

## Press Release

9 December 2013

### **The National Archives announces first ever Accredited Archive Services**

The National Archives and the UK Archive Service Accreditation Committee today announced the first archive services to achieve *Archive Service Accreditation* - the new UK wide quality standard for archive services.

The scheme defines good practice and identifies agreed standards within the archive sector across the UK. It also offers a benchmark for measuring performance, recognising achievement and driving improvement within the sector.

**Melinda Haunton, Programme Manager, Archive Service Accreditation** said:

*"We are immensely pleased to make these first awards to archive services in England, which recognise the part all these services have played in piloting the scheme as well as their strengths as individual services. We look forward to seeing the first awards made in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the coming months."*

The newly accredited archive services demonstrated that they reached the national standards relating to management and resourcing; the care of their unique collections and the service they offer to their diverse users. The archive services are:

- Cumbria Archive Service
- Exeter Cathedral Archives
- Media Archive of Central England
- Network Rail Archives
- Tyne and Wear Archives
- Worcestershire Archive Service

**Speaking about the first award cohort, Chair of the Archive Service Accreditation Committee, Bruce Jackson,** commented:

*"What these services have in common is that they have seized opportunities and made the most of their situation. In some cases, those opportunities were very large, such as a new building which allowed the service to review its whole approach to collections care and target audiences.*

*In other cases smaller opportunities were offered. For example, they experimented with new audiences or made incremental improvements to their premises. But in all cases the opportunities were taken."*

Archive Service Accreditation has been developed in partnership with the archive sector and its stakeholders and is supported by a UK partnership of Archives and Records Association, Archives and Records Association Wales, The Welsh Government through Museums Archives and Libraries Wales, National Records of Scotland, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Scottish Council on Archives, and The National Archives. The assessor body for Archive Service Accreditation for archives services in England is The National Archives.

### **Ends**

For interview requests, contact The National Archives' press office on 0208 392 5277 or e-mail [Angela.Owusu@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Angela.Owusu@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Notes to Editors**

For more information see <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation.htm>

### **Archive Service Accreditation**

- Archive Service Accreditation is the UK standard for Archive Services. It defines good practice and identifies agreed standards, thereby encouraging and supporting development.
- It is supported by a UK wide partnership of The National Archives, National Records of Scotland, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, the Welsh Government through Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales, Archives and Records Association, Scottish Council on Archives, and Archives and Records Council Wales
- Archive Service Accreditation is managed by the Archive Service Accreditation Committee. The committee comprises nominated members from the UK partnership and experienced archive professionals of high regard with sector peers and who have been recruited through open competition
- It replaces The National Archives' *Standard for Record Repositories* and its self-assessment programme for local authority archives in England and Wales.
- It will become the basis for The National Archives's ongoing relationship with places of deposit.

- The National Archives, the National Records of Scotland, Scottish Council on Archives, the Welsh Government through Museums Archives and Libraries Wales and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland will act as assessor bodies in their home nations, supporting good practice and service development.
- Designed to dovetail with other closely related frameworks and standards already in use in the archive, museum and library sectors

**Accredited archive services are:**

- Externally recognised for their good performance in all aspects of service delivery
- Sustainable and robust, ensuring the long term acquisition, preservation and accessibility of our archive heritage
- Adaptive, relevant and resilient in a changing internal and external environment
- Clear about their mission, ensuring effective planning, decision making and optimal use of resources
- Responsive to all their stakeholders and trusted in the management of their unique collections
- Supported by expert staff within clear and effective governance structures

**About The National Archives**

For the record, for good...The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archive of the UK government and England and Wales, The National Archives looks after and makes available to the public a collection of historical records dating back over 1,000 years, including records as diverse as Domesday Book and MI5 files.

Our 21st-century role is to collect and secure the future of the record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible as possible. The National Archives do this by devising technological solutions to ensure the long-term survival of public records and working to widen access to our collection. It also advises on information management across government, publishes all UK legislation, manages Crown copyright and leads the archive sector. Since 2011, The National Archives has had responsibility for leading in the development of the archive sector in England.