

Date of Meeting: 01/12/2020	Location: By video conference	THE
Title: User Advisory Group Meeting	Subject or Purpose: Minutes of the regular meeting held on the 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2020	NATIONAL ARCHIVES
ATTENDEES		
Sue Adams (Independent Researchers)	Jennifer Aston (Academic).	
Nadine Chambers (Students)	Amelia Clegg (Students)	
Stephen Daghish (On line)	Angela Graham (County/external Archives)	
Mike Grahn (On site Personal Interest)	SG (TNA – Outreach & Inclusion Manager). Item 4 only	
Rachel Hillman (TNA – Education Operations Manager). Item 4 only.	CH (TNA – (Education Web Manager). Item 4 only	
Grace Ioppolo (Academic)	Sadie Jarrett (Map Room and Early Career Academics)	
Valerie Johnson (TNA – Director of Research & Collections) Co-Chair	Susan Moore (Map Room)	
Lee Oliver (TNA – Head of Venue Management & Services)	Caroline Ottaway-Searle (TNA – Director of Public Engagement), Chair	
Will Reid (Diversity)	Pat Reynolds (Family History and On line)	
IS (TNA – Regional Community Partnerships Manager). Item 4 only	AV (TNA – Personal Assistant), Minutes	

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence.

Sophie Kay sent apologies.

## 2. Minutes, Matters arising (COS)

2.1 The minutes from the meeting of the 1st September were approved.

2.2 Matters arising. Page 5, item 4.3. Steps to actively include remote workers, caregivers and the chronically ill: *LO to follow up and raise with colleagues who have been working with the sector about inclusive reopening.*

Update (LO): In June, TNA's Archive Sector Development (ASD) team ran an inclusive re-opening survey which asked archive users and employees for their concerns about re-opening services. This survey focused on the nine protected characteristics that form part of the Equality Act 2010. Following this survey, ASD ran a webinar in August where participants could discuss a series of scenarios based on some of the most commonly listed concerns and queries mentioned by respondents. The participants looked at how these scenarios can be managed to best benefit those concerned. ASD created a worksheet of additional scenarios which archive services can work through to consider how they would respond to different situations. [Read the results and interpretation of the inclusive re-opening survey](#) and [download the inclusive re-opening scenarios worksheet](#).

2.3 Page 5, item 4.5. Provision of writing materials on site and prohibition of notebooks. MG asked if

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this background could be added to the emails to users. *LO to feedback to the teams.*

Update (LO): with the subsequent second period of closure and the revisions to the booking system, all of our messaging regarding accessing the reading rooms has been revised.

### 3. Update on TNA's COVID response (VJ, COS, LO)

- 3.1 Response to the Sector (VJ). The Archives Sector Development team (ASD) has been working hard to support archive services during the pandemic. Many archives are shut but others, such as some universities and higher education institutes, are still open. Before the suspension of reading room services a new business continuity plan and checklist was issued by ASD. This includes guidance on how best to adapt service levels and manage closure and reopening. This information is posted on TNA's [website](#) and includes scenario planning and links to guidance from other relevant institutions such as the Arts Council.

A continuing priority for ASD is digital and this challenge has accelerated since COVID. Digital tools and training have been produced, as well as advocacy resources. The digital strategy [Plugged in, powered up](#) remains active, and a free online programme 'Novice to Know-how' on digital preservation has been popular, with over a thousand participants this year. A new round of ['Archives Revealed'](#), the cataloguing grants scheme, is to be launched in the next few weeks. A new action plan for [Archives Unlocked](#), the Government's vision for the archive sector, is due to be approved and published shortly.

TNA is closely monitoring the financial challenges posed to archives by the pandemic. There is a joint crisis management team that monitors archives at risk and TNA's own staff will work with them and others through the year ahead to support archives through the difficulties they face.

