



the national archives

Winter 2005



# RecordKeeping

For all those interested  
in archives and records

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International Boundary Workshop Success  
BT Heritage Policy  
Sales Monitoring Service

## Records Management

Future of ERM Evaluation Programme  
New Custodial Policy for Digital Records

## Archives

Managing Digital Archives  
Caribbean Heritage Cataloguing Project  
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### Cover photo

A British Antarctic Survey meteorologist launching a meteorological balloon at Halley Research Station, Antarctica. (Photo: Chris Gilbert)

# Note from the Editor

We are very pleased to be able to bring you the Winter issue of *RecordKeeping*, which we hope you will find useful, interesting and relevant, whatever your involvement in archives and records.

Firstly, a Happy New Year to you all. I hope that your surroundings for gathering and keeping records are not as wintry as for the team from the British Antarctic Survey featured on the cover. As 2005 gets underway, so too do new requirements under Freedom of Information, now upon us, and I'm sure occupying the minds of many of you at present. I hope that those of you involved in its implementation have experienced positive early days. *RecordKeeping* will feature more about the impact of Freedom of Information in the next issue.

This edition of the magazine is full of news and stories from across the sector. In a popular time for annual conferences, colleagues at The National Archives (TNA) have written several reports and reviews of presentations and discussions dealing with a wide range of issues of relevance to the archives and records communities.

In what we intend to become a regular feature of input and feedback from colleagues outside The National

Archives, we are very pleased to include a contribution from Lesley Whitelaw, Archivist at Middle Temple, as the first of our (hopefully) willing participants. As you will see from Lesley's 'interview', we are keen to offer introductions to different issues of the archives and records world, and to the different types of people who are involved in the profession.

Elsewhere in the magazine, you will find interesting and useful case studies, including an account of how Ordnance Survey has managed its responsibilities as a digital place of deposit. David Hay gives an introduction to BT's new Heritage Policy, while National Archives colleagues provide useful information and advice on new cataloguing projects and about managing an Open Day. Included in our regular round up of current standards and guidance are what we hope will be helpful introductions to the Sales Monitoring Service and the Approved Electronic Management Systems here at The National Archives.

As Elizabeth Hallam Smith comments on the following page, this is a time of change and challenges for those involved in record keeping, but let's hope that 2005 is also full of excitement and opportunity.

**Mary Wills**  
Editor

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*Please do contact me with any comments or suggestions for articles.*

*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.*

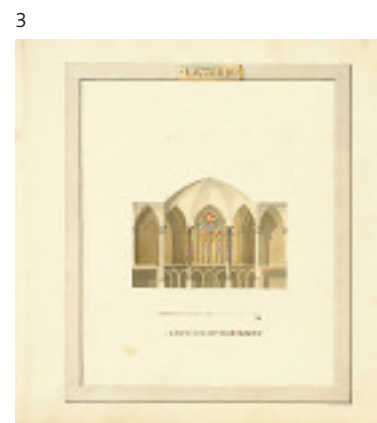
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## TNA update

# The archive and records management sector and the National Advisory Services – a time of change

All of us who are involved with archives and records management are currently facing unusual and challenging demands, but at the same time, unprecedented opportunities.

The BBC TV series *Who Do You Think You Are?* has been a resounding success in enhancing the profile and reputation of archive materials, and has boosted website and reader visits and remote enquiries across the sector (there will be a feature on it in a future edition of *RecordKeeping*). As we go to press, it is still early days in assessing the impact of the Freedom of Information Act, but it is already clear that that it will change the way we work for ever. Both of these developments offer us not just the inevitable logistical challenges, but also a chance to articulate and demonstrate the profound and long-term value of archives and records, legal and evidential as well as cultural and educational.

Because of The National Archives' multifaceted remit and great range of contacts and links with cognate bodies, fellow professionals, stakeholders and users, together with our longstanding commitment to consult with and be guided by the needs of those groups, we are in a strong position to help shape a strategic vision and the policies to deliver it, in partnership with all our stakeholders. The National Advisory Services Department has a key role here, in helping and supporting colleagues across the piece. Drawing on the skillsets and expertise of the Public

Record Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission teams, it has an overview of the wide ranging needs of the archival and records management sector, and in-depth knowledge and practical experience of service delivery which it can deploy to support the needs of our stakeholders and customers. Acting as an authority and a co-ordinator in offering advice and guidance on creation, long-term preservation, stewardship and use, the Department promotes national standards for the access to and care of records and archives. Our Standard for Record Repositories, newly updated (see page 29), supported by the Framework of Standards, offers an exemplar of best practice in delivering excellent levels of care and access, and stands as a level at which to aim even if sufficient funding is not available.

The sector can learn and profit greatly from working collaboratively with museums, libraries and many other cultural bodies. But archives and records are different and distinctive – they are unique, they have a mass popular appeal, and they have a vital legal and evidential significance – and they need a different and distinctive set of professional and expert skills and standards to create, manage and safeguard them for future generations.

This issue of *RecordKeeping* contains many examples of new developments which we hope will be of interest to our professional colleagues, and which more broadly signal the current dynamism and momentum which the archival and records management sector is managing to sustain at a time of change and challenge. Colleagues will also I am sure warmly welcome the appointment of Nick Kingsley, currently County Archivist at Gloucestershire and a Board Member of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, as the new Head of the National Advisory Services and Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, from 21 March 2005.

**Elizabeth Hallam Smith**  
**Director of National Advisory and Public Services**  
**The National Archives**



## Nick Kingsley joins TNA

Nick Kingsley joins the National Advisory Services from Gloucestershire Record Office where he has been responsible for the corporate implementation of new information legislation and the establishment of an integrated information management service, as well as for integrating the archives and local studies services and expanding museums development work. Nick has also played a leading role in the National Council on Archives, in 2002 was appointed to the Archives Taskforce and in 2004 became a Board Member of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, an appointment he will

retain in his new role at The National Archives. Nick's personal research interests are in architectural history, and especially the history of the country house in the British Isles.

Nick says about his appointment: "I look forward very much to joining the National Advisory Services team, and hope that my experience in local government will help the service address some of the big challenges facing UK archives at present: digital preservation, freedom of information and the erosion of baseline resources.

I am also very enthusiastic about the role we can play in the development of



the Archives Gateway, based on all the investment that has been made in the National Register of Archives and ARCHON over the years."

## TNA announces the future of the ERM Systems Evaluation Programme

The scheme run by The National Archives evaluates electronic records management (ERM) systems software products against a set of common, generic requirements for the public sector.

The scheme has successfully stimulated the software industry to develop products to meet these requirements. Given this positive outcome and with the rollout of solutions in user organisations about to increase

significantly in 2005/2006, the evaluation scheme will have achieved its main value for the public sector. Therefore the current phase of the evaluation scheme will be completed in 2005 with the scheme ceasing to evaluate further products.

The programme will maintain a usefulness for public sector organisations by keeping the list of approved products, the requirements specifications and the published test

scripts accessible as tools for any project to use.

It would be appropriate to review and consider revision of the requirements in 2005 as they will be three years old, but a wider range of options will be considered for the following phase for 2007 on.

For further information, please see the article on page 33.

## Accessions

With the beginning of a new year the National Advisory Services is continuing the Historical Manuscripts Commission's annual 'Accessions to Repositories' exercise. This year it is led by James Travers, who has contacted over 250 major collecting institutions throughout the British Isles for information on their main accessions of the year 2004. Now we sit tight as the returns flood in!

The aim of this process is twofold: to help us improve our advisory service by enhancing our knowledge of current archival collections and to assist

archivists in promoting their accessions. Not only do we add accessions to the National Register of Archives, the information appears separately on our website (see [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/accessions) for last year's returns). Thirty-three thematic digests of the material are also produced, many of which are published in academic journals.

Sending accessions to us will also help archivists fulfil their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as they will be proactively facilitating

public access to information. Moreover, archivists are supported in this process by the 'Accessions to Repositories' page on the website which advises readers to contact repositories in advance for further information about access, which should help archivists to help them.

**Rachel Bell**  
National Advisory Services  
The National Archives

## RecordKeeping news

# Heritage Lottery Fund – 10 years of funding in London

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) celebrated ten years of supporting heritage projects across London on 23 November, with a birthday bus trip around the capital in a classic London Routemaster.

The National Archives was the first of five stops during the day that saw HLF's London team visit Dulwich Picture Gallery, community groups in Newham, the Vestry House Museum in Waltham Forest, and a restored historic park in Brent, before travelling to the National Portrait Gallery.

As part of the celebrations, members of HLF's London Team and the London

Committee collected a heritage jigsaw piece from each stop, depicting how lottery funding has helped local organisations in London, which was assembled at the end of the route party. The first piece was presented by Sarah Tyacke, Chief Executive of The National Archives.

Sue Bowers, HLF's Regional Manager for London, commented, "Heritage is

about local people from all backgrounds and communities in London, it is about our past and our future. We want to help people to learn about the wealth and diversity of heritage on their doorstep and preserve this for future generations".

The National Archives has received more than £3 million in funding from HLF. Those meeting the Birthday Bus

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Sarah Tyacke presents Val Bott (of HLF's London Committee) with the first piece of the heritage jigsaw, outside the Birthday Bus



Representatives of the *There Be Monsters* project at The National Archives

on its breakfast stop at The National Archives included representatives of the project to film and archive the 'Burnt Records', documents detailing the service records of World War I soldiers. Another project, *Labouring Men, Labouring Women*, met the cost of transferring descriptions from 30,000 files relating to the working conditions of the poor to an online catalogue. The National Archives has also received funding to catalogue inward passenger lists in record series BT 26.

A current project, *There Be Monsters*, aims to give people with mental health problems access to The National Archives' historical map collection and then, with the help of facilitators Workshop & Co (set up by the Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust), to create a sculpture which will be placed on permanent exhibition at The National Archives.

Also present for breakfast were National Advisory Services staff, who provide the Heritage Lottery Fund with expert advice on grant applications from the wider archival community. Our regional liaison team will soon be returning the call with a visit to HLF's London headquarters as part of a programme to strengthen regional links.



## New Archive Lottery Adviser

Louise Ray has been appointed the National Council on Archives' new Archive Lottery Adviser. Louise will be co-ordinating the Archive Lottery Advisory Service, which was set up in 1997 and is jointly supported by The National Archives (TNA), the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the National Council on Archives (NCA).

The Archive Lottery Adviser provides strategic support to the NCA on fundraising issues and liaison with funding bodies. In addition the Archive Lottery Advisory Service is available to all UK archives; providing general support and guidance on lottery funding, running workshops for potential applicants, and reviewing draft applications prior to submission.

More information about the service is available on the National Council on Archives website at: [www.ncaonline.org.uk/lottery.html](http://www.ncaonline.org.uk/lottery.html) or

by contacting Louise Ray, the Archive Lottery Adviser  
Tel: 020 8392 5347, Email: [louise.ray@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:louise.ray@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Postal Address: Louise Ray, Archive Lottery Adviser, National Council on Archives, c/o The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU.



# Freedom of Information and the Historian

Stephen Twigge, Head of Academic Services at The National Archives, reports on a one-day conference on Freedom of Information and the Historian jointly hosted by The National Archives and the Institute of Historical Research, held at Senate House, University of London.

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Sarah Tyacke and  
Baroness Ashton



On 3 November 2004, over 100 academics, government officials and records managers packed into Chancellor's Hall, University of London, to discuss the latest developments on Freedom of Information.

The conference provided historians with the opportunity to learn more about the Freedom of Information Act and its potential impact on their work.

A primary aim of the conference was to provide a forum for historians to

express their views about the process whereby records are released and learn more about the latest thinking within government departments.

The conference was opened with a keynote address delivered by Baroness Ashton of Upholland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

In her presentation, the Minister stressed the importance she attached to the Freedom of Information Act and

reaffirmed the government's determination that the public should reap the rewards of greater openness. The positive role played by the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on National Records and Archives in balancing the need for openness with the need for confidentiality was commended by the Minister.

Baroness Ashton concluded her presentation with the announcement that 70,000 new files, many of which were closed to the public, would be



made available at The National Archives to researchers in January 2005.

The anticipated impact of Freedom of Information legislation on government departments formed the central core of presentations delivered by Gill Bennett of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Alex Ward of the Ministry of Defence. In their presentations both speakers expressed the view that Freedom of Information was not revolutionary but represented continued evolutionary development in the sphere of public access to information.

All government departments previously operated under the 1992 Code of Access to Government Information which provided many researchers with a valuable route for getting hold of material older than 30 years old which had been retained or closed.

The significant change introduced by the Freedom of Information Act was that researchers would now have the right to ask for material less than 30 years old. It was stressed, however, that Freedom of Information did not imply free access to all government records. Issues such as counter-terrorism, human rights, and good governance

required a climate of confidentiality in order to establish trust and ensure understanding.

The morning session was concluded by a round table discussion chaired by Chris Collins of the Thatcher Foundation. The session was used to answer a variety of questions from the floor covering such issues as the role of the Information Commissioner, access to service records and concern that departments would destroy records early to avoid the need to release information.

This latter point was considered extremely unlikely by Gill Bennett who contended that in order to function effectively government departments required a full record of all its activities. The concern was also expressed that departments would be so overwhelmed with Freedom of Information requests that the normal process of review would be adversely affected. This eventuality was considered unlikely as departments would have time to redeploy staff more effectively.

The afternoon session was composed of two parallel workshops chaired by Professor Ian Nish on foreign and defence records and Professor Rodney Lowe on domestic records. The

workshops provided the opportunity for delegates to make specific requests concerning records of particular interest. The issues covered included the process of submitting a request for information, the citation of records consulted under FOI but not selected for permanent preservation and the application of the various exemptions.

The conference was brought to a close by Professor Richard Aldrich of Nottingham University who summed up the day's events and expressed the view that to work effectively Freedom of Information would require a cultural change by both government departments and the academic community. He also expressed the concern that unless historians became more engaged in the process, the profession would be placed at a disadvantage in relation to other pressure groups who were better organised and able to use the new legislation more effectively.

The delegates expressed the view that the conference had been a great success and that a follow up seminar in January 2006, to discuss the impact of the Act during its first year, would be a welcome development.



