

P l a c e s o f d e p o s i t

Bulletin

JULY 2003

Launch of the National Archives and the Records Management Advisory Service



HRH The Prince of Wales pays homage to the World War I Veterans and meets history students at the National Archives – see page 19

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Foreword

Some of our readers in the PoD community may be wondering what has become of the title *Beyond the PRO* and, indeed, what happened to the April 2003 edition! There have been many changes at the PRO site in Kew since the last edition of this Bulletin in December 2002. The main change has been the creation of the National Archives that has brought the Public Record Office (PRO) and the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) to work together for the safekeeping of archives: both public and private. The second major change is that the Archive Inspection Services Unit (AISU) has become part of the Records Management Advisory Service (RMAS) whose remit is, in part, to ensure the provision of expert guidance on electronic records management to public bodies across England and Wales. PoD Archivists need not be alarmed by this organisational change as RMAS and AISU intend to continue to provide advice, guidance and assistance to PoDs and to continue its inspection regime. We are currently looking at ways of combining our inspection regime with that of the HMC's to encourage greater efficiencies in working. This edition of the Bulletin covers all the changes that have taken place since April.

Due to these momentous changes we were unable to publish the April 2003 Bulletin, for which we apologise. It was important to tell our readers what was happening at The National Archives and we felt that we could not really impart any useful details by April as so much was happening immediately before and directly after that month. We are now confident that we can provide some useful information to our readers about our future intentions concerning our work and relations with PoDs at the National Archives and this edition will bring you fully up-to-date.

The new RMAS remit also means that we now intend to direct this publication to the public sector records management community as well as the PoD community. Although there are notable exceptions, many local records management services have traditionally been somewhat isolated from the operations of their local archive services, resulting in many valuable records being swept away and lost in the heavy currents of information flow never to resurface where they belong in the Archive: this is especially true of electronic records. We intend to help plug this gap and enhance and promote the relationship between the semi-current and archival record lifecycle stages and between records management and archive departments through the new Bulletin. We welcome any feedback that you may wish to provide and any suggestions and concerns that you may have. If you have any comments about this Bulletin (style or contents) please send your emails to rod.ward-horner@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

So what about the Bulletin title then? Yes, it has temporarily changed from *Beyond the PRO* to *Places of deposit Bulletin*. We are still thinking about an appropriate title that will symbolise all of our new objectives. This issue is an experiment to gauge how you feel about the change and the new broader directions we are now following; so do send us your feedback. We should have a new title for you by the next issue."

Rod Ward-Horner
Archive Inspection Services Unit



A new gateway to British history is launched

The Public Record Office (PRO) and the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) have now come together to form a new organisation – The National Archives (TNA).

The PRO is a government department in its own right as well as an executive agency. It reports to the Lord Chancellor. The PRO has a comprehensive record of English and British government stretching from 900 years and runs one of the most frequently consulted government web sites in the UK. The HMC has an unrivalled knowledge of private archives and has developed the National Register of Archives as a major information resource. The indexes to the NRA were among the first archival finding aids in the UK to be made available over the Internet. They give details of nature and whereabouts of all the major private archives known to HMC, whether or not they have been catalogued. HMC has also developed ARCHON, an electronic directory linking to all UK and many foreign archives, and the ARCHON portal linking to projects in progress on British archives. The new organisation will be greater than the sum of its constituent parts and will be able to provide better services to a wider range of stakeholders.

Much more than a change of name

Heading the organisation as Chief Executive is Sarah Tyacke, Keeper of Public Records, who also becomes Historical Manuscripts Commissioner.

Sarah Tyacke says: "Building on the achievements of the Public Record Office and the HMC, TNA will be better able to safeguard the nations memory for present and future generations to enjoy. We want to reach out to people who have not previously used our services and to make TNA available to everyone – onsite or online."

Announcing a new digital archive system at TNA to store, preserve and provide access to government records created in electronic form, Rosie Winterton MP, Parliamentary Secretary at the Lord Chancellor's Department, said: "The new Archives is about more than a change of name, it is part of the government-wide agenda to improve our electronic information resources. We create a better future by

understanding and building on our past. Bringing together the HMC and the PRO will enable us to harness historical information from the Domesday Book to Cabinet papers from 30 years ago, enabling us to serve the public more effectively and move government policy forward.

I am confident that the new National Archives will build on the resources provided by the HMC and PRO – including their award-winning online education resources – to provide even better services to all its stakeholders, including schools and universities, the archive community, family historians and members of the public from every community with a curiosity about the past."



Chris Kitching, who will continue as Secretary of the HMC within the National Archives, says, "Until 1959 the HMC was housed in the PRO building in Chancery Lane. Recent generations of archivists have, in my view mistakenly, come to regard it as somehow differently motivated from the PRO because its concern was with private archives. The bringing together of the two bodies should enable us to address together what has in fact been our unifying concern in our respective fields to date, namely to document British history in all its diversity and to ensure the preservation of the original archival materials on which it is based."

In the last few months PRO and HMC staff have been working very hard to produce a unified Corporate Plan for TNA, which sets our strategic priorities over the next three years. These are some of the highlights:

Enhancing our onsite services

Last year's record level of visitor attendances at Kew and the Family Records Centre looks likely to be repeated in 2003/04. Later this year staff from the HMC in central London will move to the PRO's site where the public information and advice areas will be redesigned to reflect the new service. TNA in Kew will then be able to provide information not just about public records (the records of central government and the courts of law) but also about private archives held throughout the UK and overseas, relating to all aspects of British history.



Developing our online services

Work will start on improving the inter-operability between the electronic catalogue for PRO records (PROCAT), the Access to Archives (A2A) virtual archive for England, and the National Register of Archives – all on a common National Archives web site.

Building on our experience of supplying an increasing number of online copies to our users, we intend to play a major role in the development of a coherent and comprehensive national digitisation strategy for archives.

TNA is also keen to take forward proposals for a National Archives Network in partnership with the National Council on Archives, the National Archives of Scotland, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and other archive bodies. The present thinking is that the network will be developed through building blocks of online material, which are accessible through a common portal and search engine.

Reaching out to new audiences

TNA is committed to a rigorous programme of social inclusion and are determined to reach out to new audiences wherever possible. By September we should have completed work on the Moving Here project, which will provide at least 150,000 images online of material relating to the experience of immigration to the UK since the mid 19th century. This project is complemented by a wide variety of outreach and catalogue initiatives.

Establishing a new advisory service

TNA will continue to provide authoritative and impartial advice on the care of the records to both public and private owners, to funding agencies on grant applications, and to the government on the acceptance of manuscripts in lieu of tax. We are also establishing a new Records Management Advisory Service, which will enable us to share our knowledge on electronic records management and the likely impact of new information legislation with the local government records community.

Practising what we preach on Electronic Records Management (ERM)

Over the last three years we have set out a route map and provided detailed guidance, to enable other UK government departments to achieve the 2004 target for the introduction of ERM. We will continue to support their efforts through action plans and workshops, and to report on their progress to the Lord Chancellor. At the same time we will practice what we preach by implementing ERM throughout our organisation by the end of 2003.

Preparing for implementation of FOI

Both the PRO and the HMC have publication schemes approved by the Information Commissioner, and we are preparing for full implementation of the new legislation within central government in January 2005. The PRO drafted the Code of Practice on record management issued by the Lord Chancellor under s.46 of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, which was laid before Parliament in November 2002. As TNA, we will be continuing our involvement in raising awareness of the records management implications of FOI through our participation in road shows organised by the Lord Chancellor's Department. We are currently considering how to carry forward the successful one-day seminars provided for records managers and archivists in partnership with the Society of Archivists.