- 3.2 JA asked if there is a programme available to help save archives from failing companies. VJ replied that the challenges to business archives are recognised by TNA and efforts in this area have accelerated - TNA works closely with the Business Archives Council. In 2009 the Business Archives Crisis Management Team (BACMT) was set up, which uses intelligence from its network to identify businesses with archives at risk and help to broker solutions, which can include identifying other archives (such as universities) which could accommodate them. TNA has also worked hard to develop relations with the Insolvency Practitioners Association so that their advice to members includes archives. ASD has two staff who specialise in business archives as part of their role.
- 3.3 PR asked if there was similar coverage for charities. VJ advised that ASD has a Regional and Networks Team of 8 staff, each covering an area of England - the individuals often live in their assigned area. They therefore have a detailed knowledge of the area they support, including the charitable sector. A [contact list](#) for ASD's Regional Team is available on the TNA website. Each team member also has a sector specialism as well as an area, and so there is also a dedicated charity specialist, with access to ASD's strong intelligence network. The team are also in contact with CHARM, an archive group for the charitable sector. BACMT are aware that charities are particularly at risk so have also set up a group to look at mitigating risk to charity archives.
- 3.4 SM asked what the success rate is for saving business archives. VJ is not aware of any complete disappearances since BACMT was established in 2009.
- Action: VJ to obtain further details on numbers of archives saved.**
- 3.5 GI noted that her experience with both the University of Reading's Special Collections and the Society of Antiquaries is that when archives are acquired they need to apply for funding to pay for cataloguers and storage, which is not always a first priority. VJ agreed on the funding challenges -

this is a driver behind the 'Archives Revealed' programme which is the only major grant fund dedicated to cataloguing at present. SM asked if TNA is in contact with auditing firms such as PWC who will have intelligence on possible failing companies.

**Action: VJ to pass SM's suggestion onto the business archives representatives.**

- 3.6 **Research** (VJ). The Research team has been communicating about recent research activity through its Research [newsletter](#). TNA's Collaborative Studentships are still progressing as are collaborative research projects. Any delegates wishing to receive the Newsletter were asked to add their names to the chat function and their names would be added to the Circulation List for the Newsletter.

The Research team has been working to make applications to the Arts & Humanities Research Council's 'Towards a National Collection' programme which was launched in 2019. This has a fund totalling £19 million directed at cultural heritage institutions, to create connections between their collections so as to open up new research opportunities. In Phase one there were eight pilot projects of which TNA led on two. Phase two is made up of larger 'Discovery' projects of £3 million each. Universities too are invited to work and partner on these projects but must do so with a collection based cultural institution. TNA has submitted expressions of interest in four Discovery projects and hopes to hear results on this in April.

The Friends of TNA have generously funded a one year post-doctoral research fellowship in Advanced Digital Methods; the post holder started last week and will be focusing on war diaries and data sharing.

TNA continues to grow its ambitions in respect of research funding, and will be setting up a new Grants Funding Office next year to coordinate this work. The grants sought will also be in respect of supporting the archives sector as well as Research.

- 3.7 **Public Services** (COS). As much as possible TNA has tried to maintain services for all its stakeholders and audiences, whether the archive or academic sectors, the public or the government. There has of course been a focus on capturing the record of the pandemic whether from websites or social media and TNA has also worked with government on its Inquiries.

A lot of feedback has been received from researchers regarding the onsite public services. As a result changes have been incorporated in to the services available when the reading rooms reopen from the 8<sup>th</sup> December. All changes have been made with the safety of staff and visitors as a priority, e.g., social distancing, the quarantining of documents and ensuring a safe working environment – all practices have been subject to risk assessment. There will be an expansion in many services - Saturday services will resume and more documents will be available (readers may order 12 documents, plus 3 reserves, in advance) with public PCs, library books and finding aids available to pre-order. This expansion has required the remodelling of working practices, signage, cleaning regimes amongst other considerations.

In response to feedback we have reviewed the booking process, and have reworked many aspects, including communication and supporting processes. The document request has been decoupled from the Eventbrite booking and should make the experience much simpler for researchers. We would welcome feedback to see how this is working for users. The online enquiry service/live chat continues to be available to support researchers. There was a significant backlog of record copying orders from the first lockdown which is now largely cleared, enabling TNA to open the service again. In terms of expanding the service for the future (beyond Covid) this relies

on additional copying equipment, and trained staff, but is being considered.

TNA has increased the number of digital downloads that readers can access. Our onsite programmes have pivoted to be held online and have been very successful. TNA will seek to maintain this level of online presence in the future.