## Archive Awareness Campaign: update

Throughout Autumn 2004, 500 events took place across the UK for Archive Awareness Campaign. Workshops, exhibitions, open days and special events for children were all aimed at attracting both new and existing archive users.

Some archive organisations joined up with other schemes such as The Big Draw or Islam Awareness Week for their events or gave family history events an extra push during the BBC's *Who Do You Think You Are?* series.

In fact, half of the events registered were family history focused. Other events along the Archive Awareness theme of Routes to Roots included an exhibition put on by Suffolk Record Office called The Lost Gardens of Suffolk and Wheels Around the World at the Heritage Motor Centre. Fantastic visitor numbers were reported at events right across the country.

Individual organisations have been very successful in achieving media coverage for events and for Archive Awareness Campaign in general.

Archive Awareness Campaign will continue in 2005. Once again the aim will be to get more people thinking about archives.

The Archive Awareness Central Team will be working on new partnerships, following the success of the relationship with the BBC, and developing new ideas for promoting UK archives to the public.

To discuss ideas for Archive Awareness Campaign or to find out more please contact Lucy Fulton, Archive Awareness Campaign Officer based at The National Archives, on 020 8392 5237 or visit [www.archiveawareness.com](http://www.archiveawareness.com)

# Public Services Quality Group Forum 2004

## Anchoring Communities

The fact that communities and archives would not exist without each other is one that is important to remember. The Public Services Quality Group (PSQG), which held its 9th annual forum at The National Archives in November, concentrated on a study of community in modern Britain and how archives have an important role in anchoring them. "The community is our ultimate resource. Cherish it and replenish it, or lose it," said John Abbott of the 21st Century Learning Initiative, one of the seven speakers on the day.

Some of the most fractured communities in the UK are in Belfast. Among all the versions and perversions of history in Northern Ireland there is only one history – the one told by the archives in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). Gerry Slater of PRONI spoke about his work with some of the more vulnerable and sensitive members of the community, and how PRONI has helped them explore painful memories from their personal and collective history. "People in Belfast are still creating memories," he said.

New opportunities to connect and heal communities may be coming for PRONI. Plans are underway to possibly convert an old prison in a deprived and diverse neighbourhood of Belfast into PRONI's new home. Slater said this move would provide the base for an even greater role in healing Belfast's communities.

Stephen Thake, Reader in Urban History at London Metropolitan University, agreed. Archives must engage with the traumatised, he said. They must educate the newcomers to the community, and act as a community anchor. And in communities which keep changing and where other organisations constantly move in and out, the archives must hold their place and be sustainable.

Archives can help foster identity in a community. In the government's civil renewal strategy, archives play

important roles as a community anchor. They are aware of the local community and are working with them to record what is happening there. Archives are important because the consequences of a loss of identity in a community can be poverty, isolation and the transfer of assets from local people and business to outside groups. Local people are only left with the pain and the memories.

In this light, an initiative such as the Community Access to Archives Project (CAAP) is vital. CAAP, which was presented to the conference by Elizabeth Hallam Smith of The National Archives, aims to provide a framework for the development of relationships and activities with community groups through leading by example with community-based online archive projects. Liz Hallam Smith emphasised that engaging communities in partnership not only encouraged learning, but also helped people to learn new skills with computers, increasing their confidence and job prospects.

As archives form the foundations on which communities and people's lives are built, they should also act as a centre where children are free to explore and learn. Schools are not necessarily the best places to learn, John Abbott argued, and children should be allowed to take charge of their education. Abbott said archive services should approach learning with less emphasis on programming that

delivers themes and answers on a plate. Archives can and should be a centre with no set agenda or benchmarks to meet – places where children can learn for their own pleasure.

Jan Pimblett of the Society of Archivists suggested that this is how learning in the future may look. In the past, formal schooling focused on generating qualified people, but not skilled learners. Schooling can be formulaic and curriculum focused, with little time left over to allow children to explore their own interests. Jan emphasised that archives are centres of cultural life, not just cultural records. As such, archives have the opportunity to reach out to learners and give them more than a set menu of learning objectives and formulas.

Geoff Pick, Convenor of PSQG and conference leader, emphasised that PSQG is a group that listens, engages and is aware of the special role which archives play. Archives are in a unique position. They have the opportunity to anchor communities and foster real, unformulated learning. As Stephen Thake from London Metropolitan University told the conference, archives are not privileged, but hold everyone's heritage.

**Michelle Foggett**  
National Advisory Services  
The National Archives

*The Public Services Quality Group was established in 1996 as an informal network for archivists interested in best practice and quality issues and membership remains open to all. Charlotte Hodgson, Vice-Convenor of PSQG, addressed the forum with a round-up of PSQG activities, which included the completion of the soon to be launched Access Standard. Throughout its history, PSQG has organised annual forums, national surveys of visitors to UK archives, and also created a national standard for access. More information about PSQG is available at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/psqg/>.*

*The 21st century learning initiative can be found at <http://www.21learn.org>. Information about CAAP can be found at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/partnerprojects/caap/> and in Recordkeeping, Autumn 2004, pp14-15*

# The Clore Leadership Programme

There are some excellent cultural leaders in the UK. However, many of them have become leaders through accident or luck rather than design. The Clore Leadership Programme aims to put some of the design in place.

Around 25 people a year are given an individually tailored opportunity to learn, develop and practise new skills, to reflect and research, and to realise their potential. An intensive, flexible and modular fellowship programme is customised to meet the needs, interests, personal circumstances and aspirations of potential leaders. They are drawn from all areas of culture, including archives, libraries, museums, heritage, the performing and visual arts and cultural policy.

Each successful Fellow has a programme, normally lasting between ten and twelve months, but which can be spread over a longer period. The Fellowships can be done full-time or combined with part-time work or other commitments.

Our emphasis is on practical examples and experience. The programme includes two intensive residential leadership courses, which focus on sharing first-hand the experience of leading an organisation.

In addition, each Fellow spends three or four months seconded to an organisation which is very different from their own, but where they can make a real practical contribution. Also, there is a period of ten or twelve weeks' research, attached to a higher education institution, investigating a topic which has practical relevance to the Fellow's field of work. This year's Fellows are investigating a wide range of subjects, from building digital collections to urban regeneration.

Self-awareness is central to our programme, and the design of each Fellow's programme is primarily theirs. Each Fellow has a budget which they can use for training to fill their skills gaps. We also provide a series of workshops for all our Fellows, in areas such as presentation skills, working with a board and fundraising. Every Fellow has their own mentor, who is an experienced figure in their field, to assist and guide them through the course of the year.

One of our Fellows is Deborah Tritton, who is funded by The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and is doing her Fellowship part-time, whilst continuing some of her work as Archive Services Manager for Cornwall County Council's Historic Collections. Over the course of the programme Deborah will be seconded to the Theatre Royal Plymouth for three months, where she will be managing a project to develop theatre-making skills training and professional development in the South West. She will also be undertaking a research project into electronic record preservation.

*"I am delighted to be one of the 2004/5 Fellows and would urge others in the archive sector interested in leadership to apply. It has provided me with wonderful opportunities to learn from today's cultural leaders, and to explore ideas alongside people from very different working environments, which is stimulating and challenging, and is, for me, one of the most rewarding parts of the Programme."*

The closing date is 25 February 2005 for Fellowships starting in September. Further information is available on our website [www.cloreleadership.org](http://www.cloreleadership.org).

Sue Hoyle  
Deputy Director  
Clore Leadership Programme



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2004/05 Clore  
Leadership  
Programme  
Fellows



# Records Management in Local Government Conference 2004

## Reebok Stadium, Bolton 15 – 17 November

The annual Records Management in Local Government National Conference took place in mid-November, organised by AIIM, in partnership with The National Archives, and supported by the DLM Forum.

The goal of this two-day conference was to bring together all those involved in records management in local authorities to discuss key issues such as the Freedom of Information Act, joined-up government and sustainable records management. The conference attracted delegates from the information management industry, management consultant firms and archivists and records managers from local and public authorities. In addition, a one-day pre-conference tutorial gave a highly informative introduction to those areas high on the agenda. This catered for the delegates' varying levels of knowledge and experience, and as such, RM Local 2004 looked set for a successful kick-off.

Highly informative presentations and workshops provided an opportunity to listen to the experiences and opinions of authoritative figures in the information management sector. High on the agenda was the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) becoming a reality, intertwined with the subject of implementing Electronic Records Management (ERM) programmes in the public sector. Tony Hendley's "checklist" for the latter subject, followed by a case study delivered by Staffordshire County Council, addressed in great depth a process with which many of the delegates have significant involvement. This was complemented by a two-part workshop on supporting FOI through ERM, enabling colleagues to engage in a frank exchange of ideas and experiences. Whilst taking lunch and other refreshments, delegates were

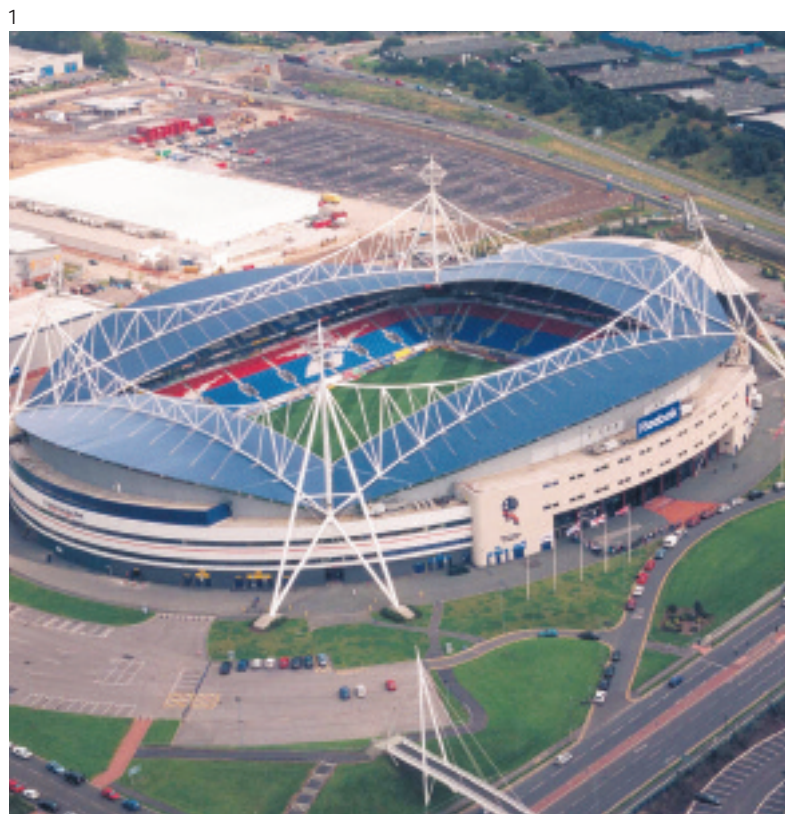
also given a taste of the types of software available through the information market place.

It is clear that the organisers aspired to assist local authorities in moving towards achieving good records management, recognising the needs of the Freedom of Information Act, whilst also looking ahead towards long-term preservation of electronic records. It is very unfortunate, then, that the attendance level was so low, particularly given the decision to use a centrally located venue, the accessibility of which would bring together delegates who would

otherwise remain as distant as Scilly or Shetland. Perhaps one of the most valuable facilities offered by conferences such as this is the ability to communicate in person, be it a question to a panel of speakers, a one-to-one chat with fellow colleagues or an informal dialogue with vendors during the tea breaks. Perhaps this point should be emphasised when future events are promoted, if a good, representative turnout is to be expected.

**Nicholas Langston**  
National Advisory Services  
The National Archives

<sup>1</sup> Bolton Wanderers' Reebok Stadium



# British Records Association Conference 2004

## The Newsroom, London 7 December

Representatives of the National Advisory Services department at The National Archives (TNA) attended the British Records Association's (BRA) conference 'Newspapers and their Archives as Historical Sources' in the appropriate surroundings of The Newsroom, the Guardian and Observer Archive and Visitor Centre.

The keynote speech was given by Ed King, Head of Newspaper Collections at the British Library, who gave an introduction to the UK context and the British Library's place within it. He emphasised the continuing importance of microfilm as a means of preserving newspaper text, and gave an update on the progress of Newsplan 2000 which has so far microfilmed and catalogued 1350 titles.

With his colleague John Goldfinch, Mr King then presented two British Library initiatives for the digitisation of newspapers and automated indexing, including the 700 volume Burney collection. Dr Nicholas Hiley, of the Centre for the Study of Cartoons and Caricature, gave an introduction to the

Centre's online database, fully searchable by keyword as well as artist and title.

The afternoon session was divided into two main themes: British newspaper archives, and newspapers as a research resource.

Representatives from News International and the Newsroom gave introductions to the history and content of their holdings, and Katherine Bligh explained the complexity and variety of the Beaverbrook Library holdings, and in particular the press lord's own multiplicity of interests. The joys and benefits of newspaper research were emphasised in two talks by former county archivists, Dr Dudley Fowkes and Dr David Robinson.

The conference closed with a salutary reminder from Dr Stephen Twigge of TNA that newspaper research is not without its pitfalls, as he presented newly opened Foreign Office documents which show extensive and prolonged efforts by the Information

Research Department to plant propagandist stories in both home and foreign press.

The BRA conference and AGM were followed by the Maurice Bond Memorial lecture, given by Chris Kitching, previously of TNA. His theme 'Public interest or private property? In celebration of private archives' was a reminder of the value of non-official sources and their place in the 'jigsaw' of the British archival scene. He also raised the very topical issue of how Freedom of Information will affect loaned and deposited private collections in public repositories.

**Melinda Haunton**  
National Advisory Services  
The National Archives

## Case studies

We would like to encourage more regular input and feedback from colleagues in the archives and records community, and would welcome news of a particular project or event that will serve as an interesting case study for others in the sector. Perhaps you are facing a specific problem or issue and may have advice for colleagues?

Since our readership is very diverse, we are also keen to offer introductions to different aspects of the archives and records world, the different types of people who are involved in the profession, and the different issues faced in each area of the sector.

This issue, Lesley Whitelaw, Archivist at The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, kindly offers her thoughts on the above.