Reviewing archive policy and legislation

In 2002 the Action Plan to accompany the Government Policy on Archives was approved by the Lord Chancellor and other Ministers, on the advice of officials on the UK Inter-Departmental Archives Committee (IDAC). The Plan provides an overall framework for the work of the archive sector over the next three years, and progress will be monitored and published by IDAC.

One strand of this activity is the thorough review of existing records and archives legislation, which we are currently undertaking. We are now consulting other government departments that have an interest in records management and archives legislation with a view to identifying areas for change. Any proposals that emerge will be the subject of wide consultation of the records and archives and user communities. We will bring you updates in future Bulletins.



The National Archives – some questions answered

Anticipating that members of the PoD community may have further queries concerning the creation of TNA we have prepared answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

1. What is the name of the organisation?

The name of the organisation from 2 April 2003 is 'The National Archives'.

Where more grammatically correct this can be abbreviated to National Archives (for example in mid sentence).

2. Will this mean that the PRO and HMC no longer exist?

No. There is no change to the Public Records Act or any new legal enactment that specifically makes us one organisation or abolishes either body.

The HMC joins the PRO to form the National Archives because the Keeper, as a statutory office holder, can have the powers to carry out the functions of the HMC conferred on her. The PRO does not have the legal power in terms of its Act to take on the work of the HMC or vice versa. A new Royal Warrant signed by the Queen empowering the Keeper and her successors to carry out the function of HMC commissioner and take responsibility for its work has been signed and linked the two organisations in April, pending possible archival legislation.

The new Royal Warrant does not have the authority to legally join the two organisations formally. This means that the HMC will continue to exist and will be a recognisable unit of the National Archives (as stated in the announcement of July 2002) as will the PRO. The role of Secretary of the HMC will also continue, as it is referred to in primary legislation.

This means that we cannot talk of the 'former PRO' or the 'former HMC'.

3. Describing the National Archives

The new logo will be for 'the national archives'. A line on the letterhead 'bringing together the Public Record Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission' has now been added. Besides fulfilling a legal function, it makes sure that those who are unused initially to the new name can also continue to recognise the component organisations.

We will cite the name as 'The National Archives: Public Record Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission' as the full official title where we need to be very specific.

We will also abbreviate as 'The National Archives: Public Record Office / PRO' or 'The National Archives: Historical Manuscripts Commission / HMC' where clarification would be useful.

General signage now employs 'The National Archives' title.

4. What implications will there be for citation of documents?

The Public Record Office and public records have legal designation in the Public Records Acts. These are not being superseded. There is no new legal instrument that empowers or compels us to call public records 'national archives' or anything else. This will be addressed if we have archive legislation in which the concept of 'record' may be redefined.

Instead we will use the term 'The National Archives' as an institutional locator. The correct format from April 2003 will be, as an example: The National Archives (NA): PRO FO 371/1234/5678 and we will encourage researchers to use this type of designation in future. This prefix will also be used for citing HMC lists and the public records held in the NDAD and the National Sound Archive. Full guidelines are available in the updated Citation of Documents General Information Leaflet 25, available online at www.pro.gov.uk/leaflets/Riindex.asp.

We are not obliged to change all the information about citation of documents currently used or those for new accessions, which still remain legally public records.



5. Will there be any changes to the procedures for certifying documents?

The existing terms of the 1958 Public Records Act regarding certification by appropriate officers remains in force. We can continue to designate staff 'Assistant Keepers' for this purpose as at present. We do not have to have a new seal, but if we decide to do so it must still refer to the Public Record Office in its design pending archival legislation.

6. New web site address

TNA has a new url: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, for the new National Archives web pages that was launched on 2 April 2003. This is a gateway page to the PRO and HMC web sites. The PRO and HMC web sites will still be maintained and updated until April 2004.

9. Contacting TNA by email

For public access services we will keep the enquiry@pro.gov.uk but the main enquiry address will be enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk. The two addresses will be used together initially and the latter will be the default address. Personal email addresses at Kew will also change, to use the '@nationalarchives.gov.uk' ending.

HMC staff will continue to be contacted on existing e mail addresses until the move to Kew, and will also continue to keep the general enquiries address of nra@hmc.gov.uk.

10. How long will references to the PRO and HMC continue?

References to the PRO and HMC will continue unless or until there is archival legislation: currently scheduled for 2005. However in practice, and with feedback on how well our users adapt to the new title, it is likely that the new name will be used on its own more and more over the next year or two.

11. How the new title will be used in events

There are many events in progress that have been organised under either PRO or HMC publicity. In future, we will use The National Archives instead. For example, the Open Day at Kew this September will be the National Archives Open Day.



'Bringing together the Public Record Office and the Historical Manuscripts Commission'



TNA: PRO hosts Records Management in Local Government Conference 2003



On 30 May, TNA: PRO hosted the *Seize the Day: Records Management in Local Government Conference 2003* at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London. The conference was free to attendees, although pre-booking was necessary to guarantee places. The Conference was targeted at Chief Executives and their senior officers to encourage support for developing information and records management policies at the highest levels of local authority management.

The conference concentrated upon the critical importance of records and information management in all aspects of local government business. TNA: PRO has been concerned primarily with central government records and information management to date and now wishes to apply the expertise it has gained from this sector to the wider public sector, starting with the local government arena. Local government cannot operate effectively without properly managed records. We all use and generate records that need to be accessed over time by a range of users. The emphasis of e-government is currently on developing take-up of on-line services, encouraging individuals and businesses to carry out transactions on the web. At the same time, information policy legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 demands that local authorities have a very firm grip on the records management aspects of their business.

The conference proceedings highlighted the support that central government could offer to local authorities to help them meet the records management challenges of e-government and information legislation. It also publicised the launch of the new Records Management Advisory Service (RMAS) that will focus upon supporting the needs of local government records management activities and provide an enhanced service to the business of local authority records and information management – see the article on RMAS in this bulletin.



1 The Seize the Day theme emphasises the need for the local public authorities to act now on records management.

2 Westminster: the location for the Seize the Day conference. The conference was targeted at Chief Executive and senior management to encourage corporate recognition for the necessity of electronic records management in local government.

The morning session comprised the following speakers.

Introducing the key speakers, **Sarah Tyacke** CB (Chief Executive of the National Archives and Keeper of Public Records) spoke upon the vital importance of records management in local government. The key drivers to change were identified (FOI, Modernising Government and good business practice), the support services available to local government were briefly introduced and the need for building relationships between local and central government was emphasised to ensure the delivery of expert advice and guidance on records management to the English regions from the lessons learnt in central government.



Richard Thomas (The Information Commissioner) explained how records management and good information handling practice could facilitate meeting the demands placed upon local authority public bodies by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Data Protection Act (DPA) legislation. Richard firstly outlined his responsibilities as Information Commissioner: enforcing these Acts. This was followed by a detailed analysis of the FOIA and the responsibilities placed upon local authorities to respond to requests for information. Requirements for responding to requests for information were considered as well as the main access exemptions categories. FOI and DPA effectively require policies and procedures to deliver consistent, robust and ordered records management for the quick retrieval of information in response to such requests. In conclusion, Richard addressed the deliberately long implementation period for the FOIA: plenty of time has been allocated to local government to prepare for this legislation due to the anticipated major changes in business practices and organisational culture that were likely to be required. Richard's parting message to the local authorities was robust as the chief independently appointed officer policing this legislation and reporting directly to Parliament: time is now short "Get your Act together: not ready = not acceptable".