- 3.8 GI asked what happens when users resident in Tier 3 book seats to visit TNA in Tier 2? LO advised that it is the responsibility of the public to abide by government guidance which requires them to observe the tiering for the area in which they live.
- 3.9 SM asked what percentage of TNA's documents are digitised? LO advised it is hard to be precise as it depends on the definition of a document but one calculation is around 5% of the collection, (80 million documents) being available on line. Work on digitisation continues both by TNA and digital partners whilst each year around 2km of records are accessioned in addition to the born digital records. COS added there is work underway to see how digitised records obtained in other ways can be made accessible.
- 3.10 SA asked if there would be any possibility of TNA accepting photographs taken by users. LO advised this had been looked at previously but challenges with ensuring consistently high quality images currently prevents this.
- 3.11 SM commented that the impression given by TNA's communications during the pandemic was that the vast majority of records are available on line whilst most are not. LO replied that the 5% is the most popular content and the volume of usage for those records far exceeds that for non-digitised on site material. The communications are designed to remind the public that there is access to records even whilst the reading rooms are closed.

#### **4. Update on Education and Outreach (SG, RH, CH and IS)**

- 4.1. **Education programmes** (RH). The team works with students aged 5 up to and including 'A' level and more recently on the Family and Young People's programme. The pandemic has meant the team has had to reconsider how best to engage with audiences offsite. The format of our onsite events has been adapted to work for online family audiences. In March 'Time Travel Club Television' was launched with pre-recorded episodes hosted by members of the Education team. These were on a variety of topics with a mystery document activity which gave the skills for the viewers to investigate follow up documents. Fun activities inspired by the documents were built into each episode. These programmes were followed up by family friendly activities such as 'Letters of Lockdown' and 'The Big Draw'. There were also craft and drawing sessions run by guest artists.

The Young People's Film project, run in partnership with film maker Nigel Kellaway, was also adapted to run online. The theme was 'From Outbreak to Archive' and looked at the records of pandemics and disease such as The Great Plague, cholera, Spanish Flu and AIDS. Sixteen young people have created films which will premiere in February 2021 along with resources and information on the documents that inspired them.

Our 'Talk' programme for schools has been re-launched online and all of the teaching content on line is available for teaching by video conferencing. In October alone we delivered online taught sessions to just under 1,300 students and in January we will launch our new Special Educational Needs sessions. On the 27th November TNA's third 'Kids in Museums Day' ran virtual sessions with Crane Park Primary School with activities and interviews with colleagues across the organisation. A blog based on this day written by the pupils will go live in February.

4.2 **On-line education** (CH). In addition to 'Kids in Museums Day' and study days, the on line team have collaborated with programme managers to publish two school text books. To enhance interactivity within TNA's existing on line lessons (e.g. 'History Hook' and 'Time Travel') video has been added. Audio files have also been added to many of TNA's themed collections which are around 40 transcribed documents around a particular topic.

As part of our work towards being the Inclusive Archive, a finding aid has been developed which pulls together all existing resources from the Education and the Collections Expertise & Engagement departments to help people find where TNA has materials relating to BAME history. The resource is available in a downloadable pdf.

The creative writing for schools competition 'Workhouse Voices' closed on the 30<sup>th</sup> November. This was based around 40 pauper letters from Paul Carter's cataloguing project 'In their own Write' which were digitised, transcribed and had audio files added onto the website together with an interactive map of their location. Over 350 responses consisting of a letter describing life in a workhouse have been received. A new themed collection on Victorian industrial towns has gone live for GCSE and A level including sources material on cholera. New lessons being planned include work with the University of East Anglia and Social Political Innovative Direct theatre group on Mangrove 9; and Black nurses in the Second World War. Other lessons are being worked on for Child Migration, Samuel Pepys, Criminal Petitions and the 1919 Race riots using the Outreach team's research on the latter. CH's presentation is attached.

A finding aid on women's history along the line of that produced for BAME history is being developed together with a puzzle corner for the website as a fun way of introducing historical sources.

4.3 **Outreach** (SG). Building relationships with those unfamiliar with archives has been challenging as face to face contact has not been possible. Given the challenges with mental health posed by the pandemic the focus has been on wellbeing activity. The recent ASD survey asked archives what they were doing on wellbeing - half of the 220 respondents replied that they are working on reminiscence materials and with creative partners to make sure communities feel involved. SG has been involved in a pen pal initiative organised by 'Arts in Care Homes' (ACH) which has included using materials such as extracts from blogs, and photographs. ACH also organised a campaign to celebrate the various initiatives run by care homes; which led to the creation by TNA of the [Five Photos](#) resource to prompt reminiscence and mindfulness. Each image was chosen as it also has audio content, to enable its use by people with visual impairment. The campaign was launched in September and relaunched during Black History Month as it has relevant content. There have so far been 1,400 web visits. In the New Year this resource will be trialled in care homes that can work with TNA on this.