Please contact us at [recordkeeping@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:recordkeeping@nationalarchives.gov.uk) if there is anything you would like to contribute to *RecordKeeping*.

# Interview with Lesley Whitelaw

## Your job title and organisation

Archivist, The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple (one of the four Inns of Court)

## What does your job involve?

The job involves the care of the Inn's records, which date from 1501 to the present. Work includes sorting and listing the records; taking in new records for permanent retention from the Inn's various departments; working with the part-time paper conservator to promote the long term preservation of the collection; researching various aspects of the Inn's history; answering enquiries and providing occasional in-house displays and articles. Current projects include the rescue from a highly unsuitable boiler room basement of several hundred architectural plans and drawings and engravings of Middle Temple property and buildings and the Temple Church, dating from the late 18th century to the mid-20th century.

The archive's time span means that tasks can vary from translating the Latin entries in the records of Middle Temple's Parliament (still the Inn's governing body) in the reign of Henry VII, to accessioning newly signed deeds or considering the application of the Freedom of Information Act (which applies to the Under Treasurer's local authority functions). The archive's subject matter is equally diverse: from the Inn's Elizabethan and Jacobean revels and masques, to members who were more famous for their literary than their legal contributions (Webster, Congreve, Sherridan, Dickens and Thackeray to name but a few); from Middle Temple's navigators, explorers and naval commanders (Raleigh, Frobisher, Hawkins were members while Drake was described as "unus de consortio Medii Templi" [one of the fellowship of the Middle Temple] in the record of his visit here in 1586) to its architectural records; from the extensive genealogical resources to records of the Inn's care of the

foundlings or "exposed children" abandoned in its precincts from the late 17th to early 19th centuries.

Workwise, my most pressing concern at the moment is trying to secure high quality archival storage for the long term, as the muniment room provided for that purpose in Edward Maufe's post-war library is now full to capacity and the archive has overflowed into several makeshift locations.

## How did you get into the archives profession?

When I left university with little idea of what I wanted to do, but with firm ideas about what I did not want to do, it occurred to me that becoming an archivist might be one of the least unpleasant ways of earning a living. I asked my tutor at St Andrews, Bruce Lenman, if he had any advice about entering the profession. He put me in touch with John Bates who was then Deputy Keeper of the Records of Scotland. After a visit to see him at West Register House he agreed to allow me to work there voluntarily for a few weeks "on records you can't do much damage to". At the end of each day I brought him my (handwritten, in those days) lists which he read through, applying a blue pen liberally and making helpfully direct, if somewhat bracing, comments on my efforts. I shall always be hugely grateful to him, because within days I knew that this was the work I wanted to do.

## What do you enjoy most and least about your work?

One of the most enjoyable aspects of my job is the continuity over several centuries of the institution for which I work and the continuity of its basic purpose and functions on its present site, all of which is reflected in the records. Perhaps because I grew up in a part of South Africa which has a relatively short recorded history and architectural heritage, I find it hugely appealing to work with Middle Temple



records several centuries old, many of which refer to present day physical surroundings and buildings, as well as to the same concerns of providing educational and collegiate facilities for members.

And while there has always been continuity, there has also always been change, adapting to new requirements, ideas and fashions. Among the changes, for instance – law students these days are a far tamer and more demure bunch than their Elizabethan and Jacobean predecessors, when violent assaults on fellow students at dinner in Hall and pelting of Masters of the Bench were not uncommon. I like the fact that the records form such an integral part of the organisation and that they are frequently drawn on for current administrative purposes, as well as being a fine historical resource.

The least enjoyable aspect is the pressure on resources. Financial constraints result in pressure on time, space, staff and sometimes on the quality of work it is possible to produce. Maintaining an archive in the private sector is an expensive business, and resources have to be spread over so many areas – high quality storage, expensive conservation materials, IT and time spent on cataloguing, enquiries, records management, etc. It is always necessary to prioritise and it is frequently unavoidable to produce work no better than what is possible in the time available, which can be frustrating.

#### **What are the three main issues facing practitioners at the moment?**

I would not claim to have the breadth of knowledge to enable me to give the definitive answer with regard to archives in general, but from my own working perspective I think three major issues are managing effectively the increased expectations placed upon archives; using developments in information technology to best advantage and awareness of and compliance with legislation affecting archives and record keeping.

As far as the first of these is concerned, not so very long ago the main interest came from a relatively small scholarly community and from some genealogists. Over the past decades the explosion of interest in family history, local history and historic buildings, and the coverage given to these subjects in the media, has brought archives to the attention of a far wider public of potential users. While it is clearly a good thing that archival resources are valued and appreciated by as wide a section of the community as possible, it does place considerable pressure on financial and staff resources,

particularly in the case of privately funded archives. Questions of access, security and conservation have to be weighed and a balance struck. While the concept of making available online to a worldwide audience descriptions of the content of an archive is extremely attractive, it is not really a viable option if the interest generated cannot be met within available resources, or more importantly, without compromising the security and preservation of the records concerned.

Information technology has brought wonderful new opportunities of sharing information globally, with all the accompanying benefits for research. If the world of archives was generally slow to embrace IT, by now IT has surely influenced almost every aspect of archive management, from computer cataloguing, searchable databases, archive web sites, electronic records and their preservation, e-mail enquiries and the possibilities offered by digitisation and remote access. In the case of a small specialist repository such as where I work, implementation is necessarily gradual and enthusiasm for these opportunities has to be tempered by a pragmatic recognition of what is, and what is not, reasonably possible within available budgets.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation has imposed standards of record keeping with which institutions have a statutory duty to comply. In many cases archivists may find themselves dealing by default with these issues, having to make time amid their other duties to understand the legislation and its implications for their institutions and to raise the issues with the appropriate authorities in their organisation.

#### **How has The National Archives made a difference in your area of work?**

As an archivist working in a small private archive I have long been indebted to the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC), now part of TNA's National Advisory Services, and over the years I have benefited greatly from the advice and support of Richard Olney and Norman James and their colleagues. I have found it both reassuring for me and beneficial for the archive to be able to approach fellow professionals who have the wide range of experience and expertise which comes from having knowledge of so many diverse archives throughout the country.

In fact, I owe my job itself to the HMC whom the Middle Temple invited to assess their archive back in 1989. As a result of the report the Inn employed an archivist for the first time the



following year. Subsequently I have sought the HMC's advice on several occasions and in every instance I have found the response prompt, helpful and courteous. Their guidance on a range of subjects from water detection systems to archive administration has been implemented. I am the only archivist in my organisation and, while I hope my employers are reasonably confident of my judgement, the recognised status of the HMC is useful in conveying to them an assessment of some aspect of the archive and its requirements.

Currently the National Advisory Services has responded very helpfully to my request for advice about the possible conversion of 2,000 sq ft of roof space for archive storage and office space, conservation studio, and research area. In addition to this, I have had great help from The National Archives in the convening of a meeting involving several National Archives specialists to discuss the project.

#### **How should The National Archives be working to support archive and records practitioners?**

I have already extolled the virtues of the HMC for the support I have received from them over the past 15 years. The value to archives and archivists of having access to a high quality, free advisory service has never been greater. The National Archives' expert advice on subjects ranging from digital preservation, the availability of grants and records legislation is a great support to archivists and records managers. I think the role envisaged for the National Advisory Services demonstrates the commitment of TNA to support the profession and practitioners nationally and to communicate to them what it has to offer.

# Managing digital archives: the Ordnance Survey as a place of deposit for digital public records

For many people working in public authorities and archive services the preservation of digital records can seem like a mysterious and challenging business. In many ways, however, the preservation of digital material bears very close parallel to the preservation of traditional paper and other physical materials. The following article illustrates this point and may help to demystify

some of the issues surrounding digital preservation.

This article has been adapted from one written by Eunice Gill of The National Archives' (TNA) Records Management Department and Jonathan Holmes, Senior Data Consultant at Ordnance Survey.<sup>1</sup> Ordnance Survey has managed a digital "place of deposit" for the

National Topographic Database since February 2000 and as such is one of TNA's longest-standing partners in the field of digital preservation. As the first digital-only place of deposit for public records the Ordnance Survey's experiences stand as a practical account of how one organisation has managed its responsibilities for digital archives under the Public Records Act.

## The National Archives and the public records system

The Public Records Act 1958 makes government bodies such as Ordnance Survey responsible for the safe-keeping and selection for preservation of their own records under the guidance, supervision and coordination of The National Archives (TNA). The Act also permits the storage of public records outside TNA in places where they have a particular local or regional interest, or where as national specialist records they belong naturally with other specialist collections, or require specialist skills or knowledge to manage them. Since February 2000 Ordnance Survey (OS) has been a place of deposit for the National Topographic Database, which is a national specialist record created and held in digital format.

## The need for OS to establish a digital place of deposit

Completion of the digitising of the OS National Topographic Database in the early 1990s, and the subsequent decision by the OS not to continue printing large-scale maps for public distribution, impacted on the OS obligation to deposit copies of their printed maps with the Legal Deposit Libraries. The Copyright Act of 1911

covered only printed material and subsequent legislation had not changed this. The system whereby the then Public Record Office (PRO) did not need to preserve copies of OS mapping because the Deposit Libraries already held the complete set was no longer going to cover preservation of the data which was contained in the National Topographic Database. Quite apart from the obvious implications for the Deposit Libraries, something had to be done to preserve copies of these digital mapping products for the researchers of the future.

The PRO was already considering the implications for the public records system of the increasing use of electronic records throughout government, and in March 1998 established the UK National Data Archive for Datasets – NDAD for short. This archive is run by the University of London Computer Centre (ULCC) and the University of London Library (ULL) under contract with The National Archives and contains datasets (from central government departments and agencies) which have been selected for preservation under the provisions of the Public Records Act. The NDAD staff provide storage, preserve the content and context of the databases, provide

online access through a searchable catalogue, and are themselves a valuable resource for practical advice on the processes involved.

NDAD deals with standard database formats (albeit some of an archaic nature) and with structured datasets, such as survey files. The OS National Topographic Database is however a highly specialist record of national importance requiring specialist knowledge and expertise in both storage/preservation and provision of public access. Hence the move towards place of deposit status for the Ordnance Survey itself. Negotiations between the OS and the PRO commenced in May 1998 and led to the creation of the Ordnance Survey as the first place of deposit for electronic records within the public records system.

## Managing the electronic place of deposit

As with all places of deposit the Ordnance Survey is required to:

- hold the data securely
- make all the information implicit in the data available to the public in accordance with relevant legislation
- provide retrieval aids for researchers

<sup>1</sup> The full article was originally published in the April 2004 issue of *Cartographic Journal*



- provide viewing and copying facilities
- make records available within a reasonable timescale
- provide appropriate security for the records during public viewing.

One of the first decisions that had to be made with regard to these obligations was what exactly OS should store. OS paper maps show a variety of information regarding the landscape, including the physical structures that existed as well as information on the height of ground above sea level. It was important that enough information was stored in the digital archive in order to record a picture of the landscape at that time. It was therefore agreed that Ordnance Survey would store two of its mapping products – Landline Plus (held in national transfer format, or NTF) and Landform Profile – which together would provide a permanent historical record representing the topographical data which OS generates.

In April of each year, a snapshot of both of these products is taken and stored on CD. The term “snapshot” is an analogy with its photographic meaning, in that it is just like pointing a camera at the database and taking a copy of what exists at that particular time. The data is then checked for completeness before being stored securely. This all sounds very

straightforward but it soon became apparent that there were a number of problems with storing digital data that did not occur with paper maps.

For example, no one knew how long data could be read from a CD. With paper maps we know that, given the right conditions, they can be preserved for hundreds of years. Back in the late 1990s it was estimated that CDs had a shelf life of approximately seven years. This is a marked difference. Clearly the media on which the OS information is stored needs to be durable, or alternative arrangements made for the transfer of the data to more durable formats in due course.

Another problem was the format of the data itself. NTF has been around for several years already but there is no guarantee that systems will continue to be able to read it in the future. As the archive becomes older there is an increasing chance that NTF will become obsolete and that standard GIS (geographical information systems) will not be able to read the data. Therefore OS needed to make preparations in order to make the data available when that day comes.

On top of these data degradation challenges existing problems, such as what happens if there is structural damage (a fire or bomb) in the building

that the archive is held in, had to be considered, as they are just as relevant with digital data on CDs or computers as they are with paper maps. OS and PRO had to agree on what course of action needed to be taken to address these problems.

#### Ensuring data integrity

Solutions to these problems were not always obvious. In order to try to mitigate the problem with data degradation it was decided that four copies of the data, on different types of CD, would be stored. That way if one of the copies was found to have degraded another copy could always be made from the remaining three. One may ask why was the data stored on CD? Surely the volumes of data are not that great? Back in 1995, 30Gb (gigabytes) was a lot of data and the current alternatives such as DVD, DLT (digital linear tape) or even single hard disks were not available. It is worth noting that OS also had Landline Plus data that pre-dated the agreement with PRO, and that has since been placed in the archive.

Using multiple copies of CDs solved some of the problems but didn't mitigate the risk of fire or bomb damage. The solution to that came in the form of two fireproof safes. One is stored in Southampton (at the OS headquarters) and the other is in a secure remote data store.



Having four copies of the data gave some security but still didn't solve the problem of "how do we know when the data is degrading?" In fact in one way it actually increased OS's problems by giving them four times the number of CDs to check. This was partially overcome by calculating a cyclic redundancy check (CRC) value for each file. This is a piece of software that can compute a value for a file, based on its size and content, and can then be used as a comparison when the value is recreated at a later date. This method could tell us if a file had changed or not: if the value of a file was seen to have changed then data degradation could be assumed to have taken place. Unfortunately, recalculation of the value was not automatic. Each year the archive increases by approximately 300 CDs and there are now ten years' worth of data. That is over 2,700 CDs that have to be manually extracted from their secure store and tested! Clearly this is a significant and time consuming task that increases every year.