Martin Ferguson (Assistant Director e-Government (Strategy and Research) Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)) gave a presentation on how the information management priorities of local government in improving public services can be achieved. Martin addressed the key ingredients of local e-government: **Services** that are more accessible, convenient, responsive, and cost effective; **Organisations** that are more open, accountable, inclusive and better able to lead their communities. Technology used appropriately will facilitate improved access to information. A number of examples were cited of the effective development and use of e-technology services offered by various local authorities: e.g. Telford and Wrekin County Council's initiatives to protect and improve the quality of life of young people at risk by introducing secure information sharing facilities between law enforcement, health and social services bodies. IDeA's support role for local authorities was outlined: e.g., effective e-business may be enhanced by the use of toolkits available from IDeA for introducing e-services, the opportunities to network with peer groups experiencing similar change and by the strategic advice IDeA can provide to struggling authorities. In conclusion, Martin emphasised the recognition of information management as a key issue underpinning effective local e-government that can make a real difference to the quality of peoples lives.



Janice Morphet (Local Government Modernisation Team, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)) delivered a talk on the national strategy for e-government and how this can help local authorities transform the ways in which they lead their communities and deliver services. Janice focussed upon the progress in implementing electronic government (IEG) in various local authorities, some of the lessons learnt from this experience and some of the difficulties still to be resolved. For example, electronic records management should be a key component of IEG but is still absent from many local authorities' IEG strategies. Further, the problems of sharing data between different government organisations and the legislative restrictions on achieving this remains to be resolved. However, ODPM are committed to promote practical solutions for these knotty problems.

Philip Jones (Head of Information Resources Unit, Staffordshire County Council) outlined Staffordshire County Council's approach to records and information management as a way of demonstrating how one local authority has addressed its own business needs within the context of central government policy. The key principle governing the introduction of records management in Staffordshire is the balancing of priorities: coping with increased requests for information due to the demands set by the FOIA and DPA, introducing a systematic approach to training the large numbers of staff with diverse backgrounds and expertise in best practices FOI procedures and the need to cause the minimum disruption by introducing communicated change only where there is a clear need for it. The complexity of the interlinked processes of local government



- 3** Sarah Tyacke - Chief Executive of the National Archives and Keeper of Public Records.
- 4** Richard Thomas - The Information Commissioner.
- 5** Martin Ferguson - Assistant Director, e-Government (Strategy and Research), at the Improvement and Development Agency.
- 6** Janice Morphet -Head of Local Government Modernisation Team, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
- 7** Philip Jones - Head of Information Resources Unit, Staffordshire County Council.

environment was compared to the simple public perceptions of the service whereby simple requests for information may cut across many service areas. The issue of finding selected information from amongst a huge mass of other information over a widely distributed environment was the key challenge to Staffordshire County Council and will be for many other local authorities. Philip argued that the solutions to this complexity lie in the corporate recognition, endorsement and support of the role of records management, the application of business rules and the use of technology to ensure that business needs and retrieval requirements are met. Philip strongly endorsed the use of the *ISO 15489 Records Management Standard* as the best basis for introducing corporate records management. In conclusion, Philip mentioned that good records management is the art of bridging the gap between the front and back offices in local government whereby "Enterprise Content Management" – the catch all phrase for the management of documents, content, web content, all formats of records, knowledge and digital assets - becomes an inherent practice rather than a project.

Launch of the TNA: PRO Records Management Advisory Service

The afternoon sessions at the Records Management in Local Government Conference 2003 concentrated on how TNA:PRO is developing and delivering an exciting programme of practical support to local authorities in their records and information management work through a new business unit. TNA: PRO has received a growing volume of requests from local authorities for our support and advice on their records and information activities. As a response to this, the RMAS was launched at this Conference on 30 May 2003.

The Records Management Advisory Service (RMAS) has been established under the supervision of the Head of Records Management Department. This business unit brings together our expertise in central government electronic records management (Electronic Records Management Development Unit) with our knowledge and experience of the local authority archives and records sector (Archive Inspection Services Unit). It will provide advice and guidance to local authorities wishing to implement electronic records management systems and subsequently to transfer records of this format to local archives. The main focus of the service will be on setting standards and providing written guidance, but the service will also provide more direct information through the means of seminars, conferences, road shows, and one-to-one advice where possible.

Extensive expertise on Electronic Records Management (ERM) has been gained from TNA: PRO's work with central government departments. **Richard Blake** (Head of Records Management Advisory Service (RMAS)) outlined how TNA: PRO was now bringing this valuable experience to bear in local government through the RMAS business unit.

Ian MacFarlane's (Head of Electronic Records Management Development Unit) talk at the conference focussed upon the great progress made in central government through the implementation of ERM systems, citing a number of prominent examples where massive rationalisation of information access, storage and retrieval had been achieved with the help, guidance and expertise of TNA: PRO.

Steven Jones delivered a presentation which showed how the bond between AISU and the local government archival community had grown over the past decade, and would now be strengthened by the arrival of RMAS and the support it would give to local authority records management operations.

The afternoon rounded off with an open questions and answers panel, at which Sarah Tyacke and Richard Blake were joined by Liz Rees (County Archivist, Tyne & Wear) and Tony May (Chair of the Records Management Society and Document manager for Hertfordshire County Council). Questions and comments from delegates ranged from those who looked forward to more TNA guidance and advocacy for local authority records management to those who were reassured that TNA's support for archive services would continue via its places of deposit inspection regime.

All comments and questions will be invaluable to us in developing our forward plans for RMAS.

In the forthcoming months these will encompass the following activities:

- Undertake a consultation exercise to establish the overall needs for (electronic) records management in local government
- Fostering strategic partnerships with key stakeholders and interest groups
- Seeking to embed (electronic) records management in new initiatives and programmes within local government through the use of strategic partnerships
- Fostering the developments of an effective (electronic) records management community across local government whilst maintaining good and effective relationships with the existing archival community
- Holding a further conference for (electronic) records management in local government in 2003 and to consider the demand for an annual event thereafter
- Focussing initially on the needs of unitary and county authorities – but responding positively to inquiries from other public bodies such as district councils, health authorities, fire and police authorities
- Reviewing existing published guidance to develop a programme for publishing new guidance relevant to both the central and local government communities
- Concentrating particularly on effective electronic records management whilst recognising support will also be needed in tackling paper-mountains.

TNA will maintain and develop its existing support for the local authority archives sector while developing these proposals. We would welcome your thoughts on the above agenda: Please contact rod.ward-horner@nationalarchives.gov.uk if you would like to forward any comments for consideration: RMAS welcomes any feedback that you may wish to contribute.



- 8** Delegates enjoy a coffee break in the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre.
- 9** Richard Blake - Head of the Records Management Advisory Service at the National Archives.
- 10** Ian MacFarlane - Head of Electronic Records Management Development Unit, part of the Records Management Advisory Service.
- 11** Steven Jones - Head of Archive Inspection Services Unit, part of the Records Management Advisory Service.
- 12** Panel Q & A session - from left to right, Tony May (Documents Manager, Hertfordshire County Council and Chair of the Records Management Society), Richard Blake, Elizabeth Rees (County Archivist for Tyne and Wear and Chair of the Society of Archivists) and Sarah Tyacke.

Archive Inspection Services Unit and the Historical Manuscripts Commission – working together in the National Archives for the safekeeping of archives

Anticipating the advent of the National Archives from April 2003, the Archive Inspection Services Unit (AISU) and the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) held a meeting on 18 March 2003 to discuss how some of their similar practices were to be streamlined and combined over the following 12 months for incorporation into the National Archives. Some of the ideas mooted at the meeting are presented here.

