit, including disposal, legislation and access

Steven Jones
steven.jones@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8392 5318
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/advice/pod.htm

Regional liaison, advice to grant-awarding bodies and sales monitoring; advice on private records
- Including liaison with regional archive councils and regional agencies
- Advice to all owners and custodians of non-public records

Dr Norman James
norman.james@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 2615)

Regional Archival Liaison:

Scotland	–	Alex Ritchie
Wales	–	Michelle Kingston
Eastern Region	–	Anthony Smith
South East Region	–	Melinda Haunton
Yorkshire and the Humber Region	–	Andrew Rowley
North West and Northern Ireland	–	Mary Wills
East Midlands and West Midlands	–	Michelle Foggett
North East Region	–	Melinda Haunton
South West Region	–	James Travers
London	–	Rachel Bell

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

Archives awareness initiatives:
Advice on initiatives to promote archives
Archives awareness campaign officer
press@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8392 5277

Education, learning and access, schools and universities:
- "Learning Curve" and other online initiatives for schools
- Events, exhibitions and outreach programmes for schoolchildren and undergraduates

Tom O'Leary
thomas.o'leary@nationalarchives.gov.uk
020 8876 3444 (x 5298)

Academic publications and development of material for the higher education and lifelong learning sectors
Vanessa Carr
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020 8876 3444 (x 2212)

National Register of Archives
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the national archives