Currently, OS addresses this problem by sampling the archive. Every year it tests a number of CDs from each of the sets. Fortunately, even though the oldest CDs are now ten years old, no data degradation has been found. However, OS is reviewing its storage strategy with a view to being able to carry out a degradation check against every file every year. Consequently it might in future move to storage on an alternative media such as computer hard disk or DVD. Once the data has been verified then backups might be taken on digital tape to provide a failsafe in case of any problems. These issues are still being considered by OS and TNA.

Even with an appropriate storage medium there is still the potential problem of the data format becoming obsolete. Each year OS assesses the formats of all of the data in order to ensure that it is still readable. Both OS and TNA are aware that at some stage either the data will have to be translated into another format or OS will have to store software (and even possibly hardware) in order to read and view the data. There is regular liaison throughout on these processes, with both parties contributing their expertise on what is required.

#### Public Access to the Data

The agreement for OS to run its place of deposit was made prior to the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act. As with so much information held in other places of deposit, the details of how OS information will be made available to the public will need to be considered

on a case by case basis. What is clear is that the ways in which OS delivers information to the public will change over time as technology and research interests change. OS and TNA already recognise the need to resolve the following issues, among others:

- Where might people go to gain access to the data?
- Will there be a need for a search room?
- Could the data be made available over the internet?

The status of OS as a trading fund – which must make money from its information assets – adds an extra element to these considerations. As long as the information is adequately preserved, however, it should be possible for OS to maintain its high standards of public accessibility to the public records in its care.

**Ordnance Survey is an organisation which has shown itself to be on top of its digital preservation needs, which is recognised by TNA in its ongoing approval of OS as a place of deposit. OS has also been very willing to share its experiences and expertise with other bodies faced with similar digital preservation challenges. TNA continues to work closely with OS on its forward plans for ongoing archival preservation and access. With a growing family of digital places of deposit – the UK Data Archive in Colchester was recently appointed as a digital place of deposit – the future preservation of digital public records looks bright.**

For further information:  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation/advice/digital.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation/advice/digital.htm)

# ‘Your Caribbean Heritage’ – a new cataloguing project at The National Archives

One of the biggest collections of records held at The National Archives (TNA) is the accumulation of material amassed by the Colonial Office and its predecessor departments. This includes a variety of printed material – the colonial government gazettes, locally enacted statutes, annual statistical returns, and proceedings of the local legislatures – but the most important series of records are those containing the correspondence between the successive governors of each British dependency and the responsible government department in London.

In the mid 19th century the Public Record Office embarked on an ambitious project to calendar the correspondence relating to the American and West Indian colonies, but after 134 years of work – which was at first regular and more recently somewhat sporadic – the project was abandoned after the publication in 1994 of the volume for 1739.<sup>1</sup> At the other end of the long period covered by these records, correspondence is adequately described in The National Archives’ online catalogue for the period from 1926, when the Colonial Office introduced a registered file system, until 1966 when the office merged with the Commonwealth Relations Office.<sup>2</sup>

For the period between 1739 and 1926, however, the bound volumes of correspondence and boxes of loose papers are effectively uncatalogued; the catalogue gives the date range covered by each volume but otherwise notes, at

most, only if the contents are ‘Despatches’ (official correspondence of the governors), ‘Offices’ (letters from government departments and other organisations) or letters from ‘Individuals’. Contemporary registers and indexes are available at Kew, but are, of course, of no help to researchers using the catalogue remotely.

Our increasing emphasis on opening up The National Archives’ services to a broader user base was instrumental in our decision to seek external funding to catalogue correspondence relating to the Caribbean.<sup>3</sup> After 1739, when the *Calendar* comes to an end, there was, of course, a huge expansion of the British empire and parallel record series also exist for dependencies in Africa, Australasia, the Mediterranean region and many parts of Asia, but it was felt that a proposal to catalogue the Caribbean material might have a good chance of success given the considerable number of people of

Caribbean descent in the UK and the growing interest in Black and Asian history.

The collection forms a primary source, undoubtedly the main UK source, for the history of the Caribbean and its peoples, and for related diaspora studies. The availability of detailed catalogue descriptions would make this rich documentary source accessible to individuals with an existing interest in the history and culture of the Caribbean, who are at present unaware of it, who are unable to visit TNA, or who find the existing contemporary finding aids too time-consuming to use. The project would also provide material for educators and other professionals, writers, and relevant community groups, including the local groups now involved in Black History Month and related events.

More generally, it was hoped that the project would aid the development of a

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, 1574-1739* (HMSO, 1860-1994; CDRom edition, Routledge, 2000). An additional five volumes of the *Calendar* cover documents in TNA and elsewhere relating to the East Indies, 1513-1634.

<sup>2</sup> Cataloguing of 1926-51 records for a number of colonies in Africa and the Caribbean was completed with internal resources in 2002/3.

<sup>3</sup> See ‘Thinking about Social Inclusion at TNA’, *RecordKeeping*, Autumn 2004.

greater understanding of the richness and diversity of British national culture as writers and other communicators become aware of the contents of the records. The application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was successful, and TNA received funding to employ three full-time cataloguers for three years. Georgina Hague, Gemma Romain and Kristy Warren were appointed, and the project started at the end of March 2004.

We started our cataloguing with records dating from the 1870s. This is simply because the format of the documents becomes more standardised at this period and it is much easier for people unfamiliar with the records to practice their new cataloguing skills. We chose to start with correspondence relating to Bermuda<sup>4</sup>, Grenada and Jamaica, reflecting the interests of the team<sup>5</sup>. New catalogue entries give a brief description of each item of correspondence, the date of the despatch or letter, the name and position of the writer, and the former references allotted in the Colonial

Office and by the sender. To facilitate the identification of an item within the volume, and also to give an indication of bulk for those planning a research trip or wishing to order copies, we also give the folio numbers of each item. In recognition of the growing family history lobby we try to name individuals referred to as far as possible, although this is not possible where, for example, we have petitions signed by many individuals.

The documents themselves have provided insight into the working of local politics and society through various forms of records including letters, memos, petitions, reports, and returns. They shed light, for example, on power dynamics and social relations, as well as providing insights into the lives of individuals. They illuminate the interaction between the local and imperial governments, as well as inter-island and international relations. It is already clear that enhanced cataloguing will greatly facilitate the task of those working on comparative studies within the region.

The work so far has presented a number of challenges. The content of the records is so varied that it is difficult to build up any real subject expertise and I am doubtful that any meaningful indexing at series level will be possible. The item descriptions are, of course, fully searchable, but terms used within the correspondence vary considerably and without constant checking it is not practicable to expect standardisation. For example, a constant theme in the late 19th century is the need for improved communications but correspondence about the postal services may be variously described as 'mail service', 'mail ship service', 'steam ship service', or concealed under the name of a shipping company.

A further difficulty is how best to treat terminology now considered unacceptable, especially where it is not consistently used in the records. For example, in the 19th century Caribbean 'Negro' and 'coloured' and a variety of other racial designations are not simply used as alternatives for 'black' but generally have distinct and precise

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Document  
workshop held  
at The National  
Archives



<sup>4</sup> Bermuda is not, of course, in the Caribbean but was generally dealt with by the West Indian Department of the Colonial Office in the modern period.

<sup>5</sup> Some limited work has also been done on records relating to Barbados, St Lucia, St Vincent, the Turks and Caicos Islands and, in earlier brief periods of British occupation, Havana, Martinique and St Eustatius.



2  
 Example of catalogued Colonial Office records now available to view on The National Archives website

Catalogue Reference	Title/Scope and Content	Covering Dates
CO 37/210/36	<i>f</i> Reports the case of Annie Campbell, who is in the Jamaica Asylum awaiting trial for the murder of her baby, Annie Martha Campbell. Suggests that she be transferred to Broadway Asylum in England. Also see CO 37/210/21, CO 37/210/73, CO 37/210/74 and CO 37/210/82 Major General Robert Michael Lefor, Governor of Bermuda, St.	1876 Aug 31
CO 37/210/73	<i>f</i> Encloses details as to whether Annie Campbell, who is being held in the Bermuda Lunatic Asylum needs a trial for the murder of her baby, Annie Martha Campbell, can be legally removed to Broadway in England. Suggests that the Colonial Office and the Law Office should give opinions as to the matter.	1876 Oct 9
CO 37/210/74	<i>f</i> Encloses resolution to consider any proposed legislation to transfer Annie Campbell, who is being held in the Bermuda Lunatic Asylum awaiting trial for the murder of her baby, Annie Martha Campbell, to Broadway in England. Also see CO 37/210/21, CO 37/210/61, CO 37/210/71 and CO 37/210/82 Home Office, Folios 437-442	1876 Oct 20

meanings. 'Coolie' may mean an indentured Indian worker, but care must be taken in substituting the modern form as 'coolie' comes to mean a descendant of such migrants. Similarly, in the area of mental health terms such as 'lunatic' and 'idiot' must be treated with care. Unless we can be certain of the precise meaning it is often simpler to use the original version, but to put it into inverted commas.

A further lesson learned is just how difficult it is to estimate the time a cataloguing project will take; there was no internal funding available to run a comprehensive pilot and it is already clear that my original estimates were overly optimistic – a problem we still have to address. We are grateful for the contribution currently being made by two student placements and a visiting archivist.

Our first outreach activity was a document workshop held at Kew in

October. A plenary session considered some of the material we had found on the subject of mental health, which included returns from the asylums in Grenada and St Lucia, a case of a woman kept in the asylum in Bermuda which subsequently influenced the drafting of imperial legislation, and a case of a Jamaican woman who published her experiences in that colony's asylum and the reaction her complaints received from the local government. The workshop then broke into groups looking at three topics: land rights of the Accompong Maroons in Jamaica, Indian migration into Grenada and St Lucia, and issues of race in Bermuda.

The feedback from the 25+ participants was good, and we hope to present further workshops. In November the emerging findings on the theme of mental health were presented as a seminar paper at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London University.

Our emphasis has to be on UK audiences, but we are, of course, also concerned that our work will be of use to archivists, academics and other researchers in the Caribbean itself. National archives there will have the 'colony end' of the correspondence so far as it has survived, and some microfilm copies of the correspondence held in The National Archives are also known to be held there. We will be extending our contacts in the region during the course of the project and hope that a planned touring exhibition of facsimiles can be hosted in one or more Caribbean countries.

**Mandy Banton**  
 Research, Knowledge and Academic Services Department  
 The National Archives

3  
 Demonstration in St Vincent against confederation with Grenada, 1905 (CO 321/228)





# International Boundary Workshop Success

On 23 November 2004, The National Archives (TNA) hosted a full day as part of the 24th Training Workshop *Archive Research for Boundary Dispute Resolution* organised by the International Boundaries Research Unit (IBRU), part of the University of Durham's Department of Geography.

IBRU works to enhance the resources available for the peaceful resolution of problems associated with international boundaries on land and at sea. Since its foundation in 1989, IBRU has built up an international reputation as a leading source of information and expertise on boundary and territorial issues around the world.

As part of its core activity, IBRU organises regular training workshops on practical aspects of boundary delimitation, demarcation, management and dispute resolution. This workshop was specifically provided for the benefit of diplomatic staff, negotiators, legal advisers, technical advisers, researchers and archivists.

The programme was designed to help participants appreciate how archive material can be used to help build a case in boundary and territorial disputes. In particular, practical sessions (at The National Archives and the British Library), offered guidance on how to make the best possible use of time available for archive research.

The workshop tutors over the two and a half days of the course included archivists, researchers and case managers drawn from the IBRU staff, The National Archives, the British Library, King's College, London and Trowers & Hamlin Solicitors, London.

The National Archives welcomed 22 participants from 12 countries (Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, European Commission, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago, USA and UK). Present were Embassy/Ministerial Secretaries, Heads of Division/Directors, Senior Surveyors/Lawyers, Research/Geospatial Analysts, Political Scientists, Geographers and GIS Specialists.

The tutor for the day was Geraldine Beech, Senior Map Archivist at TNA, who gave a presentation *Records for Boundary Research* and supervised a subsequent research exercise.

Geraldine gave an introduction to international boundary records in general and in particular those found in the UK Archives. She explained the importance of the context of their creation and preservation and gave a general overview of records held at Kew, touching on the reliability and variety of records available.

Participants then had the opportunity to view a display illustrating some of the kinds of material held and tailored to their particular interests. One delegate commented that he was 'bowed over by the volume and diversity' of the material he had seen.

A major part of the display was designed to illustrate the case history of the Venezuela/British Guiana (now Guyana) boundary, and in so doing to detail the variety of documents available relating to a single boundary line. This particular dispute began post Venezuelan independence (1845), continued through the 19th century, was considered settled and the frontier established by arbitration in 1899, was resurrected in the 1950s and in the Venezuelan view is still not resolved.

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1

Photograph of cutting through virgin forest by surveyors on the American North West Boundary Commission, 1876 (record series FO 302/30)

2  
Map depicting  
the 49th parallel  
from the US  
Northern  
Boundary  
Commission  
(record series  
MPK 1/55)



The display also illustrated particular cases of interest to participants, and examples of the wide variety of record types held at TNA relating to international boundaries (documents, maps, reports, photos, boundary demarcation records, correspondence, printed papers, treaties), including:

- sixteenth-century mapping of the Scottish-English border.
- files from the Department of Overseas Surveys International Boundary Archive giving source information on the British Guiana boundaries with her neighbours: Venezuela, Brazil and Surinam 1959-2002.

These files have been selected for permanent preservation and are currently in preparation for transfer to TNA as part of series OS 62 during 2005. Ordnance Survey kindly allowed TNA this small sample of the files from its International Library (ahead of transfer) especially for display at this workshop. These records generated much interest.

- non-public records (e.g. Major-General Sir John Ardagh's diaries from record series PRO 30/40).
- a selection of standard printed works, catalogues and TNA publications and leaflets.

Participants commented on how valuable it was to learn something about the process of research and the volume and potential of the records. An introductory tour was given to prepare them for their own research and to assist with planning future visits. The research exercise gave an opportunity to start their own research in the TNA Reading Room with Geraldine Beech and Martin Pratt, IBRU's Director of Research, on hand.

Many of the delegates were already planning return visits, feeling that they could do so with greater confidence and that such visits would be worthwhile, now that they knew something of the volume and detail of the material available.