Archive inspection work and standards

Statutory inspections work and those made at the request of private archives will continue. From the AISU perspective, personal visits are likely to be reduced in number due to the new requirements of the TNA:PRO Records Management Advisory Service to address its records management in local government responsibilities. However, AISU will be relying to a greater extent upon HMC inspection reports to assess the provisions of care for public records in places of deposit. The AISU and HMC have agreed the need for a common standards framework for archival inspections and work on this will begin in 2003. A consultation on the completed framework for all stakeholders will be carried out prior to its finalisation.

Balancing priorities

Local authorities will need to meet the challenge posed by Freedom of Information and records management in addition to their traditional archival provisions. Consequently, concerning the inspection of both areas, the National Archives will need to consider how to address these twin responsibilities and how to make efficient use of its existing resources. Archival standards and records management in universities and other higher education institutions will also need to be considered.

Reviewing terminology

A reappraisal of what the term "archive" means in the context of the National Archives' new focus will be necessary. Archive has commonly meant a record office in the past but may now need to comprise a broader interpretation to cover company archives and the like: archive equals "any body of evidential records" perhaps.

Locations for the new inspection service

Although primarily based in Kew, Richmond, Surrey, both AISU and HMC elements of the National Archives will continue to have a Central London presence at the Family Records Centre, Islington, London. Rooms at this facility may be booked where our stakeholder partners have difficulty in travelling to Kew for meetings.

Partnerships

In addition to those already mentioned, joint cooperation with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Local Government Association, the Society of Archivists and others will also be developed in line with the statutory need for improved and modernised access to information.

Training and development

A need to develop expertise in specialised media records was identified for both AISU and HMC staff: e.g. web site archiving, electronic records management systems.

Your feedback will be important

Although the creation of the National Archives is still in its early days we would value your comments on any of the rough sketch ideas outlined above. We are committed to developing a consultation timetable on issues such as inspections and guidance and as soon as it is ready it will be distributed as widely as possible amongst the archival community. We promise to keep you fully involved. If you should have any comments in the meantime, please direct them to rod.ward-horner@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Archives Development Officer for Wales now in post

On 2 April 2003 Eluned Jones started work as the Archives Development Officer for Wales. We wish her well in her new post. Her contact details are provided below.

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Archive Awareness Campaign

Archive Awareness Month



Katie Norgrove, NCA Policy & Development Officer, was previously the NCA's Archive Development Officer for the Regions, co-ordinating the work of the English Regional Archive Councils. Previously, Katie worked at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport looking after the relationship between the Department and the British Library and the Historical Manuscripts Commission, and at the Heritage Lottery Fund as a Senior Case Officer assessing major grant applications. She holds an MA in Museum Studies and a Diploma in Managing Voluntary and Not-for-Profit Organisations. One of Katie's key tasks in her current role is to promote Archives Awareness in the English regions and in what follows, she has taken this opportunity to promote the Archive Awareness Month to take place in September 2003 and to provide some details about the campaign for Archives Awareness. Over to Katie...

- **Why does the UK need this campaign now?**

- The potential of archives to illuminate people's lives is being severely inhibited by their low profile and the lack of awareness of their value amongst the general public, politicians, decision makers and funding bodies. With the increasing popularisation of history, the power of ICT, the growth of new partnership working and more attention at government level, there's been no better time to start raising our profile.

- **What do we want to achieve with the Campaign? - Long term objectives**

1. To raise the profile of the archives domain amongst the general public, potential partners, politicians, decision makers and funding bodies
2. To encourage new users and a wider user base
3. To change the image of the domain and the archive profession
4. To involve the archival community in its broadest sense to develop a greater sense of confidence and mutual support

- **Objective for Campaign 2003 – Archive Awareness Month**

- We are proposing to start tackling the first two of our long-term objectives, given above, through the promotion of Archive Awareness Month September 2003.

- **What's the theme for Archive Awareness Month September 2003?**

- The opening up of archives to the general public and raising public awareness of the sheer wealth of treasures that archives hold.

- **Who are we targeting with Archive Awareness Month September 2003?**

1. Our existing user base (be they internal or external users)
2. Those currently poorly represented as users:
 - Under 24s
 - Black and ethnic minority communities
 - Higher education students

- **Why a month?**

- To allow flexibility in planning for events

- **Why September?**

- Availability of potential audiences, notably schools, universities and colleges
- Tying in with complementary campaigns such as linking with Heritage Open days and London Open House (13–22 September)
- Allows enough time to implement the month successfully
- Increasing our chances of publicity as September is traditionally a slow month for news

- **What are the messages we want to convey by opening up?**

- **Discovery** is based on using archives to make the hidden known. Archives are treasure troves of information that explain and clarify past actions and help rebuild current lives.
- **Validation** focuses on the authenticity of archives, and how this is important in providing contemporary accounts of past events. Through archives past acts are preserved for future judgement, offering the foundation stones for a society's judicial system and democratic freedom. Challenging the past is about how archives can transform our lives today. For example, the use of archival evidence in proving compensation claims for former industry workers. Engagement refers to the power that archives have, in conjunction with other media to create a world gone by.
- **Belonging** demonstrates the way in which archives can create a sense of identity and belonging to a group, place, family, community or nation.
- **Perceptions** – archival material offers something to everyone, are personal, are about you. Stereotypes of archival institutions and archivists aren't necessarily true.

- **How are we going to organise this?**

- **At the national level:** As the leading advocate for archives, and an independent forum for the whole archive community, the NCA will be leading the development of Archives Awareness Month at the national level. The NCA will be supported by the PRO, Resource and the Society of Archivists.
- **At the regional or devolved level:** The 9 English Regional Archive Councils will be responsible for coordinating and promoting activity within their regions. They will act as a vital communications link between national and local planning. In the home countries, these functions will be performed by the Scottish Archives Council, Archives Council Wales and by the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.
- **At the local level:** Individual institutions, their users and supporters will be responsible for organising and promoting events at the local level. Locally based events will form the backbone of Archives Awareness Month.

- **What will the NCA actually be doing?**

- Coordinating branding for the Month for distribution.
- Generating national events, publicity, press and marketing for the Month.
- Creating a directory of events in on-line and print format.
- Providing a series of toolkits to help archives plan activities.
- Appointing a part-time co-coordinator in the Spring to support the Month.
- Securing funding for national coordination from within its own resources, the PRO, Resource, the Society of Archivists and private sponsorship.
- Coordinating evaluation of the Month and building future plans.

How can I find out more?

By contacting:

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National Council on Archives
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Surrey TW9 4DU

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Tel: 020 8392 5376

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Position Statement and Call for Expressions of Interest to Access to Archives after March 2004

A Access
2 to
A Archives

Background

The second phase of A2A (Access to Archives) comes to an end in less than a year's time in March 2004. A2A has already provided a significant contribution to the UK on-line National Archives Network, as its English strand:

- the equivalent of more than 500,000 catalogue pages are now available in the A2A database at www.a2a.pro.gov.uk
- nearly 60,000 archive groups / collections are described in A2A
- well over 1.5 million searches have been carried out on the A2A database, resulting in over 3.6 million catalogue viewings
- more than 300 repositories across England have contributed A2A content, through almost 50 projects
- archivists, librarians, curators and archives users have all been involved with A2A.

By the end of Phase 2 the equivalent of more than 700,000 paper catalogue pages will be available in the A2A database via retroconversion and new cataloguing, with linked interpretative web pages and a growing number of digital images. The National Archives and other A2A stakeholders are keen to build on this success and to widen the National Archives Network after March 2004.

