



**THE LORD CHANCELLOR'S
FORUM ON HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS AND
ACADEMIC RESEARCH**

Date: Friday 30th January 2015
Time: 11.30am – 3.30pm
Venue: Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London
Chair: Master of the Rolls, Lord Dyson
Minutes: Trish Humphries
Members:

Dr Elizabeth Lomas
Dr Bendor Grosvenor
Dr Ian Mortimer
Mr Clive Cheesman
Ms Lesley Ferguson

Non-members:

Mr Jeff James, Chief Executive & Keeper, The National Archives
Mr Nick Kingsley, Head of Archives Sector Development,
The National Archives
Mr Philip Gale, Acting Head of Private Archives Team, The National Archives
Mr Clem Brohier, Chief Operating Officer, The National Archives
Mr Peter Farr, Head of the Master of the Rolls' Private Office

	Welcome and Introductions
	Lord Dyson welcomed members to the fourteenth meeting of the Lord Chancellor's Forum on Historical Manuscripts and Academic Research and advised that he would have to leave the meeting at lunchtime due to other commitments. Dr Elizabeth Lomas would then take the Chair for the remainder of the meeting Mr Jeff James, Chief Executive and Keeper of The National Archives, was welcomed to his first meeting, together with Ms Lesley Ferguson, who had recently been appointed to the Advisory Council and had agreed to represent the Council on the Forum. Mr Philip Gale was attending in his capacity as Acting Head of Private Archives Team, following the recent retirement of Dr Norman James. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Christopher Ridgway and Ms Hillary Bauer, another new Council member who would be joining the Forum.

1.	Minutes and Matters Arising
	The Minutes of the previous meeting, held on 13th June 2014 were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record of discussions and decisions taken. A summary update, which had been circulated to members following the cancellation of the November meeting was also noted.
1.1	<i>1.2 Future Objectives and Priorities for the Private Archives Team</i> Mr Kingsley advised that an internal funding bid had been submitted to take forward the proposed survey on philanthropic archives. It was hoped that, if the bid was successful, the project would commence very soon. A paper summarising the scope of the project was circulated to members for information.
1.2	<i>5. Manuscripts of Daily Life</i> Dr Mortimer advised that he has been asked to take over as Chair of the Friends of Devon Archives later this year, and would hope to be able to take the project forward at that time. A pilot project focusing on Devon and Cornwall had been suggested and would be discussed in more detail with Mr Kingsley. Items from November summary update:
1.3	<i>Acceptance in Lieu</i> Mr Gale advised that there were no new cases to report, and provided a brief update on the cases which had been considered in November.
1.4	<i>De-accessioning</i> Mr Kingsley advised that comments provided by Forum members had been taken on board. Members acknowledged the current difference between museums and archives regarding the disposal of items such as pictures, but felt that there should be a more standardised approach. Mr Kingsley advised that consideration would also be given to the possible establishment of an organisation to consider whether individual disposal cases would meet specific criteria of guidance, and whether this would sit better with The National Archives or the Archives & Records Association. Members discussed a number of points in the guidance, which will be taken on board before a final draft is produced. The final version will be circulated to Forum members before being published. ACTION: Final version of guidance to be circulated to members.[Post meeting note: Guidance published on website and link circulated to members]
2.	TNA Future Direction & Strategy, and Realignment
2.1	Mr James advised that the current four year Strategic Plan for The National Archives was now in its final year, and work was underway to review and revise the plan for the next four years, which will focus on The National Archives' four key audiences and the cross-cutting theme of digital:
2.2	• To inspire the <u>public</u> with new ways of using and experiencing our collection • To provide expert advice and scrutiny to <u>government</u>, ensuring the record survives and thrives • To be an effective leader and partner for the <u>archive sector</u>, to sustain and develop the nation's collection • To advance knowledge through exemplary <u>academic liaison</u> and outstanding disciplinary research • To become a <u>digital</u> archive by design

2.3	Mr James advised that he has spent time with the Archive Sector Development team visiting archives and private houses, and as a demonstration of commitment to the academic sector, a new Director of Research position has been created. Members were advised that Dr Valerie Johnson will be taking on the role in an interim capacity.
2.4	Forum members felt that it was important to have a qualified archivist on the Executive Team of The National Archives, and although Mr James agreed to take these views on board, he advised that in his view it was important to get the best person overall.
2.5	The increasing challenges around digital records were discussed. The National Archives already takes some 'born digital' records, and will be looking to take a key role in advising Government on how digital records are managed.
2.6	Following discussion, Mr James suggested that it might now be appropriate to review the terms and conditions of the Forum, to ensure that the expertise of the members is fully utilised, and it was agreed that this be an item for discussion at the next meeting.
2.7	Members expressed their willingness to take a more active role where appropriate and provide comments or advice on issues between meetings.
2.8	The possibility of having a joint meeting with the Advisory Council had been discussed at previous meetings, and the Chair suggested that the next scheduled Council meeting in May might be a suitable date. This would give the non-Council members of the Forum an opportunity to meet with the Council and perhaps attend part of the Council meeting to learn more about its work. ACTION: Review of the Terms of Reference to be included as an agenda item for the next meeting ACTION: Secretariat to arrange for the next meeting to be held on the same day with the Advisory Council
3.	20 Year Rule – Update
3.1	Mr Kingsley gave a brief update on the position regarding the move to the 20 year rule for Records of Local Interest. He advised that secondary legislation had been laid in parliament and was now in force. The transfer process will work in the same way as for national government records, but will be two years behind.
3.2	To minimise the burden on places of deposit, a new transition standard has been adopted for material, to bring it in line with the process for records being transferred to The National Archives. In order to implement this change of culture, staff have been working with departmental record officers in local courts, hospitals, prisons etc, providing training courses and support. The National Archives is also committed to building a new e-learning platform to cover the training for new organisations, and is liaising with the NHS in England and Wales, with a view to bringing them in to conformity.
3.3	Mr Kingsley advised that two members of staff have been working on the transfer, and this commitment has been extended for another two years, to allow for further training, and also to provide support to places of deposit in their efforts to ensure the organisations they deal with prepare records properly for transfer.
3.4	Government has acknowledged that there will be a cost to local authorities, and has committed £7.1M over ten years. This funding is primarily for additional storage/access costs, and will be transferred to The National Archives for allocation.
	The Forum noted the very positive outcome and felt that the work being carried out was having a