*For further information about IBRU its work and resources contact Michelle Speak, Director of External Relations, at: tel: 0191 334 1965, e-mail: [ibru@durham.ac.uk](mailto:ibru@durham.ac.uk) or International Boundaries Research Unit, Department of Geography, University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE*

**Eunice Gill**  
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**The National Archives**

# BT's heritage policy – a model for safeguarding business heritage collections

A significant milestone for British Telecom (BT) was reached in 2004 – the adoption by the company of a formal Heritage Policy for managing and preserving its collections of archives and artefacts. BT is believed to be the only major UK private company to have made such a public commitment to maintain its heritage on behalf of the nation. David Hay, BT's Head of Heritage and Corporate Memory, tells us how BT is promoting its approach as an innovative alternative model for safeguarding potentially vulnerable corporate heritage collections as part of a company's corporate responsibility programme.

## Background

It was appropriate that this policy was adopted in 2004, for last year BT celebrated a major anniversary in its history, the twentieth anniversary of the company's privatisation and flotation as a public limited company. British Telecommunications, a public corporation from 1981, was privatised on 6 August 1984, and in November of the same year over 50% of shares in the new British Telecommunications plc were floated on the stock exchange by the government of the day. This was the first of a series of privatisations of state-owned utilities throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s.

During the past twenty years BT has changed almost beyond recognition in its organisation and culture as it has adapted to face the challenges of an increasingly liberalised and competitive global market place, new and emerging technologies, and a shifting political and regulatory environment. BT's experience as a public limited company is a uniquely rich resource for historians

of politics, economics and technology, to name but a few research areas, and there has been a wide field of such histories from the earliest days of the company's transfer from the state to private sector.

BT has always enjoyed a high public profile, and it continues to play a significant role in today's society on a variety of levels, not least in the current roll out of broadband technology which is such a critical enabler of the government's UK Online policy for the delivery of public services. People are familiar with BT, and this brief outline of the company is common knowledge.

What is frequently forgotten, however, is that BT's origins go much further back than its privatisation and flotation. Not only was the company originally created out of the state-owned British Post Office, BT is in fact directly descended from Europe's first telecommunications company, the Electric Telegraph Company (formed in

1846). As such it can claim to be the world's oldest communications company.

This lineage is reflected in the heritage collections – archives and artefacts – that such a significant and long-standing organisation has generated and accumulated during the course of its development. For the most part, the collections were inherited by BT on its privatisation and passed to the company in 1984. There appears to have been little thought given at the time by the government as to how this nationally significant collection would continue to be managed, and enjoyed by the public in the future.

## Archives

BT is almost unique among private companies in having statutory obligations under the Public Records Acts, 1958 and 1967 (as amended by the Freedom of Information Act, 2000). Public records legislation applies to all BT's records created before the date of privatisation. These include those





created between 1980 and 6 August 1984 when British Telecom had operated as a public corporation following the split from the Post Office.

In the first few years following privatisation an approach continued to apply which had been agreed with the Post Office in 1980. Under this agreement, BT was to be responsible for its archival heritage only from 1969. From that year, the telecommunications and postal divisions had been managed as distinct businesses within the Post Office, following legislation which transformed the Post Office from a central government department into a public corporation. A consequence of this agreement was that for the first few years after BT's privatisation, telecommunications records selected for permanent preservation passed to the Post Office Archives once their operational life had ended.

This position was reviewed in 1987 following the appointment of the author as BT's first professional archivist. A senior management decision had previously been made that year that it was appropriate that BT should be responsible for the whole of its own documentary heritage. During the years following 1987, the newly created BT Archives team devoted itself to consolidating the various archival collections scattered around the company, and negotiating

from the Post Office Archives the transfer of telecommunications related records for the whole period back to 1846. These included the surviving corporate records of the telegraph and telephone companies that the Post Office had taken over during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As all of these records created up to the date of BT's privatisation are public records, all of these developments were subject to the approval of the then Public Record Office to ensure statutory compliance.

The Archives moved to a split site facility in 1990, which met the requirements for approval as a 'place of deposit' for public records outside of the Public Record Office. The public searchroom and office areas were in central London, with the main storage facility within a records centre warehouse at London Colney near St Albans. Following the disposal of this London and St Albans accommodation in 1997, the BT Archives moved to its present location in central London, to an area within Holborn Telephone Exchange that had been stripped back to its shell and then completely refurbished to BS5454 standard. This new facility was again appointed a 'place of deposit' by the Public Record Office, and was also certified as meeting the standards required for archival repositories by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, the only business archive to be so certified.

BT has consistently gone beyond meeting the bare minimum legal requirements in providing for its documentary heritage, for instance recruiting a second qualified archives professional in 1999. This is undoubtedly due partly to BT Archives' efforts to embed itself in day to day business operations, so that today it sits as a discrete professional operation within the Company Secretary's Office (CSO), alongside others such as Quality, Company Ethics, Board Secretariat, Risk and Insurance, and so forth.

#### Artefacts

The artefact collections inherited by BT at privatisation contained over 40,000 objects, some dating back to the mid 19th century. They included thousands of telephones, switchboards, telegraphs, and associated equipment; large items such as telephone kiosks, test desks, submarine repeaters, and even a historic vehicle collection consisting of 25 lorries, vans, carts, and motorcycles dating from the 1930s to the 1970s. The collection also held huge numbers of components and spares: switchgear, valves, insulators, tools, as well as tens of thousands of items of ephemera – signage, protective wear, booklets, posters, photographs and so on. Altogether, as they represented the UK's (arguably the world's) most comprehensive physical record of the development of telecommunications.



In previous years the artefact collections were managed by the BT Museum, a physical visitor attraction located by Blackfriars Station in London. The museum had existed for some years as the successor to earlier permanent and temporary telecommunications heritage displays, going well back into Post Office days, in various buildings around central London. Although a popular attraction for groups from local schools, with several imaginative interactive displays, the museum's site offered little scope for expansion and further development, and was not easily accessible to most of the population outside London. Owing to relatively low attendances for a visitor attraction of this significance, the decision was made in 1997 to close and mothball the BT Museum until an alternative solution could be found.

Paradoxically, the closure was announced at the same time that BT Archives was moving to its new improved accommodation. Not surprisingly, this seemingly inconsistent approach to the overall management of its heritage attracted some internal comment. However, the reality was that the archives and the museum had never reported to the same part of the organisation at the same time. Although some overlap in activities and collecting policy was inevitable, and although the two teams worked collaboratively in some areas, the two institutions operated largely in isolation from one another. Furthermore, as the archives had always worked at developing an internal customer base in central core functions, emphasising its business support and compliance roles, the company chose not even to consider bundling the archives with the BT Museum when it came to close and mothball the latter.

Nevertheless, closing the BT Museum did not signal the company turning its back on its artefact collections. BT has always accepted an obligation to preserve these heritage assets, even though they did not have the statutory protection that covered the archives. Ultimately, however, analysis demonstrated no viable economic future for a stand-alone BT Museum that would do full justice to the extensive collections.

Furthermore, no internal solution was considered possible which would be sufficiently sustainable to protect the collections from the vagaries of future corporate restructuring and policy reviews.

It followed that for BT to fulfil its commitment to its heritage the collections needed to be managed in a

new and entirely different way. An obvious early consideration was to set up some kind of charitable trust to place the collections at arms length from BT, an approach adopted by other large corporate organisations. Charitable trust status for BT's solution has not been discounted for the future, but a stand-alone trust from the outset was not thought to be the most cost-effective, long-term strategy for BT to deal with the immediate issue. Furthermore, if an objective of the trust would have been to create a new museum or visitor centre, BT was well aware of the general agreement in the heritage sector that there were already too many museums competing for too few resources, particularly in the independent sector. BT did not want to add to this strain on funding by overseeing the foundation of yet another independent museum.

As a consequence, the overall collection had somehow to be regarded as a grouping of discrete, more manageable sub-collections. The real challenge was to accomplish this whilst ensuring their preservation and interpretation, without losing sight of their context and relationship to each other within the overall collection. This is, of course, a familiar concept to archives professionals and regular users of archives, but is perhaps less so when applied to a museum collection, particularly where necessity required that the constituent parts of the collection would be sited in different geographical locations.

At the same time, a significant opportunity was presented by the internet. If it was accepted that a single physical museum was not possible, then an alternative was to create its equivalent on the internet. This was also seen to be a perfect fit with BT's aim to provide innovative solutions to customers and to society at large using state of the art technology. It was also consistent with the company's new media and broadband focus.

After much consultation within the company and the heritage community, Connected Earth, BT's solution for its artefact heritage, was officially launched at the BT Tower in London in April 2002. This event was hosted by BT chairman Sir Christopher Bland, and featured a keynote speech by Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

The solution that BT put forward has two basic features. Firstly, a UK-wide network of partner museums spread around the country which are responsible for the physical stewardship of the dispersed BT collection of artefacts, a collaborative alliance of

institutions with a shared collection and a common interest. The second component, and the hub of the partners' network, is the 'virtual' museum on the internet ([www.connected-earth.com](http://www.connected-earth.com)). Today, a virtual museum is not such a startlingly original idea, and examples can easily be found on the web as 'museums' in their own right, or as a presence supporting our most familiar and best-loved museum institutions. In 2001, when the concept was first floated, however, practical examples were less evident. Even today, the strategy adopted by BT of a virtual museum at the centre of a network of partner physical museums is a unique application.

The two elements are managed within the overall Connected Earth brand, a stand-alone identity which provides an inclusive umbrella for participating museums to take forward – with BT – the whole field of the preservation and study of telecommunications heritage.

Ultimately, the newly configured physical collections will be accessible in purpose-built galleries from Edinburgh to Cornwall, ensuring that more people than ever before will be able to enjoy and learn from this important inheritance. It is now possible, not only to visit permanent, physical exhibitions, but also to visit the collection in cyberspace, enabling access, regardless of location or physical ability, via the Connected Earth museum on the internet.

This is the model for Connected Earth: a genuinely national, distributed collection, endowed by BT, but managed in partnership with museum and archives professionals, creating UK-wide access for research and interpretation and linked by a new museum on the internet.

### **Moving forward**

The Connected Earth initiative has been managed within BT in two distinct phases. The first phase was a two year implementation project within BT's Group Communications division which oversaw the negotiations with the partner museums, public launch of the initiative, design and publishing of the Connected Earth virtual museum, and dispersal of BT's artefacts collections.

Following the completion of the first phase of the project, responsibility for Connected Earth passed to the Company Secretary's Office (CSO) in the next phase to develop BT's approach to its heritage, by exploiting the expertise and synergies within BT Archives. Within BT, the heritage role has been bundled with BT Archives'

existing records and information management roles under the umbrella of a corporate memory function. In a business environment familiar with the concept of knowledge management this has a more immediate resonance than simple heritage. Outside of BT, Connected Earth and BT Archives retain their distinct identities, although both teams work collaboratively as the single voice for heritage issues. BT has never regarded the Connected Earth project as a quick fix solution to solve an immediate problem, but is genuinely anxious that the concept is a permanent success. The company recognises that fulfilling its long standing commitment to preserve the UK's telecommunications heritage is a continuing process. BT's ongoing commitments to Connected Earth are to maintain and develop the Connected Earth museum on the internet, extend educational resources, provide curatorial support across the distributed collection and manage all heritage issues which arise.

BT is particularly keen to see the Connected Earth network of partner museums work as a collaborative alliance to benefit the whole field of telecommunications heritage. BT remains a committed member of the Connected Earth partnership network, which meets three times a year to review progress and discuss policy issues. BT has also set up an email discussion list to sustain the relationship by exchanging information and ideas for interworking.

In addition, BT has set up a Consulting Group of senior company executives and external people from the heritage and public sectors, which meets twice annually. It is also currently investigating constituting a panel of experts from across the company and industry generally, to advise on which aspects of new and emerging technologies should be targeted for preservation as part of the future heritage of telecommunications.

### **The Heritage Policy**

Not unreasonably, BT is keen to maximise the return on its considerable investment in its heritage from positive public relations and media coverage, not only to enhance BT's reputation amongst opinion leaders in government, media and heritage sectors, but also to increase general public awareness of the UK's telecommunications heritage.

The marriage of the archives and museum activities has enabled BT to take an holistic approach to the management of all its heritage. It also provided an opportunity to ensure greater visibility externally to its vision

for telecommunications heritage by promoting its strategy externally as BT policy.

Consequently, the Board Community Support Committee, chaired by BT chairman Sir Christopher Bland, approved a new Heritage Policy in July last year which formalises the company's ongoing commitment as guardian of the UK's telecommunications legacy. Since then the Policy has been available for public scrutiny on the internet ([www.bt.com/archives](http://www.bt.com/archives)) and as a hard copy leaflet.

The Policy recognises that BT's heritage activity, encompassing both archives and artefact collections, is now perceived by the company as a permanent feature of the company's corporate responsibility programme. BT is a member of the Per Cent Club, a Business in the Community initiative involving more than 400 leading companies. The first phase of the project contributed considerably to BT's challenging commitment to allocate 1% of UK generated profit against charitable or non-profit making expenditure. The heritage team continues to work closely with other corporate responsibility activities, such as BT Education and Tate Online sponsorship, to meet this target.

The Policy details eight commitments to all its heritage collections in ensuring preservation and improving public access. The key features of BT's approach to managing its heritage are to maintain historical documents and records within the company, under the management of BT Archives, and to promote access to its physical artefacts online and at museums across the UK through its Connected Earth initiative.

It stresses BT's desire to work in partnership with others to achieve its heritage objectives for the good of the nation. Perhaps most significantly, it recognises that the task is ongoing, and that BT has a key role in ensuring the preservation of the heritage of emerging and future telecommunications technology.

### **Conclusion**

BT's new Heritage Policy acknowledges the work the company is engaged in to safeguard its unique heritage, and allows BT to publicise the commitment it has made to maintaining it as a key part of its corporate responsibility programme.

Rejecting the option of doing the bare minimum to discharge its responsibilities, BT has devised and implemented a highly effective and innovative solution for the long term

care and preservation on behalf of the nation of a unique heritage.