Work after March 2004 will have two chief facets: the development of interoperability and linking between A2A and the various other strands of the UK archives network, through two projects entitled *Community Access to Archives* and *Linking Arms*; and a further opportunity to contribute A2A content projects, under a 15-month extension of the Phase 2 timetable to July 2005, which will form A2A Phase 3.

A2A after March 2004

Community Access to Archives

This one-year project is a partnership between the A2A Central Team at the National Archives (the lead partner), Hackney Archives Department, the National Archives of Scotland, the National Council on Archives, the National Library of Wales, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and West Yorkshire Archives Service. *Community Access to Archives* is seeking £95,000 from HM Treasury's Invest to Save Budget to work with new communities of archives users across the UK. These may be ethnically and culturally diverse groups, or children and lifelong learners, perhaps affected by social exclusion; or

groups in the wider UK community with their own informal local community archives websites. An outcome of the project will be a Best Practice Model for community involvement in the UK National Archives Network, which may be adopted by other local or national archive organisations, or by organisations from other heritage sectors.

Linking Arms

This significant partnership project, to be led by the National Archives, is seeking substantial external funding for the development of on-line National Archives Network interoperability. Currently, the National Council on Archives is working with colleagues from all the major strands of the National Archives Network on a protocol/concordance to facilitate **technical interoperability** between archival resources.

Linking Arms will aim to establish an archives internet portal giving cross-searching access to A2A, SCAN, the Archives Hub, AIM25, and other joint or single network strands; after a formal technical options study, with associated assessment of user need - including use of the Best Practice Model from *Community Access to Archives* - and analysis of the impact of the network in its current state. Content projects for the National Archives Network are also envisaged as an element of the *Linking Arms* initiative.

As part of the funding package for *Linking Arms*, a major bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is being prepared for submission in December 2003. It will be submitted under HLF's major grants programme, which has a two-stage assessment process, with a final decision anticipated in 2005.

A2A Phase 3

A2A Phase 3 will run in tandem with the other developments, in order to continue to increase A2A content for new and existing users of archives. It will begin in April 2004 and run until July 2005. The total number of catalogue page equivalents to be covered is not yet set, but it will probably be in the region of 120,000, reflecting the requirements of the timescale. The National Archives will support the A2A central infrastructure and staff costs, as it has done in Phase 2.



About 10-14 content projects are sought, whether regional, sub-regional, single-repository, subject-based or user-led; these may involve retroconversion of existing paper and electronic catalogues, targeted cataloguing of significant archives, interpretation, or digitisation of original documents; or more than one of these elements. As previously, content projects may be self-funding or seek external support. To date the HLF has been the funder of choice, though alternative sources of funding are also welcomed. Although the A2A Central Team is unable to offer cash partnership funding for these projects, their contribution in kind to each project can once again be measured as partnership support for funding applications; more details will be confirmed as soon as possible.

To enable planning and co-ordination to continue, and especially to ensure that any funding applications are prepared and submitted in good time for project startup in April 2004, archivists, librarians, curators and archives users wishing to submit content to A2A in Phase 3 are warmly invited to contact the A2A Central Team at the National Archives as soon as possible.

Louise Craven
A2A Programme Manager
National Archives (PRO)
020 8392 5232

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a2a@nationalarchives.gov.uk
www.a2a.pro.gov.uk

Records of Community Health Councils

Some places of deposit may have already been contacted by local Community Health Councils which are due to be abolished on 1st September 2003. This note is to confirm that records of these organisations are public records.

The role of Community Health Councils (CHCs) has been to represent patient interests in the NHS. There are currently 203 in England and Wales. CHCs were established in 1974.

There is an Association of CHCs for England and Wales – ACHCEW:
<http://www.achcew.org.uk>

There is a list of those CHCs which have websites at:
<http://www.achcew.org.uk/local%20groups.htm>

We would be grateful if all places of deposit receiving new classes of public records could inform us so that we can update the official Place of Deposit Instrument and Schedule of Public Records.

Catherine Redfern
Archives Inspection Officer
TNA: PRO

New reader registration service at the National Archives: PRO

On-line reader registration is now available at the TNA: PRO. You can now view our on-line reader ticket application form by logging on to <http://www.shop.pro.gov.uk/registration>



New self service photography for readers at the National Archives

An exciting new service for readers recently went live at the National Archives: Public Record Office (PRO) at Kew. Readers who have ordered records at Kew may now make copies of them themselves with their own cameras providing they observe certain conditions that are designed to protect the records and to safeguard copyright.

So how does this work?

Readers have to register at the Record Copying Help Point on the First Floor. Staff check that the photographic equipment is suitable for this purpose and ask readers to sign a copyright declaration form. Document preservation is paramount and registration is dependent on readers following our 'Care of the Documents' guidelines. Flash photography and tripods are not allowed.

Staff then note the reader's name and ticket number and stick a small silver label on the reader's ticket. The label has a small camera icon on it and if anyone tries to remove it will become null and void. The presence of this label alerts our security officers and other public services staff to the fact that the reader has been registered for this service.

Readers are then directed to the areas designated for camera users that are supervised by staff.

The new service is proving very popular with researchers, especially those with digital cameras and limited research time at the National Archives: Public Record Office, Kew. They are able to download images direct to their laptops and then read the records at a later time outside our opening hours.

Are there any documents that cannot be copied in this way?

Yes. We do not allow readers to photograph the following records:

1. Records at risk of damage
2. Records which are available to readers only on microform or in electronic format – these may be copied on the self service printers in the microfilm reading room, for a charge
3. Records which for security reasons are available to readers only in the Invigilation Room – these may be copied only by special arrangement with the National Archives: PRO Production Manager at Kew.

Is there a charge for this service?

Readers using their own camera may normally do so free of charge.

Readers who wish to reserve a space or who, in the view of the Record Copying Counter Supervisor, require substantial supervision and assistance by staff, will be charged £2.00 for each 15 minutes. Reservations may be made in person, by telephone (020 8392 5330 ext. 2325) or by e-mail (enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk) giving at least one working day's notice.

Contact for more information

If you would like to know more about how we are running this service then please email us at enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk.

Richard Grocock
Record Copying Manager
The National Archives: PRO, Kew

The National Archives: PRO System for Access Regulation (SAR) Project

As part of TNA: PRO's preparation for the full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in 2005 we have embarked upon our System for Access Regulation project. At present, records transferred from government departments to TNA: PRO and places of deposit for public records are sometimes subject to extended closures or accelerated opening Lord Chancellor's Instruments (LCIs). From January 2005 all public records will be open on transfer unless an exemption under the FOI Act has been declared. Members of the public will be able to request to see documents that are closed under the LCI system and which are exempt under the FOI Act. TNA: PRO, working in conjunction with the central government departments transferring the public records, will have to review the documents in question to see if they are still exempt. This change in regulation of public access to records at the TNA: PRO will have a major impact on our operations and we need to ensure that we have the tools to manage the new regime.

At present TNA: PRO has an LCI Database that holds details of all the Lord Chancellor's Instruments. The system is very useful but it is only available in-house, and it was designed before the FOI Act was passed. We have started work to replace it with a System for Access Regulation. The new system will hold details of all documents subject to LCIs, of all documents exempt under the FOI Act, and of the outcomes of FOI reviews of documents held by both TNA: PRO and places of deposit for public records. SAR is linked to TNA: PRO's on-line catalogue, PROCAT, so that if a document is subject to an LCI or FOI exemption, and is in the custody of TNA, users will be able to get more details about its closure or retention status. It will also be linked to PROCAT to ensure data integrity between data in the system and the data in PROCAT that regulates whether or not a document is to be produced to a member of the public at TNA.