	genuine impact.
4.	Exhibition Proposal
4.1	Mr Brohier briefly outlined the background to this proposal and advised that, together with Mr James and Dr Ridgway, he had recently attended a meeting with the Head of Research at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The suggested date of 2019, and outline of the proposed exhibition were felt to be something the museum would be happy to consider and it was suggested that a formal proposal be put to the museum committee responsible for all exhibition proposals.
4.2	It was acknowledged that discussions would also take place with the British Library, as The National Archives already supports a number of exhibitions with them.
4.3	The meeting was very positive, but the Head of Research advised that the proposal would need to be considered within the next six months.
4.4	Members were pleased to note the reaction from the museum, but expressed some concern that the original idea for an exhibition focusing on national documentary heritage might be lost. However, it was agreed that there is a need for a partner.
4.5	It was felt that there needs to be a clear vision and this needs to be explored in some detail before a formal proposal can be made. Mr James suggested that a small internal group consider the matter and then seek wider input from the Forum
4.6	A number of suggestions were discussed and Mr James advised that there was a possibility that both the British Library and Victoria & Albert Museum could be involved.
4.7	Dr Lomas requested that Forum members receive any relevant documentation and information, so that they could fully contribute to the project. ACTION: Internal working group to be set up to consider the proposal in more detail ACTION: V&A proposal guidelines and relevant documentation to be circulated to members, when received.
5.	Copyright and Publication Right
5.1	Forum members had been asked to comment on a response from The National Archives on the Government Consultation on Unpublished Works.
5.2	A number of concerns had been raised by members on the proposals outlined in the consultation, which were to be discussed in more detail at this meeting.
5.3	Mr Kingsley advised that the Government had announced the previous day that they would not be going ahead with the proposal. There will be further consultation on how the use of archival material can be made easier and the results of this will be shared with the Forum. Members were pleased to note the decision.
6.	Discovery Update
6.1	A presentation on Discovery had been scheduled for the meeting, but Mr Kingsley advised that due to IT constraints, it would not be possible on this occasion and would be held over until the next meeting to be held at Kew.
6.2	Members were advised that two main pieces of work were being undertaken this year – to

	integrate databases of information about records held by other archives into Discovery and to build tools to enable contributors to enter data more easily.
6.3	Integration was now nearly complete, apart from the development of a custom search facility for the Manorial Documents Register. The complexity of the technology required meant that this had taken longer than expected.
6.4	The project to build tools for data entry was now underway, following delays in recruiting the additional capacity required. The first of three planned tools is now being developed. In response to a query from Dr Mortimer, Mr Kingsley confirmed that once the project was completed, local record offices would be able to input their own data directly into Discovery. It was also anticipated that there would be a facility for people to upload data from their online catalogues, and to extract data from other aggregators' systems, such as the Archives Hub. Smaller services without their own online catalogue would be able to use Discovery as an online presentation system for their data if they so wished. Members were pleased to note the progress and looked forward to a future demonstration. ACTION: Demonstration of Discovery to be arranged at future meeting.
7.	Update Papers
7.1	<i>Research and Academic Liaison Update</i> A report on the work of the Research and Academic Liaison team had been circulated to members, who were pleased to note the continued efforts of the team.
7.2	<i>Archives Sector Development Update</i> An update on the work of the Archives Sector Development team had been circulated to members and Mr Kingsley provided updates on some of the activities. Dr Norman James, Head of the Private Archives Team had retired in December and a recruitment exercise for his replacement would commence soon. Mr Kingsley proposed that, following a review of the team's responsibilities, the role would be renamed Head of Independent Archives. It was felt that this more accurately reflected the wider remit of the team, which includes business, charity, private and religious archives. Members discussed the proposed name change and agreed that, although not perfect, the new title was more appropriate. Dr Lomas asked if members could see more detail about how the work of the Archives Sector Development team will be articulated over the next year. Mr Kingsley agreed to provide this information once the annual budgets had been approved. He also advised that although the decision had been taken not to pursue the scientific archives proposal at this time, a draft paper was being prepared proposing a smaller programme. ACTION: Mr Kingsley to prepare more detailed information regarding the forthcoming work of the Archive Sector Development Team.
8.	Any Other Business
8.1	<i>Thanks</i> Members requested that thanks be recorded to Dr James for his work and support since the inception of the Forum, which was hugely appreciated.
8.2	<i>De-accession at Torquay Museum</i> Dr Mortimer provided an update on an issue at Torquay Museum regarding the possible sale of items from its collection. Mr Kingsley had given advice and spoken with the Arts Council, but as

	the museum is not an accredited archive, there was very little to be done. Members felt that this issue highlighted the difference between archives and museums and agreed that there should be an integrated view. Mr Kingsley agreed to explore possible ways of achieving a closer link between the two.
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	Dr Lomas suggested that the future challenges for archives might be a subject for discussion at a future meeting.
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	There being no further business, the meeting was closed.
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