BT has acknowledged that fulfilling its obligations to its heritage is a critical part of being a genuinely socially responsible company, and has positioned its heritage activity within its corporate responsibility programme. By highlighting this contribution to society, BT has demonstrated that exploiting its heritage adds real value in supporting its business operations. In this manner, it has turned around what is commonly perceived in commercial terms as a negative liability into a positive business asset, in an original and permanent solution to bring incremental and lasting value.

**David Hay**  
**Head of Heritage**  
**and Corporate Memory**  
**BT Group plc**

# The National Archives Open Day 2004

## Operation Archives: D-Day to VE Day

Last year's National Archives Open Day took place on Saturday 18 September and was attended by 1,250 visitors. In order to mark the 60th anniversary of the Normandy landings, the theme chosen was D-Day to VE Day.

One of the main aims of Open Day is to attract new audiences, particularly families. We therefore developed activities that looked at life on the Home Front, as well as focusing on the military events that were taking place in the months leading to the liberation of Europe.

We started our planning in February. It is important to start early if you want to book contributors such as performers, workshop leaders and speakers. People working in a freelance capacity rely on this type of work and often have their diaries booked well in advance.

With over one thousand visitors expected, a big challenge for us was to provide sufficient activities within limited space. As many of the events had to take place in the conference or education rooms, numbers were limited. Talks and film screenings

could only accommodate 100 people, storytelling and 'meet the veteran' sessions just 60, while the capacity for art workshops was 30. We therefore decided to ticket all events although they were free.

We realised that there was the possibility of all tickets going to the people that arrived first so kept afternoon tickets back until lunchtime. Inevitably some people were disappointed but we had to balance this with the needs of the presenters and artists and the limited capacity of contained spaces.

Our aim was to introduce visitors to different aspects of the archives but also to offer events that were both educational and entertaining. As usual, the activities offered by the Preservation department proved the most popular. Under the guidance of conservators, children were able to seal their own secret messages and make their own ration-style notebook. Adults and children were fascinated by the real life stories told by D-Day veterans from the Royal Star and Garter Home in Richmond and also by a storyteller's interpretation of a child's wartime city life.

Other activities included dressing up in 1940s clothing, demonstrations by a food historian and dance demonstrations and instruction for anyone who wanted to join in.

A trail in the form of a D-Day Diary provided an educational activity for families. The trail took in eight areas around the building. Each trail point was themed with a "D", for example D is for Deception, Diet, Dress, Defence and Departure.

Within this theme we were able to incorporate elements on spies and espionage, evacuation, the Home Guard and wartime campaigns such as 'Make-do and mend' and 'Dig for Victory'. There was a wealth of



material to draw on, including posters and photographs as well as text based documents. Each trail point included a small display which offered families an interactive way of engaging with the documents while also offering something to interest adult visitors.

Key to the event's success was early planning and good communications between all departments taking part. For Open Day we really do depend on the co-operation of staff across all areas of The National Archives.

**Sue Barnard**  
Events and Exhibitions Co-ordinator  
The National Archives



## Standards and guidance

# The National Archives Standard for Record Repositories

In December 2004 The National Archives (TNA) published the Framework of Standards, a list of standards and best practice guidance, and The National Archives Standard on record repositories, which is The National Archives' main archival standard. They will be used to inform the inspection and advisory visits of the National Advisory Services.

The two publications were devised following a consultation exercise that many colleagues in the archives and information management sector participated in.

The general consensus was that colleagues were:

- (i) in favour of a general framework of standards that brought together recognised standards and accepted principles in all aspects of caring for and giving access to records
- (ii) content that the framework should be flexible, and useful to all types of custodians whether they work in public archive services or are private owners.

The components of the Framework will remain dynamic and we look forward to developing it with the archival community as new standards and guidelines are created.

The consultation exercise also emphasised that colleagues would like a single voice from The National

Archives on caring for records further than BS5454 2000. The TNA Standard delivers this bringing together the Historical Manuscripts Commission Standard and elements of the Beyond the PRO guidance. Although at first glance the TNA Standard does bear a resemblance in content and style to the former HMC Standard, its remit is far wider. The TNA Standard now applies equally to all groups of records; it includes guidance on the preservation of digital and electronic records; and it serves as a point of reference for all custodians of records aspiring to the best standards of access and storage.

This new Standard is the recognised benchmark for caring for records and providing access to them, and subscription to the Standard is valued by external bodies.

The National Advisory Services is reviewing how archive services and owners can subscribe to the Standard to make it a much simpler and straightforward process. With this in mind it remains essential for archivists

to get buy in from governing bodies to have a strategic vision to work towards achieving the Standard.

The Standard and Framework will come into reality in the next few months when members of the National Advisory Services team start inspecting against it. They are both living documents and will be reviewed if we feel and hear they do not meet the needs and demands of the sector in helping to secure funds to develop archival services and indeed build on existing excellent services.

Further information about The National Archives Standard for record repositories and the Framework of Standards is available on The National Archives' website at: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/)

**Katie Woolf**  
National Advisory Services  
The National Archives



# National Advisory Services – Sales Catalogue Monitoring Team

The Historical Manuscripts Commission, now part of the National Advisory Services at The National Archives, has long sought to track significant archival and manuscript material being sold privately or dispersed at auction. We do so as part of our core work of discovering, describing, safeguarding and promoting access to the United Kingdom's archival inheritance.

1  
A selection of catalogues from major auction houses and manuscript dealers

Since 1973, when we first began to advise the government Purchase Grant Fund at the Victoria and Albert Museum, we have monitored the manuscript market more systematically. Today, we regularly receive catalogues from all the major auction houses and from manuscript dealers across the UK – we took in catalogues from 50 different dealers in 2004. In monitoring catalogues, our aim is primarily to inform our wider advisory services, particularly in relation to grant-awarding bodies, but we are also able to alert repositories to reasonably substantial material which falls within their collecting policies which they might otherwise be unaware of.

Sales catalogue monitoring is therefore a key part of our intelligence-gathering. In the course of reading the catalogues we look out for items subject to statutory controls, such as manorial and tithe records, public records, parish registers and any other material which may be extra commercium. We encourage auctioneers and dealers to co-operate in observing the law.

Information recorded on the National Register of Archives (NRA) together with our files of collecting policies and other information about repositories'

1



holdings, indicates who is collecting what, and whom to notify about impending sales. Purchased items or groups of records appear in our annual survey of accessions to repositories and relevant information about them is added to the National Register of Archives. Where collections are dispersed through sale, we note this too on the NRA, keeping it as up to date as possible. We also hold some

records of the destination of material after sale, and can be of assistance in tracing dispersed collections.

## Sales and advisory services

Our electronic sales database holds information on material sold in the past decade, including estimated and hammer prices. The price data we collect informs our advisory services to the grant awarding bodies. The

MLA/Victoria and Albert Museum Purchase Grant Fund and PRISM Fund regularly consult us as expert advisers on purchase of groups of documents or archives. This sometimes enables us to see through the whole purchase process, from reading the catalogue, to notifying a repository of the sale, to commenting on a grant application and finally hearing of a successful outcome.

Obviously, the prices achieved for the sale of material from archives which have been broken up, which is largely what is found in dealers and auction catalogues, cannot be applied crudely to the sale of whole collections, where different precedents and considerations apply. Nevertheless, the information gained from the manuscript market enables us to take an informed general view of what is being asked for larger collections, particularly where specific groups of material within an archive have a particular valuation attached to them. This is helpful in dealing with the more substantial collections which are frequently offered for sale by private treaty and where repositories frequently apply to the Purchase Grant Fund or Heritage Lottery Fund for assistance.

We do not undertake the valuation of manuscript material, though we are always happy to comment informally on quoted prices in catalogues or collections offered for private sale where this would be helpful to purchasing repositories.

We can use the database to pull up examples of similar items sold in the past few years, and give price comparisons. Our advisory service can also offer general guidance about *douceurs* available in the case of private treaty sales to public repositories where there may be advantages to the vendor and the repository if the vendor would normally incur a tax liability in the course of the sale, or indeed, about the advantages of offering material which

#### Among the items purchased after notification this year were:

- Deed of gift from Sir Thomas Morgan et al to John Robynet of St Brides, 1490 (Gwent Record Office)
- Mordaunt family of Walton Hall, Warwicks: rental of Essex estates 1420; and manor of Caludon, Coventry: a 1749 letter and copy rent roll (Warwickshire County Record Office)
- Manor of Abbess Hall, Essex: accounts of Stephen Skynner 1745-74 (Essex Record Office)
- Nineteenth-century notebook, apparently a teacher's manual from Farnham Grammar School (Surrey History Centre)
- Sir Henry John Fanshawe Badeley, Baron Badeley, Clerk of the Parliaments (1874-1951): correspondence, papers, photographs and athletic trophies, including notes on his visit to the Nuremberg Trials (House of Lords Record Office)
- Plymouth Friends Pen and Pencil Society: album of sketches, poems and stories (Plymouth and West Devon Record Office)
- Sir Edward Elgar, composer: 38 letters and postcards to John W Austin. (Elgar Birthplace Museum)

might be pre-eminent in lieu of inheritance tax where appropriate.

#### Sales notifications

Monitoring sales catalogues is time consuming, and few repositories other than certain national institutions can hope to do it comprehensively in-house. We therefore provide a free notification service, telling collecting institutions about forthcoming sales which may be of interest.

In 2004, 804 lots or items were notified to 179 different repositories. Significant items which fall within an institution's collecting policy, or relate directly to material already in the archive, are notified by letter, or email if time is short.

It is not possible for us to note every historical document which appears for sale, and we have fairly strict criteria for what merits inclusion in the database and notifications. Published material is not included, and nor are sketchbooks or musical scores. Single items are not normally noted unless they are substantial or of early date. Examples of items notified and

purchased in the past few months are shown above.

Where there is an overlap in collecting policies, all relevant repositories are notified, but we make it clear where duplicate notifications have been issued, so that archivists can work together to secure material for one repository by agreement and avoid bidding against each another.

#### Keeping in touch

We rely a great deal on repositories to let us know the outcome of sales notifications. This helps us to keep track of the movement of manuscript material and to review and improve our services. Our notification letters are designed with a slip for return with information on the outcome, successful or otherwise. This can be a really helpful way of keeping in touch with salerooms and archivists.

Sometimes repositories which have not purchased can still give us useful

2  
The gothic dairy  
in the Red Book

### Case study: Funding a major purchase

Lancashire Record Office reversed the flow of British manuscripts abroad in one instance, by purchasing Humphrey Repton's 'Red Book' for Lathom House at Sotheby's New York in June 2004. Repton produced his Red Books as a marketing tool, using 'before and after' illustrations to recommend landscaping improvements to potential patrons. They are detailed and attractive documents, proposing such delights as the gothic dairy illustrated here.

Although he produced several such schemes for properties in the North West, no other Red Book for the region is at present known to be publicly accessible.

A coalition of funding bodies came together to support the purchase of the book, at a hammer price of \$75,000. As well as the Record Office's own funds, contributions came from the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the National Art Collections Fund, the



Heritage Lottery Fund, Friends of the National Libraries and Friends of Lancashire Archives. The book is being digitised, for maximum access, and has already been briefly exhibited at the Lathom Heritage Festival.

information. Occasionally the slips give us unwelcome news – the cry from the heart ‘purchase budget slashed’ crops up from time to time. But we also get success stories. We heard, for example, of a record office which did not pursue a notification but passed it to the estate office of a local landowner, who managed to return some stray documents to the fold. Persistence can have good results, even if there are insufficient funds to purchase – in several cases, record offices have made contact with those who purchased an item and managed to acquire copies of the documents so that the information they contain is made publicly available even if the original item is not.

#### Online sales monitoring

The advent of online autograph and manuscript sales has complicated our work considerably. We regularly review appropriate websites and notify according to our usual practice. However, the immense growth of eBay, as a purveyor of almost anything means that there is a new marketplace for documents, often sold with tight deadlines and poor descriptions. This has led to fears that quantities of important material may be being lost to those who might use them for research.

We now have a regular schedule for monitoring eBay. Our findings so far are quite reassuring in that we have not found that large quantities of significant material are regularly sold on the site. Each time we monitor eBay, a handful of items do appear, but many are of marginal importance. The number of items of significance is very small indeed. However, we are keeping a close eye on eBay at present, and will review our monitoring system should the quantities of material offered for sale increase noticeably. We are also looking into ways of working with the site owners to ensure that controls on the sale and export of archival items are respected.

#### The future of the sale market

Sales of archival material regularly spark the interest of national newspapers, and prices for plum collections can be very high. Literary material, in particular, commands a premium. The growth of online sales has given new impetus to concerns about the loss of important archival material.

During a recent survey of repositories which actively collect archival material we asked for information on purchase budgets. Of over 230 respondents, only 58 confirmed that they had any purchase budget at all, and of these only 18 had a fund of more than £5000; most hovered around the

### Case study: Perseverance pays off

The sales monitoring service notified Cambridgeshire Archives Service, Cambridge of the sale of a collection of 15 medieval deeds at Bonhams auctioneers in March 2003. The Record Office decided to bid for the items, with support from Friends of the National Libraries and the Purchase Grant Fund. They were unfortunately outbid, but decided to try at least to capture the content. The auctioneers had already been helpful in sending jpeg images of the deeds before the auction, and continued to assist the Record Office by forwarding a request for copies of the items to the purchaser.

The deeds had been bought by an American dealer, who responded to the request and kept in touch while the Record Office considered

mounting a fundraising campaign. Two deeds were sold from the collection during this interim period, but the bulk remained together. Cambridgeshire were then occupied with a different purchase appeal and were not able to act immediately, but after some months a very successful local fundraising effort was underway. The funding bodies also offered continued support and the deeds have recently been secured. In this case, the time between the first auction and the final purchase was unexpectedly helpful. The dealer was willing to sell at virtually no profit to himself, and due to the fall in the dollar in the intervening months, the eventual purchase price was actually slightly less than the amount the Record Office had been prepared to pay in 2003.

£1000 mark or below. These figures are further reduced by the number of respondents who stated that their purchase fund was part of a larger budget, either for collections care in general or for purchases across the collections in museum-based institutions. This suggests that very few repositories have the means to make regular purchases on the open market.