To date, due to the inconsistencies in formats and data transfer difficulties between PROCAT and the catalogue data kept on public records by PoDs, the inclusion of PoD public records on the PROCAT on-line catalogue have been few. Many of these are already available on the Access to Archives (A2A) database, along with numerous non-public record archives that will not be linked to SAR. Consequently, in the majority of cases, PROCAT and A2A databases cannot be used by

PoDs to find out access details pertaining to particular series of public records held by them. However, TNA: PRO will consider means by which the SAR can be made available to PoD archivists from January 2005 and this will include review of the practicalities of including PoD held public records data on PROCAT. In the meantime, public authorities that have custody of public records should refer to Susan Healy's article *FOI Publication Schemes, Archives and Finding Aids* from *Beyond the PRO - September 2002* to consider immediate methods of making this information available to the public.

During 2003, TNA: PRO Archive Inspection Services Unit will be considering procedures to improve the communication processes concerning the transfer of records between central government (records transferring) departments and PoDs, as well as methods for informing PoDs of the FOI review tribunal decisions, that will be decided between TNA: PRO and the transferring government departments.

We will keep you informed of any developments relating to this project. Any enquiries concerning the SAR project or access to public records generally should be directed to rod.ward-horner@nationalarchives.gov.uk.



The Prince of Wales meets WW I veterans and young history students at the National Archives

Members of the First World War Veterans Association met for the last time on 8 April 2003 in the presence of Charles, Prince of Wales, as part of an educational event hosted by the National Archives.

Eight centenarians, whose ages ranged from 102 to 108, spent the day sharing memories and experiences with the Prince and with 15 selected young history students from year 10 of Tring School in Hertfordshire. Some of these veterans had served in both World Wars.

It is estimated that fewer than 40 WWI veterans still survive in Britain of the millions who fought and died for Britain in the Great War. The Prince of Wales was received by the Deputy Lord-Lieutenant of Richmond, Councillor Douglas Orchard (Mayor of Richmond) Sarah Tyacke (Keeper of Public Records) and a host of other notables and dignitaries, and then proceeded into the National Archive building to meet the soldiers who had served under his great-grandfather, George V, 85 years ago.



Eight of the surviving World War I veterans. From left to right: George Leonard, 104 years; Albert Marshall, 106 years; Henry Allingham, 104 years; Harry Patch, 104 years; Alfred Lloyd, 105 years; William Stone, 102 years; Charles Thomson, 104 years and Jack Davis, 108 years

The Dark Horse Venture Charity, whose guiding principle is that life does not stop when you retire, arranged the Veterans Day event in collaboration with the National Archives. A key theme of the event was the importance of handing on the memories, the experiences and the history as it was lived to younger generations. For the event, the National Archives produced a number of WWI documents, many of which related directly to the veterans activities during the conflict. Amongst these documents were the service records of soldiers and non-commissioned officers contained in series WO 363, WWI War Diaries from series WO 95 and maps and plans from series WO 153. The Prince of Wales was particularly interested to see an original signed letter from Winston Churchill to Lord Kitchener and spent much of the visit chatting with the schoolchildren about the records and with the veterans about their personal experiences. The oldest of the veterans Jack Davis, 108, joined up in 1914 and served in the 6th Battalion, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. Jack said "Prince Charles is the Colonel-in-Chief of my battalion, so I was delighted to meet him – even if it was 89 years after I joined up. It was very fitting that he should come to see us for what will be the last ever meeting of the men who fought in World War One".

The personal experiences of the veterans were of great interest to the Tring School pupils. Harry Patch, 104, and William Stone, 102, spent much of the afternoon talking to the students and answering some of their questions about their experiences. Harrowing experiences of the horrors of war, death, the unsanitary conditions, makeshift first aid, disease, the boredom of life in the trenches interspersed by periods of high danger and drama evoked for the students a vivid and intense impression of how the history was actually lived. Ross Kemp, 15, who plans to study history and languages at university, said "It puts it into perspective. People say X, Y and Z died during the war. But to meet someone who was there makes it real". It also altered positively some of the stereotypical views that the young may have about the elderly. Carly Sullivan, 15, had some initial reservations about attending... "I thought it would be boring listening to old men but now I am so glad I came."

Actor Paul McGann, who is filming an independent film commemorating the Great War Veterans, was also present at the event. Paul was quick to credit the veterans' sense of humour for, although frail, they were lively. Of their good humour, Paul said "I'm in my forties and sometimes think to myself that I haven't got much left, but these guys have fought in wars and have had incredible lives and they're 60 years older than I am!"



The Prince of Wales was fascinated by the Education Workshop facilities available at the National Archives. The benefits of a resourced in-house education service were clearly impressed upon all the attendees. Video conferencing facilities were employed during the event for a dramatic performance of a WWI British soldier in a reconstructed trench who was able to perform and communicate on a live-link to students based in Ireland and Liverpool together with the veterans. The importance of educational outreach for archive services in highlighting the significance of the documentary sources as well as the experience of the participants was clearly demonstrated on the day. Catherine Hammond (Education Manager) commented, "understanding the individual experiences helps



students to see that their own lives can be important in history." The technological innovations that are now capable of capturing ever widening audiences are now tried and tested at the National Archives and have already proved well worth the investment.

The event received heavy press coverage, appearing on national television news, national broadsheet newspapers as well as the local press. The event was just one example of the many opportunities offered by the National Archives to pupils of all ages to work as real historians with original sources from the past through to modern records formats and the technology of the future. Some four thousand students attended workshops at the National Archives last year. The Veterans Day event was a day of mixed emotions: a happy occasion to celebrate the Veterans' lives and achievements, and a sad day as it will be unrepeatable.



- 1 Harry Patch with the actor Paul McGann. Paul is filming an independent film commemorating the Great War veterans.
- 2 HRH The Prince of Wales discussing some of the original source materials on display with the Tring School pupils.
- 3 Recreating a soldier's life in the trenches using video conferencing facilities.
- 4 Teacher and pupils from Tring School, Hertfordshire, discuss some of the exhibits and the recollections of the veterans.
- 5 A Gordon Highlander salutes the Veterans by playing an air on the pipes.
- 6 HRH The Prince of Wales and Sarah Tyacke (Chief Executive of the National Archives) survey some of the original source materials on display.
- 7 HRH The Prince of Wales meets the veterans and shares a joke with Harry Patch.
- 8 HRH The Prince of Wales, flanked by Elizabeth Hallam Smith (left, Head of Public Services Division) and Tom O'Leary (right, Head of Education Services), is introduced to the National Archives Education Centre.



Moving Here: Moving Forward



Places of deposit, especially those that hold records relating to ethnic communities in Britain will be interested to hear about Moving Here – if they have not already!

The Moving Here website www.movinghere.org.uk is the result of a dynamic partnership between museums, archives and libraries and people themselves, both in specific communities and those living side by side in the wider community. It provides access to more than 150,000 digital items, provided by thirty heritage partners, which record and illustrate the migration experience to England of Caribbean, Irish, Jewish and South Asian communities over the past two centuries.

From January 2003 the website went live and gives free online access to the wide range of digitised material contributed. The online resource ranges from art objects and maps to photographs, government documents, film and sound. At the end of July 2003 the site will be officially launched with enhanced capabilities and additional resources.