4.4 **Outreach** (IS). IS highlighted three recent activities:

- A play series 'Once British Always British' was undertaken with the Tamasha Theatre. This will be launched in Spring 2021 following a successful private launch this autumn.
- An on line workshop 'Trauma, Resilience, Recovery', produced with the Black African Asian Therapy Network (BAATN). This looked at Indian indentured labour using archive records. TNA worked with a BAATN member from an indentured heritage to share their personal narrative along with TNA's materials. There is a legacy site enabling viewers to look at documents and to submit questions.
- 'Racism Past and Present' a project with Stillpoint Spaces (a psychotherapy organisation), looking at Black British history in the twentieth century and drawing together archival research with therapeutic practice. Stillpoint invited three TNA record specialists to talk about materials relating to Black British history and then a counsellor working with the audience helped process their

feelings prompted by these materials. Next steps are conferences and seminars on promoting this work.

Podcasts have also been created using TNA records: James Gillespie and the 1919 race riots; Partition violence and refugees; Du Bois and Churchill. Themes for future work include: housing and homes in interwar Britain, African textiles, and 1920s exhibitions and events.

5. **Delegate submitted items:** Many delegate questions had been answered as part of the updates in item 3.
- 5.1 Publicity (SM). There was a lack of updates on TNA's website from July to November. Could regular updates be added to reassure the public that planning is ongoing? TNA's PR has not worked well. COS thanked SM for her feedback and has passed on her written comments to the communications team. Many communications have been 'just in time' due to the work required to relaunch services; and as a government department, TNA is required to have confirmation from DCMS that reopening may proceed. A balance needs to be struck between too much communication which can lead to unhelpful speculation but TNA will use this feedback to improve.
- 5.2 Is it correct that a reader may only have two seats a month (SM)? COS advised that this limit will be in place initially to ensure availability for readers who had been unable to book a place previously. Demand will be monitored and the limit will be raised when possible. The new approach does mean consecutive days can be booked, which has been a frequent request from users travelling longer-distances to get to TNA.
- 5.3 There is no representation on UAG for professional historians (i.e. authors who use archives to write books) – could a place be made available on UAG on the next recruitment round (SM)? COS agreed that this constituent group will be borne in mind, and that we regularly review representation when we recruit.
- 5.4 The options available for digitisation for the academic sector (JA).  
LO advised that TNA does not itself have funding to digitise archives – this is funded by customers, including academic institutions either from their own funds or through research funding bids. TNA provides large scale digitisation services via our Digitisation Team, as opposed to Record Copying. The large scale digitisation pricing structure can work out to be cheaper per image. This link provides more information and contact details:  
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/commercial-opportunities/digitisation-services/>

## 6. Forthcoming Events and Any other Business

- 6.1 A cataloguing update is available [here](#) - it is planned to provide regular updates going forward.
- 6.2 See Appendix 1 for a digitisation update.
- 6.3 NC asked for an update on the post graduate workshops for students. LO advised that these have been held online, delivered both by TNA and in conjunction with other organisations such as IHR. A workshop was held in late November on the Northern Way project in conjunction with the Borthwick Institute for Archives. TNA is researching equipment to improve document led video conferencing.
- 6.4 COS confirmed that she will be retiring in Spring 2021 with the March call being her last UAG meeting.

## 7. The next call will be held on Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 10.30 am.

## Digital Microfilm

A full list of what is now available can be found [here](#). No new series of Digital Microfilm have been indexed and made chargeable on Discovery since the last report.