Many respondents emphasised that they did have other resources which could be tapped for assistance, including friends associations, and that they were prepared to undertake fundraising initiatives for major acquisitions. However, the overwhelming picture is of very limited funds available within repositories for routine acquisitions, as opposed to support for substantial one-off purchases. Very few archivists have the flexibility to be able to purchase less spectacular but evidentially significant material, such as the constant trickle of medieval and early-modern deeds sold by internet-based sales and other small dealers – but with these documents goes a wealth of information which is often rendered inaccessible if it is not

secured by an institution which can make it available for research.

In summary, what we can do for you:

- Advice on grant awarding bodies (see our leaflet at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archive/s/advice/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archive/s/advice/))
- Informal opinions on prices quoted for sale
- Notifications of material which may be of interest, whether in traditional or online sales
- Acting as a central collecting point for information and opinions from the profession on issues relating to the sale of archives, and articulating it in the appropriate national forums

#### Contact us for further information and advice

The sales team currently comprises Melinda Haunton (team leader), James Travers, Rachel Bell and Liz Hart, under the direction of Norman James.

We can be contacted at [sales@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:sales@nationalarchives.gov.uk), or by phone on 020 8392 5330 x 2612.

### Stop Press: Macclesfield Psalter saved for the nation

The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge has been successful in its fundraising campaign to save the Macclesfield Psalter from export to the USA. It has raised £1.7 million to secure it for the nation. This has been made possible by major grants from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and the National Art Collections Fund and by a generous response from the public.

# The National Archives Approved Electronic Records Management Systems – top 10 questions

## 1 What does it mean if an Electronic Records Management (ERM) system is TNA “Approved”?

The simple explanation is that a National Archives “approved” ERM system is an ERM product that has been evaluated by The National Archives (TNA) as being compliant with the generic requirements for ERM systems. This is not quite as straightforward as it sounds as there are two sets of generic requirements for ERM systems published by TNA, the first version was published in 1999 and the second in 2002.

In 1999 TNA, with collaboration from other government departments and agencies, published a set of generic requirements for ERM systems. When the requirements were initially published this type of software was in its infancy and it was felt that there was a need to specify the type of product that would satisfy the needs of central government for managing its electronic records.

TNA also developed an evaluation scheme (often called the approval scheme or testing scheme) to indicate which products were compliant with the 1999 requirements. The evaluation scheme was established to provide a level of assurance to government departments about the degree to which ERM products could meet the ERM requirements.

In 2002 TNA published a new version of the requirements. The revised requirements reflected developments in information legislation and standards; these included ISO 15489, EU Model Requirements for ERM Systems (MoReq), the e-government interoperability framework (incorporating the ERM metadata standard), Freedom of Information Act

2000 and Data Protection Act 1998. It was felt that there was still a need to provide re-assurance about the degree to which ERM systems could meet the requirements and that TNA should continue evaluating ERM systems against the 2002 Requirements.

## 2 How does TNA decide which products will be successfully “Approved”?

TNA only approves ERM systems that demonstrate the capability of meeting all the Mandatory “Core” Requirements, in section A of the Functional Requirements document. There are also a number of Highly Desirable and Desirable Requirements and three optional modules, in section B of the Functional Requirements document. An ERM system does not need to meet any of the discretionary requirements or optional modules to be approved. However, approval of an ERM system in respect of any or all of the optional modules is conditional upon approval being obtained against the Mandatory Core Requirements.

TNA’s decision to “approve” an ERM system is based on the outcome of the evaluation process. The evaluation process involves three stages and at each stage TNA make decisions about the capability of the ERM system to meet the generic requirements. The three stages are as follows:

- 1 – Submission
- 2 – Test
- 3 – Test Report

**Submission:** Suppliers provide written evidence and screenshots to demonstrate how their product meets every Mandatory Core Requirement. At this stage a member of TNA’s test team evaluates the submission and decides whether further information is

required, and whether it is possible to proceed to test.

There are instances where even though further information has been provided TNA’s test team feel that the supplier has not provided sufficient evidence to indicate the product could meet all the Mandatory Requirements. In these situations the supplier is asked to re-submit a submission document following further development work.

**Test:** The test takes place at a UK location of the ERM system supplier’s choice and using a system setup provided by the ERM system supplier. Those present on the test are three TNA test team representatives plus representatives from the ERM system supplier. The test is conducted manually using standard test scripts published on TNA’s website.

The purpose of the test is to demonstrate to TNA that the ERM system is capable of providing all the functionality required by the 2002 Requirements for ERM systems. The test scripts aim to assess the ERM system’s ability to demonstrate compliance with the full set of Mandatory Core Requirements concurrently without any adverse effects, therefore they are always performed sequentially.

The final decision regarding approval is based on the observations on test and the analysis of the results during the test period when writing the Test Report.

**Test Report:** A full report detailing the performance of the ERM system on test is written by the test team members present on the test. The report indicates the degree to which all the Mandatory, Highly Desirable and Desirable Core Requirements were met



and any functional and / or usability issues that were encountered during the test period; the report provides similar information for Optional Modules that the ERM system has been tested against. Once the report has been completed it is sent to the ERM system supplier so that they can add any appropriate comments.

Approved products are listed on TNA's website and their reports are made available to records managers in Central Government. The ERM system supplier is also provided with a formal letter of approval signed by the TNA director responsible for the evaluation programme. If TNA is unable to approve an ERM system the Programme Manager informs the ERM system supplier of the decision.

### **3 Does TNA "approve" all ERM systems entering the evaluation process?**

TNA does not "approve" all ERM systems entering the evaluation process. As the evaluation process is a staged process a decision may be made at any stage of the process to withhold approval if the Test Team feels that the ERM system does not have the appropriate functionality to be compliant with the Mandatory Core Requirements.

For example, there have been several occasions when TNA has made the decision not to proceed to test because the submission document provided by the ERM system supplier has not indicated that the product will meet all the Mandatory Core Requirements. There have also been several occasions when TNA has decided to withhold approval following a test as the ERM system has not demonstrated the capability to meet all the Mandatory Core Requirements.

### **4 What happens if a new version of a product is released? Is that approved too?**

TNA approval relates only to the version of an ERM system that was successfully evaluated during the test period. TNA approval is based upon the test conditions provided and changes to the environment and / configuration may produce different results; the setup includes the configuration of the ERM system, the operating system, the database, the email client and the web browser.

As a general rule, if an ERM system or product set is already approved, minor product versions (e.g. service pack releases) will not be eligible for re-evaluation. The reason for this is because the changes that will have

been made are not likely to introduce new functionality. Major new releases may be submitted for evaluation. TNA would normally expect the standard version numbering conventions used in the software industry to mesh neatly with this proviso, but any issues arising from it will be treated on their own merits following discussions with the supplier concerned.

### **5 What is the benefit of having an ERM system over using paper system or using existing computer software? Do we really need to buy special software?**

The recent initiatives for Information Age Government have led to increasing numbers of records being created electronically. As new forms of service delivery are being developed to enable the citizen and business to conduct business electronically, an increasing number of electronic transactional records are being produced. As the types of electronic records are becoming more sophisticated it is harder to manage these records by printing them to paper or using existing computer software. Some of the difficulties of managing records produced from electronic transactions are:

- staff forget to print and file significant documents
- e-mail messages are deleted from servers without any prior archiving
- website and intranet documents are not effectively controlled as dated versions
- multi-media documents cannot be printed without loss of information.

Essentially, if electronically produced records are not managed using specialist electronic software there is a higher risk of them being lost, destroyed or corrupt.

Many of TNA's Requirements for ERM systems were specifically drawn up to ensure that the records that are retained and managed electronically can be demonstrated to be reliable and authentic. However, there are also some additional benefits that may be achieved through the implementation of an ERM system, for example:

- greater access to corporate information
- collaboration across workgroups and the enterprise
- knowledge management across sectors of government by making reliable information available for sharing, extraction and summarisation
- compliance with specialist legislation by demonstrating the authenticity of records and supporting legal admissibility.

- managing information as an asset, encouraging its collection, dissemination and sharing
- evidence-based policy making by providing reliable and authentic information for the evaluation of past actions and decisions.

### **6 Will buying a TNA approved product solve all our records management problems?**

The advantage of acquiring an ERM system approved by TNA is that an organisation can be confident that the product has the capacity to deliver full electronic records management as defined by TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM system. However, procuring and installing the software without considering the information management requirements of the organisation will not deliver records management until appropriate processes and business rules have been established to ensure the ERM solution will deliver effective electronic records management.

In order to ensure an organisation has appropriate records management it must manage its information corporately. To do this it will be necessary to develop a relevant file-plan to organise its records, ensuring that it is supported by appropriate disposal schedules. In addition it is necessary to consider the appropriate access model that allows for the greatest possible access to the records whilst using access permissions to safeguard against unauthorized personnel accessing sensitive records. All of these can be implemented using an ERM system, but initially they will require careful planning.

To ensure that the ERM system is used to deliver an appropriate level of records management within an organisation it is important that careful consideration is given to the change management issues involved. The success of an ERM system implementation depends on the level of user acceptance and this will only be achieved through appropriate communication and training.

### **7 What if our preferred product is not on TNA's ERM system "Approved" list?**

Although an organisation might use TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems as a basis for their own requirements for an ERM system, it should be noted that organisations are not mandated to use TNA approved ERM systems. When producing a statement of requirements organisations may find TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems a



useful benchmark but they should consider carefully where their Mandatory Requirements differ from those in the TNA's Core Requirements section. There is also a need for organisations to consider whether those requirements listed as Highly Desirable or Desirable are actually considered to be mandatory for the purposes of their own procurement exercise. Performing this type of exercise should help to establish the emphasis an organisation wishes to place on a product obtaining TNA ERM system approval.

Where an organisation feels that there is a significant correlation between its own requirements and TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems then TNA's approved ERM system list may provide assurance regarding product compliance issues against TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems. Where an organisation finds that this is the case but their preferred product is not on TNA's approved list they should try to ascertain the following:

- Does the ERM system supplier have plans to submit their product to be evaluated by TNA?
- Has the ERM system supplier already submitted their product to be evaluated by TNA?

There is no guarantee that a product waiting in TNA's evaluation process will

be approved, but the fact that they are in the process may indicate that they are interested in meeting TNA's 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems.

If these questions are asked it should be borne in mind that there is about a two to three month gap between an ERM system supplier sending TNA a submission document and the submission being evaluated, and another two month gap between the time when the submission is evaluated and the time when the test will take place.

Some organisations may have preferred ERM systems that are not approved and the supplier is not proposing to apply for approval. In these circumstances the organisation should consider asking the supplier to provide evidence of the degree to which their product conforms with the desired requirements or undertake appropriate compliance / acceptance testing as part of their procurement exercise.

#### **8 Are there other standard requirements for ERM systems?**

Other organisations have developed and published requirements for ERM systems. The other two most widely used sets of requirements for ERM systems are DoD 5015.2 and MoReq. Some people also consider ISO 15489 when assessing, however this standard

is really an implementation methodology rather than a set of requirements to be used when procuring an ERM system.

DoD 5015.2 is a United States Department of Defence (DoD) standard. It is primarily aimed at organisations related to the DoD but as it is also endorsed by the American National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). This standard is widely used within the United States as the benchmark that should be used when selecting an ERM system. A compliance testing programme is run to test the extent to which products meet the requirements. Both the requirements and the compliance testing programme differ to the TNA's requirements, in part this is due to US juridical practice and differences in legislation. More information on DoD 5015.2 can be found at: <http://jtc.fhu.disa.mil/recmgt/index.htm>.

MoReq is a European standard for ERM standards. This standard was developed by a part of the European Commission called European Commission Enterprise DG's interchange of data between administrations (IDA). This organisation led a programme to develop both functional and non-functional requirements relating to ERM systems. The requirements that were produced are generic and were designed for use

by both public and private sector organisations. More information about MoReq can be found at: <http://europa.eu.int/ida/en/document/2303>.

### 9 How will the evaluation scheme change in the future?

The evaluation scheme has stimulated the software industry to produce products to meet the 2002 requirements for the public sector. Given this positive outcome and with the rollout of solutions in user organisations about to increase significantly in 2005/2006, the evaluation scheme will have achieved its main value for the public sector.

Therefore the current phase of the evaluation scheme, based on the 2002 requirements will be completed in 2005.

It would be appropriate to review and consider revision of the requirements in 2005 as they will be three years old but a wider range of options will be considered for the following phase for 2007 on.

ERM systems are now significant projects in the portfolio of many public sector organisations. Typically they have long rollout schedules involving culture and business process changes with on-going benefits realisation and process redesign phases. The indications are that rollout to users is increasing significantly in 2005 and 2006.

For the software products industry, the programme will cease to evaluate further products but provides the opportunity for engaged suppliers to enter the evaluation scheme with new expressions of interest up to the end of March 2005. There is also a deadline of the end of June 2005 for fully worked submissions prior to testing.

The programme will maintain a usefulness for public sector organisations in several ways. The list of approved products will be kept accessible.

The 2002 requirements will be kept accessible for any public sector organisation to tailor and augment to meet their needs. Indeed a requirements rationale document is under development and this will assist use of the requirements specifications. The published test scripts will remain accessible as a tool for any project to use.

Given, as explained above, that the requirements and the scheme would be due for revision in 2005, a new

phase is envisaged from 2007. It should be noted that the programme has achieved international recognition especially for the common, generic requirements for ERM systems (the 2002 requirements). Building on this, TNA is participating in the EU DLM (Document Lifecycle Management) Forum and there is a possibility of setting up an EU de facto standard (MoReq2) and an associated compliance testing regime with an appropriate organisation, to take the place of the TNA scheme. Other options may also be explored.

### 10 What publications have TNA produced to support organisations who are implementing an ERM System?

TNA has published various guidance and toolkits that support the activities that an organisation should consider when implementing an ERM system. All the guidance published by TNA is available on its website: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/).