Partnership with the heritage sector

Funded by the New Opportunities Fund, The National Archives is the lead partner with a consortium of supporting partners including:

Senior Partners

- Black Cultural Archives.
- British Library.
- Jewish Museum, London.
- London Metropolitan Archives.
- Museum of London.
- National Maritime Museum.
- Royal Geographical Society.
- Victoria & Albert Museum.
- West Yorkshire Archive Service.

Other Partners

- Birmingham City Archives.
- Bradford Heritage Unit.
- Croydon Museum & Heritage Service.
- Hackney Museum.
- Haringey Museum and Archive Service, Bruce Castle Museum.
- Hull City Archives.
- Imperial War Museum.
- Lancashire Record Office.
- Leeds Museums & Galleries.
- Liverpool Record Office.
- London School of Economics.
- Luton Museum Service.
- Manchester Central Library.
- Manchester Jewish Museum.
- North West Film Archive.
- Oxfordshire Museums.
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.
- Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives.
- Walsall Local History Centre.
- Wandsworth Museum and Local History Service.

Many of these organisations have strong community links meaning that they are able to bring cultural resource-based community knowledge to the Moving Here project. In return they will be able to find new ways to make their collections relevant to specific audiences: people of many different ages, backgrounds and with many different interests and purposes will have unprecedented access to the digitised items on the website. This unique 'digital' network of national, regional and local resources transcends administrative, institutional and physical barriers.



- 1 Moving Here catalogue reference RAIL 910/1. Irish Cross Channel Timetable, Summer 1955. The National Archives.
- 2 Village Women and a goat, 1971. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- 3 Moving Here catalogue reference 2002.27. Enameled metal sign for Russian Vapour baths, Brick Lane 1900-1914. Jewish Museum, London.
- 4 Moving Here catalogue reference INF10/39/009. Newsboys, waiting to collect their copies of "News" - a Barbados daily paper, 1960. The National Archives.

The partnership is not just valuable in terms of supplying content but extends through the whole range of activities Moving Here undertakes. Promotion of the website is done via sessions run with community groups and via public libraries. Community activity co-ordinated with partners is also a key way of reaching our audience. For example, The National Archives, Moving Here and a University of the Third Age group in Haringey gathered reminiscences based on material from the Moving Here site. This generated the popular 'Memories from the Islands' exhibition which was shown at the TNA and is also touring around the country. The Museum of London is developing a joint project with Newham Heritage service working with a group of Asian elders who paint with watercolours. Luton Irish Forum has involved Moving Here as has a Jewish Advisory group and Jamaican Society in Leeds.

Museums, libraries and archives are establishing new ways of working together just as they are with a range of external groups. As more people hear about Moving Here it is establishing wider links with higher education, heritage and development groups outside the original selection of supporting partners. We look forward to these links extending and intensifying as resources on the website are developed in the coming months.

Partnership with new audiences

www.movinghere.org.uk is a resource for lifelong learning which is as much about partnership with our users as it is with our providers. We are encouraging individuals and community groups to share their experiences of migration and contribute their own digitised objects, documents and stories. Moving Here is therefore introducing people to their own heritage as well as existing heritage material.

It will provide flexible learning paths and frameworks. People will be able to approach the subject of migration from different perspectives to follow their own individual learning paths. In addition to a searchable catalogue of digitised resources all other sections of the site enables access to material via different starting points and levels.

Migration Histories gives an overview of lives in the countries of origin, the journeys people made to England, and the struggles and success of arriving and settling.

Tracing your Roots explores family history with easy-to-use illustrated guides to tracing Caribbean, Irish, Jewish or South Asian ancestors.

Stories encourages anyone with experience of migration to add their own story to the site through an online contribution page. The user can choose any item from Moving Here catalogue to illustrate their story, or accompany it with their own photographs/images/audio. This encourages creativity and participation by allowing people and organisations to repurpose material. This section of the site is proving a popular method for individuals to express their creativity and use their imaginations. It provides people with lots of flexibility to use the Moving Here content in a manner most meaningful to them.

The Gallery will provide highlights of the catalogue arranged according to subjects such as sport, food, style. This is a very visual space that allows people to randomly view images according to what catches their eye.

Moving Here provides opportunities for users to develop new skills. The process of navigating web pages, filling in an online contribution form, scanning an image and sending an e-postcard all form the basic building blocks of IT skills whilst directly engaging an individual through their own experiences. Trainers in the People's Network are already very keen to use Moving Here as a tool to assist people in libraries learning about ICT.

The site enables people to explore identities and celebrate cultural diversity: to find out more about how and why they came to England and their neighbours' experiences – and with over 150,000 items on offer it is a very good starting point!

If you would like to know more, your organisation would like to work with Moving Here or you would like to obtain some publicity material to advertise the site in your area then contact the Project manager helen.wood@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Practical Experiences in Digital Preservation National Archives, 2 to 4 July 2003

The National Archives hosted an international conference at the start of April 2003 – *Practical Experiences in Digital Preservation* – to discuss the important question of how we should preserve our digital heritage. Digital objects such as web pages, multimedia resources and databases hold important information about our age, and as such should be preserved for the future as archival records.

Preserving digital information presents archivists with a number of tough challenges – software and hardware can quickly become obsolete leaving information inaccessible. Digital storage media such as CD-Rs and digital tape can also degrade if not stored and managed properly.

The conference was prefaced by the keynote speech of Rosie Winterton MP, Parliamentary Secretary for the Lord Chancellor's Department, who formally announced the launch of the National Archives and described how it "will play a major role in archives locally, nationally and internationally." These sentiments were endorsed by Sarah Tyacke (Keeper of Public Records) and Chris Kitching (Secretary of the Historical Manuscripts Commission) whose respective organisations had now come together to comprise the National Archives.

Practical Experiences in Digital Preservation featured papers and demonstrations from twenty leading national and international speakers. What follows is a summary of a very comprehensive programme of presentations.

Day 1 concentrated upon: a review of the current activities in the United States; the Icelandic and international perspectives on organisational issues in international archives; the nature and integrity of historical objects and the need for their preservation; the development of emulation systems for obsolete computer systems and special event showcasing the National Archives collaboration with a group of enthusiasts to produce a Windows PC version of the 1986 BBC *Domesday* system. This (once obsolete now happily restored) multimedia survey is often cited as an important case study illustrating the need for digital preservation.

Day 2 proceedings covered a variety of issues: the National Archives' experience of using migration as part of a digital preservation program and the use of reliable conversion tools; the development in the Netherlands of XML-based file formats to manage the plethora of different file formats; experiences of tape conversion and difficulties with physical media deterioration in the Danish State Archives; The BBC's massive programme of audio digitisation, budgeted at £5m; the use of XML-based technology in the National Archives' new Digital Archive System to store "born digital" records; the National Archives experience of trying to collect information on software products and file formats from software companies; cooperation between the National Archives and the British Library on digital storage and distinctions between storing simple digital text files and interactive files; the UK Data Archive's recent work to produce an interactive archive delivery system allowing users to browse,



Digital Preservation Conference held at the April 2003



interrogate and display the contents of archive collections; a review of web archiving, considering selection and legal issues and an in depth examination of digital preservation cost models and the project management of preserving digital records.

Day 3. The final day of the conference started with a description of a series of workshops organised to teach skills in digital preservation based on current best practice. Following on from this the proceedings covered: legislation and the need to reflect legislative agendas from both Swedish and English archival perspectives, including consideration of data protection and freedom of information issues; arguments for the emulation of digital hardware platforms rather than the migration of digital file formats and, finally, the Internet Archive's company aim to collect and store as much digital information as possible as an alternative to selecting and cataloguing digital records – based upon the premise that disk space is now so cheap and search engines so sophisticated that it is more efficient and cost effective to rely on these to the exclusion of selection and cataloguing.