## Digitisation

Title	Dept/series/ Piece(s)/Item (s)	Description	Status
The Genealogist: Tithe Maps	IR 30	Tithe Maps – county by county beginning with Northumberland, Westmorland and Middlesex, moving on to Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Essex. <a href="https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/tithe">https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/tithe</a>	Scanning onsite commenced August 2015 for incremental release county by county from April 2016 ongoing
Adam Matthew Digital	Various FO 262, MFQ 1 & MRQ 1	Foreign Office Files for Japan 1919-1930: Japan and Great Power Status <a href="https://www.amdigital.co.uk/primary-sources/foreign-office-files-for-japan-1919-1952">https://www.amdigital.co.uk/primary-sources/foreign-office-files-for-japan-1919-1952</a>	Published February 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various CO 5	Colonial America, Module 5 <a href="https://www.colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk/">https://www.colonialamerica.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various MAF 60, 74, 83, 156, 286 & 356	Food & Drink in History, module 1 <a href="https://www.foodanddrink.amdigital.co.uk/">https://www.foodanddrink.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published December 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various DO 169 & 187 & FO 371	Foreign Office Files for South East Asia, module 1 <a href="https://www.amdigital.co.uk/primary-sources/foreign-office-files-for-southeast-asia-1963-1980">https://www.amdigital.co.uk/primary-sources/foreign-office-files-for-southeast-asia-1963-1980</a>	Published February 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	MH 32 & MH 33	Poverty, Philanthropy and Social Conditions in Victorian Britain <a href="http://www.povertyinvictorianbritain.amdigital.co.uk/">http://www.povertyinvictorianbritain.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published March 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various DL 50, E 179, LC 2 & 7, PRO 30/24 & PRO 30/53	Early Modern England: Society, Culture and Everyday Life, 1500-1700 <a href="https://www.earlymodernengland.amdigital.co.uk/">https://www.earlymodernengland.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published May 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various ADM 1 & 179, AIR, FD 1 & 2, HLG 7, MH, PIN 15 & WO	Medical Services and Warfare, 1928-1949 <a href="https://www.medicalservicesandwarfare.amdigital.co.uk/">https://www.medicalservicesandwarfare.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published May 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Adam Matthew Digital	Various HO 45 & PC 1	Food & Drink in History, module 2 <a href="https://www.foodanddrink.amdigital.co.uk/">https://www.foodanddrink.amdigital.co.uk/</a>	Published September 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Brill	Various ADM 1, CO 42, EXT 9, EXT 11, MFQ 1, MPG 1, MPI 1, MR 1, PRO 30/55	History of Warfare in North America, c.1756-1815: British Perspectives <a href="https://brill.com/view/db/wna">https://brill.com/view/db/wna</a>	Published July 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library

	& WO 34		
British Online Archives	Various CAB & FO	Paris Peace Conference and Beyond, 1919-1939 <a href="https://microform.digital/boa/collections/86/paris-peace-conference-and-beyond-1919-1939">https://microform.digital/boa/collections/86/paris-peace-conference-and-beyond-1919-1939</a>	Published August 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Findmypast	Various FEC 1, PMG 42-47 & WO 162	FEC 1, PMG 42-47 & WO 162 <a href="http://www.findmypast.co.uk">www.findmypast.co.uk</a>	Published March & June 2020 to family history market with free reading room access.
Gale-Cengage	CO 129	Hong Kong, Britain and China, 1841-1951 <a href="https://www.gale.com/intl/c/china-and-the-modern-world-hongkong-britain-china">https://www.gale.com/intl/c/china-and-the-modern-world-hongkong-britain-china</a>	Published June 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Gale-Cengage	Various HO 45, HO 283 & KV 2	Political Extremism and Radicalism: Far-Right and Left Political Groups in the U.S., Europe, and Australia in the Twentieth Century <a href="https://www.gale.com/intl/c/political-extremism-and-radicalism-in-the-twentieth-century">https://www.gale.com/intl/c/political-extremism-and-radicalism-in-the-twentieth-century</a>	Published August 2019 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Gale-Cengage	LH 1 & 2, SH 1-4	Women's Studies Archive: Voice and Vision <a href="https://www.gale.com/intl/c/womens-studies-archive-voice-and-vision">https://www.gale.com/intl/c/womens-studies-archive-voice-and-vision</a>	Published January 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Gale-Cengage	Various CAB, CO, FO & WO	Refugees, Relief and Resettlement: Forced Migration and World War Two <a href="https://www.gale.com/intl/c/refugees-relief-resettlement-forced-migration-world-war-ii">https://www.gale.com/intl/c/refugees-relief-resettlement-forced-migration-world-war-ii</a>	Published March 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library
Taylor & Francis	Various FO 371	Cold War in Eastern Europe, module 4 <a href="https://think.taylorandfrancis.com/cold-war-eastern-europe/">https://think.taylorandfrancis.com/cold-war-eastern-europe/</a>	Published September 2020 to academic market with free reading room access via e-library