Examples of existing guidance that may be of assistance when implementing an ERM system include:

- 2002 Requirements for ERM Systems: Volume 4 Implementation Guidance (this provides advice on the technical issues involved in implementation)
- Business classification scheme [Fileplan] design

There is also some guidance currently under development that may be of assistance when implementing an ERM system, including:

- Requirements Rationale Document (this will provide an explanation of each Functional Requirement, illustrative examples and links to the Test Script which tests the requirement)
- Records Management Audit Manual (this will detail how implementation can be assessed and monitored in relation to Section 4 (6) of the Freedom of Information Act)

In addition TNA's Functional Requirements for ERM systems can be accessed at: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/reqs2002/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/reqs2002/)

**Eleanor Russell**  
**National Advisory Services**  
**The National Archives**

# The National Archives' Appraisal Policy: implications for digital records

The National Archives' Appraisal Policy was published at the end of August 2005. It is available on The National Archives' website, together with the Background Paper and Additional Appraisal Procedures which accompanied the draft policy circulated for public consultation.

Please see:  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/appraisal.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/appraisal.htm).

The Grigg system of review has ordered the transfer of historical records to The National Archives (TNA) since the 1950's and the Appraisal Policy was developed in order to determine whether, and if so, how, it should be modernised. Briefly, the central conclusion reached in the Appraisal Policy was that the main elements of the Grigg system *'are not practical for assessing the archival value of digital records'*; but that they be retained *'as the means to safeguard the continuing transfer of records in all other media to The National Archives'* as long as they are needed to comply with section 3(4) of the Public Records Act.

In deciding how to appraise digital records, the policy commits TNA to the adoption of some of the principles of macro-appraisal. Macro-appraisal is defined in the policy as *'assessing the value of records at a government, departmental or unit level rather than at an individual document level'*.

The policy endorses macro-appraisal to the extent that it *'encourages government-wide or organisation-wide analysis of functions as a guide to identifying records of value for business and archival purposes'*. The policy envisages a move towards the development of generic archival appraisal guidance for categories of records, such as those produced by similar types of departments or those produced by activities common to many departments such as research papers or inspection reports. These can ultimately be used to guide both digital

and paper appraisal providing some consistency in selection criteria. Such an approach may be characterised as macro-appraisal plus categorisation, in which understanding the functional remit of departments is one element in the appraisal process, but assessment of the importance of functions and activities is not the main means of determining archival value.

The implementation stage is now proceeding with a key focus on the application of the macro-appraisal principles in the Appraisal Policy to the range of digital records we expect to need to appraise. The impact on the composition of the records selected for the digital archive as a result of the adoption of a more high level and strategic approach is growing clear and three main elements in the new approach are emerging.

Firstly, The National Archives will adopt a differentiated approach to different types of government departments.

The National Archives expects to develop different procedures for appraising the digital records of central institutions, i.e. those closely involved in high-level policy-development, on the one hand, and executive and operational bodies on the other. We are likely to see central institutions (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, HM Treasury, Home Office etc) as being the most important for policy development and to therefore limit the extent to which policy development is traced in subordinate and /or executive departments.

We therefore expect a reduction in the detail which might be captured through review of any digital equivalents of registered file series created by agencies. However, The National Archives also wishes to ensure that the digital archive documents, as the paper archive does currently, the way agencies and other departments implemented policy. To that end we will develop a common approach to similar types of executive and operational agencies and Non-

Departmental Public Bodies etc. such as those regulating the private sector, or museums, or those making research grants. The National Archives will suggest common ways to handle the records of similar agencies, so ensuring that similar organisations are treated consistently for archival purposes.

Secondly, The National Archives will implement a programme to develop generic archival disposition rules for types of records common across government. The National Archives already provides guidance for disposal of administrative records commonly used across departments, this analysis would extend that guidance to records of historical value. The following list indicates some record 'types':

- Committee papers
- Inspection reports
- Project documentation
- Scientific and technical research papers.

Finally, client managers are looking at new ways of appraising datasets, again through making initial assessments across the whole of government of areas where data of significant research value is created.

This work is proceeding through consultation: within TNA, with historians and archivists represented on TNA Management Board's Records Appraisal and Selection sub-group, and through a working group for Departmental Record Officers.

Any comments or enquiries should be addressed to:  
[helen.mercer@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:helen.mercer@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

**Helen Mercer**  
Appraisal Policy Project Manager  
The National Archives





Seamless Flow, which will integrate and automate processes for managing electronic records throughout their lifecycle, from creation, appraisal, selection and transfer from government departments to preservation and dissemination by TNA. The further development of PRONOM will be an integral part of this programme: planned enhancements over the next two to three years include automated technology watch, preservation planning, and migration control services.

In order to maximise the value of PRONOM, TNA welcomes the input and participation of all interested parties. This does not require major resources: a very practical way to contribute is by submitting new information for inclusion in the database. In particular, TNA is keen to collaborate with all who have specialist knowledge of particular types of electronic record, such as scientific data formats and software tools. Information can easily be submitted

using an online form, and all sources are fully acknowledged. Further information about PRONOM, including the latest news on new developments, is available from the PRONOM website at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pronom/).

**Adrian Brown**  
Digital Preservation Department  
The National Archives

# The National Archives is consulting on a new Custodial Policy for digital records

Last year's consultation on new archives legislation proposed a number of updates to the Public Records Act 1958 to better support the management of digital records.

We have decided to proceed with this new Custodial Policy irrespective of the eventual timing of new legislation to promote the survival of vital historical records, please see [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/custody/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/custody/).

TNA has no power to shorten the normal statutory deadline for archival material to reach us: this is set at 30 years by section 3(4) of the 1958 Act. The main thrust of the Policy is to confirm the roles and responsibilities of The National Archives and Government Departments to take care of the records in changing technological circumstances. This duty derives from the Public Records Act 1958.

Irrespective of which organisation is holding the records, access to the information contained in them will be determined by the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the

Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 1992 (2004 revision pending).

In some other countries, there have been experiments with distributed custody of historical resources. Where this involves the continued holding of archival material by the creating organisation, this is sometimes referred to as the "post-custodial model". This will only be pursued for parts of the national archival collection in exceptional circumstances.

These circumstances might include where there is a compelling continuing business need for the creating Department to retain access to its material and technical or cost constraints rendering the holding of the material by both impracticable. An example might be a complex meteorological or geographic database. It is envisaged that the Policy will be followed by bi-lateral transfer agreements between The National Archives and Public Record Bodies. These will set out the timing of the transfer of their records to us, bearing

in mind the security and other considerations outlined in Section 7 of the Policy affecting their business and its information.

Where it is not possible for some good reason for the records to be transferred to the archives within 10 years of creation, Departments must take steps to ensure the records have the same standard of care they would have had in the archives. Alternatively, where the records are required for an extended period for business purposes but are not worthy of permanent preservation, it is important that Departments follow the advice of The National Archives in their treatment.

Comments are welcome before 11 March 2005.

**Malcolm Todd**  
Head of Standards, Digital Records Management  
The National Archives

# Recently released useful publications

## Publications from The National Archives

### The National Archives Standard for Record Repositories

The Standard is the recognised benchmark on caring for records and providing access to them.  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/repositories.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/framework/repositories.htm)  
See page 29 for more information

### Freedom of Information – guidance on deposited public records

This guidance gives advice to government departments and places of deposit on how to manage deposited public records with regard to the Freedom of Information Act.  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/foi/pdf/foi\\_guide.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/foi/pdf/foi_guide.pdf)

### Custodial Policy for Digital Records (draft)

The main thrust of this policy is to confirm the roles and responsibilities of The National Archives and Government Departments to take care of the records in changing technological circumstances. This document is currently open for consultation. See page 39 for more information  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/custody/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/custody/)

## Future Publications from The National Archives

### Operational Selection Policies

Operational selection policies (OSPs) apply the criteria set out in the Acquisition Policy to the records of individual departments and agencies or to records relating to a cross-departmental theme. There are two OSPs currently out to consultation:  
**OSP 30:** Government and people: the interaction of the state with the citizen  
**OSP 31:** Post 16 Education, 1974–1988  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/ospintro.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/ospintro.htm)

### Preparation of records for transfer to the Public Record Office

This Standard – a best practice benchmark for all organisations transferring records to The National Archives or other approved places of deposit for public records – is currently being revised.

## Publications from other organisations

### Department for Constitutional Affairs

#### • Freedom of Information: Guidance on Procedures and Exemptions

Guidance for government department officials (to help with responses to information requests) and public authority officials and the general public (as a reference tool and for general interest).  
[www.foi.gov.uk/guidance/index.htm](http://www.foi.gov.uk/guidance/index.htm)

#### • Guidance on the application of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004

New guidance on the FOI fees regime. Archivists may find section 5, which refers to publication schemes and cover for information services provided by archives services, particularly useful.  
[www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm](http://www.foi.gov.uk/feesguide.htm)

### Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – Environmental Information Regulations 2004

The latest Environmental Information Regulations are available at  
[www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2004/20043391.htm](http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2004/20043391.htm)

### UK Information Commissioner – FOI Awareness Guidance

Awareness Guidance 14  
– International Relations

Awareness Guidance 15  
– The Economy

Awareness Guidance 16  
– Investigations

Awareness Guidance 17  
– Law Enforcement

Awareness Guidance 18  
– Public Audit

Awareness Guidance 19  
– Section 38 Health and Safety

Awareness Guidance 20  
– Prejudice and Adverse Affect

Awareness Guidance 21  
– The duty to confirm or deny

Awareness Guidance 22  
– Vexatious and Repeated

Awareness Guidance 23  
– Advice and Assistance

Awareness Guidance 24  
– Policy Formulation, Ministerial Communications, Law Officers' Advice, and the Operation of Ministerial Private Office

Awareness Guidance 26  
– Communication with Her Majesty and the Awarding of Honours

Awareness Guidance 27  
– Prohibitions on Disclosure

[www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=1024](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=1024)

### National Preservation Office – The Prevention and Treatment of Mould Outbreaks in Collections

This leaflet promotes a better understanding of how biological organisms function, alongside advice on control measures, storage guidelines and treatment of mould outbreaks.  
[www.bl.uk/services/npo/publicationsleaf.html](http://www.bl.uk/services/npo/publicationsleaf.html)

### Museums, Libraries and Archives Council – Learning for Change: Workforce Development Strategy

The 2004 Workforce Development Strategy identifies a range of actions designed to enhance and support the sector's workforce.

[www.mla.gov.uk/information/publications/00pubs.asp](http://www.mla.gov.uk/information/publications/00pubs.asp)

## Contacts

# Contacts and staff news

### Staff changes

#### **National Advisory Services Department:**

Amy Warner has joined the department from the Royal Historical Society. Catherine Guggiari has joined from the Reader Information Services Department at The National Archives and Rosie Logiudice has joined from the Record Copying Department.

#### **Records Management Department:**

Teresa Bastow has become Head of FOI Implementation Unit. Carole-Ann Montgomery has joined the department as a Records Management Executive. Victoria Davis has joined as an Accessions Administrator. In the Client Management Unit, Jill Brassington now has responsibility for DEFRA and its agencies, the Forestry Commission, DFID and the British Council. Jo Lancaster is client manager responsible for DCMS, museums and galleries, Inland Revenue, HM Customs and Excise. Val Traylen has left The National Archives. Mark Jarvis has taken over her work with the Home Office.

### Contacts

Tel: 020 8876 3444 (followed by staff extension)  
Fax: 020 8392 5286

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

#### **National Advisory Services**

Enquiries to [nas@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:nas@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Katie Woolf, Communications and Advocacy Manager  
x 2380

#### **Advice on places of deposit and public records**

Advice on issues relating to the management of public records in approved places of deposit, including disposal, legislation, standards for storage and access: Steven Jones, Head of Archive Inspection Services  
x 5318  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/advice/pod.htm](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives/advice/pod.htm)

#### **Advice on non-public records**

- Advice to all owners and custodians of non-public records on standards for storage of and access to private archives
  - Advice to grant awarding bodies
  - Sales monitoring
  - Liaison with regional archive councils and regional agencies
- Dr Norman James, Director of HMC Advisory services  
x 2615

#### **Regional and home country 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

#### **Electronic Records Management**

Enquiries to [e-records@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:e-records@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Ian Macfarlane, Head of Electronic Records Management Development Unit  
x 5366  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords)



### **Records Management outside central government**

Enquiries to [rmadvisory@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:rmadvisory@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Advice on developing effective information and records management systems for paper and electronic records:  
Richard Blake, Head of Records Management Advisory Service  
x 5208

### ***Records management in government departments***

Enquiries to [records.management@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:records.management@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Meg Sweet, Head of Records Management Department  
x 5315

Kelvin Smith, Head of Cataloguing and Accessions Unit  
x 2303

Howard Davies, Head of Inspection and Client Management Unit  
x 2357

Malcolm Todd, Project Manager: Sustainability of electronic records  
x 5340

Stuart Abraham, Access Manager  
x 5346

### ***Key contacts in other National Archives departments***

#### **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](mailto:susan.healy@nationalarchives.gov.uk)  
x 2305  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy)

#### **Digital Preservation issues**

Enquiries to [digital-archive@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:digital-archive@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

David Glover, Head of Archive Services and Digital Preservation  
x 5257  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/preservation)

#### **Conservation and preservation of traditional materials**

Enquiries to [conservation-preservation@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:conservation-preservation@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Mario Aleppo, Head of Conservation  
x 5263

#### **Storage of records**

Tom Gregan, Head of Archive Production Service  
x 5288

#### **Copyright and intellectual property issues**

Tim Padfield, Copyright & Policy Manager  
x 5381  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/legal/copyright.htm](http://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, Copyright & Policy Manager  
x 5381

**Social inclusion and diversity issues**

Including online and cataloguing initiatives and The National Archives' User Advisory group:  
Rachel Hasted, Social Inclusion Project Manager  
x 2531

**Archive Awareness Campaign initiatives**

Lucy Fulton, Archive Awareness Campaign Officer  
x 5237

**Education, learning and access, schools and universities**

Events, exhibitions and outreach programmes for schoolchildren and undergraduates, Learning Curve and other online initiatives:  
Tom O'Leary, Head of Education & Interpretation Department  
x 5298

**Academic publications and development of material for the higher education and lifelong learning sectors**

Vanessa Carr, Head of Department Research, Knowledge & Academic Services  
x 2212

**Public enquiries about records held at The National Archives**

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