Over the course of three days, the conference provided a great overview of the many different digital preservation projects currently underway. It also underlined the amount of cooperation that is occurring across institutions: both nationally and internationally. Judging by the conference feedback form results, the event was a great success.

For a more detailed analysis of the proceedings see www.pro.gov.uk/about/preservation/digital/conference/proceedings.htm.



1 Question time - left to right: Neil Beagrie (Joint Information Services Committee and the The Digital Preservation Coalition); Duncan Simpson (Consultant for the National Archives, formerly Director of Government Services for the Public Record Office); Claes Granstrom (The National Archives of Sweden) and Hans Hoffman (ERPANET).

2 Keynote speech delivered by Rosie Winterton MP. Chris Kitching (Secretary of the National Archives: Historical Manuscripts Commission) and Sarah Tyacke (Chief Executive of the National Archives) are seated.

3 Andy Finey (original member of the BBC Domesday Project) displays one of the original obsolete disks used to store the Domesday data.

4 Claes Granstrom of the National Archives of Sweden - one of the Conference's distinguished international speakers.

5 Remote video conferencing was employed for certain presentations that were over-subscribed.

Visits to custodians of public records by the TNA: PRO Archive Inspection Services Unit during 2002-03

During the financial year from April 2002 to March 2003 the AISU visited the following places of deposit for public records and prospective PoDs.

East Midlands

Coal Authority, Mansfield
University of Nottingham Library, Manuscripts Department
Lincolnshire Archives

London

LB Bromley, Central Library
LB Croydon Archive Service
LB Greenwich Local History & Archive Service
LB Kingston Museum & Heritage Centre
Royal London Hospital Archives & Museum
Historic Royal Palaces, Tower of London
University College London NHS Trust Archives
St. Bartholomew's Hospital
Guards Division Archives, Wellington Barracks
RAF Museum, Hendon
Royal College of Surgeons
St. George's Hospital, Tooting

Midlands.

Keele University Photographic Unit

North East

Tyne & Wear Archives Service, Gateshead
Teesside Archives Service
University of Durham, University Library, Palace Green & the College
MOD (Army), KO Scottish Borderer's Museum, Berwick upon Tweed
MOD (Army), Museum of Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Alnwick

North West.

Tameside MB, LS Library, Stalybridge
Stockport Archive Service
Bolton Central Library

Scotland

MOD (Air), Meteorological Office, Edinburgh

South West

Broadmoor Hospital Archives
Plymouth & West Devon RO

South East

Addenbrooke's NHS Trust
East Sussex Record Office
MOD (Army), Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst
MOD (Army), Royal Electrical & Mechanical Engineering Corps RHQ, Reading
National Environmental Research Council, British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge
Royal Greenwich Observatory, Cambridge University Library
UK Atomic Energy Authority

Wales

Conwy Record Office
Anglesey Record Office
Bangor University Archives
National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
Flintshire RO, Hawarden
Glamorgan Archives: Cathays Park Cardiff
Glamorgan Archives: St. Catherine's Corner, Pontypridd (prospective site)
Glamorgan Archives: Landmark Place Development (prospective site)
Glamorgan Archives: The Maltings, Cardiff (prospective site)
Gwent Record Office
National Assembly for Wales : Aerial Photography Cell & Film Store, Cathays Park, Cardiff
MOD (Army), S. Wales Borderer's & Monmouth Museum, Brecon

Yorkshire

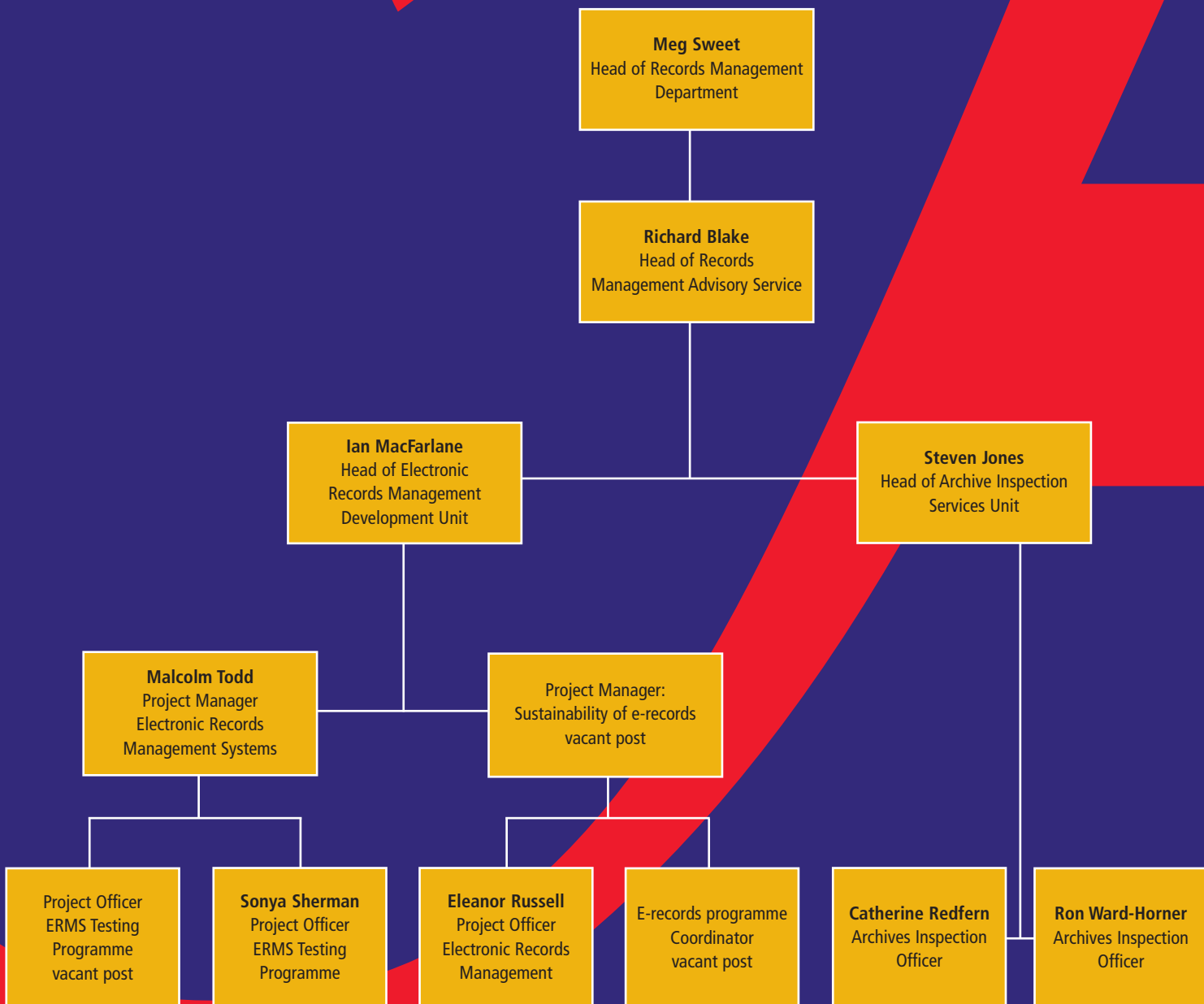
Barnsley Archives

Advice on plans of new record storage and access facilities

Admiralty Library Portsmouth
LB Greenwich
Borthwick Institute, York
Devon Record Office
Tameside Local Studies and Archives Service
University College London Hospital NHS Trust



Records Management Advisory Service at the National Archives: PRO





the national archives

Contacting Us

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