Date of Meeting: 5 September 2023	**Location:** By Video Conference / TNA	**THE**
Title: User Advisory Group Meeting	**Subject or Purpose:** Minutes of a regular meeting held on 5 September 2023	**NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

ATTENDEES	
Grace Ioppolo (Academic)	Anne Samson (Ethnic Minority & Other Diverse Groups)
Nadine Chambers (Students)	Pat Reynolds (Family History & Online)
Susan Moore (Maps)	Jennifer Aston (Academic Researcher)
Jeremy Stocker (Academic Researcher)	Emmajane Avery (TNA - Director of Public Engagement & Sector Leadership
Roger Fisher (Map Room Users & Overseas Researchers)	Lee Oliver (TNA - Head of Visitor Experience)
Mike Grahn (Onsite Personal)	DS (TNA Corporate Security Advisor)
Lisbet Sherlock (Family History & Online)	RM (TNA – Senior Personal Assistant), Minutes
Alison Kay (External Archive Users)	
APOLOGIES	
Will Reid (Diversity)	Lucy Fletcher (TNA – Director of Public Access & Government Services), Co-chair
Matthew Cleary (Student & Online)	Grace Touzel (External Archivist)

1.	**Introduction & Welcome (EJA)**
	EJA welcomed members and apologies were recorded.
2.	**Membership Update (EJA)**
	EJA provided an update on the recruitment of three new members who would join the next UAG meeting on 12 December.
	EJA thanked GI, NC, WR and GT for their contributions to the UAG meetings.
	EJA advised the group that TNA would be reviewing the content of the UAG meetings and how the group will work in future. EJA informed the group that any feedback would be welcome.
3.	**Minutes & Matters Arising (EJA)**
	Minutes of the meeting on 6 June were agreed with the exception of an outstanding action on 'Digital Archive Outsourcing' (AS) which has been carried forward.
3.	**Public Services** (LO)

	LO provided the group with an update on Public Services emphasising the success of Tuesday & Thursday family activity days with the 'Spirit of Invention'. LO pointed out there had been no complaints about any disruption from researchers, reader and users.
	LO advised the group that the exhibition will close in October. The next exhibition will have been finalised by the next meeting (12 December) and further details will be provided.
Q.	SM asked if the parents attending these sessions were interested in looking at the archives or were they attending to entertain the children.
A.	LO informed the group that TNA are constantly trying to show those visiting the archives that there is more to see and do for example the 'Document of Month Display' which TNA are planning to expand.
Q.	GI asked if there could be computers near the exhibition for those who might want to start their research.
A.	LO advised that there are a number of tablets available from 1921 Census launch which we have made available downstairs on Sundays. Due to space it would be challenging to provide computers. LO reiterated that the reading rooms were not open on Sundays.
Q.	RF asked if TNA would consider an exhibition on Genealogy.
A.	EJA informed the group that the next exhibition would include family history aspects.
Q.	SM asked if the documents shown at the exhibitions could have the reference numbers displayed.
A.	LO agreed this was a good point and would provide feedback to the exhibitions team
4.	**Security Checks (DS)**
	DS provided an overview of TNA's Security Procedures emphasising that the purpose of checking bags etc. is to avoid terrorism, stop stealing of documents and provide safety to the staff and users of the archives.
Q.	SM questioned why security would need to look at laptops particularly upon arrival and an apparent lack of consistency in searching.
A.	DS informed the group that everything should be checked and that the procedures were essential.
5.	**Delegated Submitted Items (LO)**
	The rearrangement of the books and finding aids in the Map Room
Q.	SM raised her view that though considerable consultation between the map room and library staff takes place there is no discussion with map room users eg., with map room users who are directly affected in their research by making furniture changes. A number of IND 1 volumes are coming out to open shelves which is good news but consultation with what comes out would be welcome. SM commented that she was hoping the full set of Oxford English Dictionary books will be returning to the map room. SM pointed out that this was a vital resource for the researchers and the ability to browse is essential. SM questioned whether being involved in discussions around major changes

	were possible.
A.	LO provided the group with a response from DG informing them that map room moves are part of the Map Room Refresh paper that was circulated and approved by the UAG in late 2021/early 2022. In DG's response it was confirmed that nothing has been removed from the map room that is not available in the catalogue or online. DG confirmed that relevant record specialists were consulted before any items were actually removed in April & May 2023 and if readers still wished to consult these finding aids they can request them at the map room enquiry desk. DG's response provided an overview to the group about what factors were considered in terms of deciding what original finding aids to bring out to the map rooms from the repositories. The 3 key questions asked were, is the information available elsewhere, how much space do these volumes take and are these series and department well presented in the map room? DG concluded his response by stating that TNA record specialists were consulted regarding what finding aids to bring out using their decades of experience dealing with user needs. LO completed the discussion by informing the group that should there be any further Map Room additions/changes the UAG would be consulted.
Q	RF asked if there could be a floor map of the reading rooms?
A.	LO informed the group that this is under consideration.
Q.	RF asked if there could be a separate library established from the reading rooms?
A.	LO informed the group that there is always the issue of space.
	The new version of Discovery (Discovery Beta)
Q.	SM commented on her disappointment with the current private beta release and gave some examples,
A.	LO provided the group with a response from SB emphasising that feedback is welcome and an important part of TNA allowing them to shift priorities as a result. SB's response informed the group that is it TNA's aim to improve the service and reaffirmed that there is no plan to turn off Discovery until the new search/website is at least equal in it's functionality to Discovery. SB advised the group that this is not to say that all features will be replicated like for like, as the change is an opportunity to refine and simplify as well as expand and grow features on a case by case basis. The aim is not to remove any key functionality. SB's response confirmed that the new 'Beta' would have the ability to download search results with the added functionality of 'advanced search' and 'browse'. SB stated that this type of development is a cornerstone of the Agile framework that government favours for its digital services and that as such TNA had decided to initiate private beta with a minimum viable product functionality with a view to adding and refining the new system. The reason for early release to a small group is to elicit exactly the kind of feedback provided by the UAG and other the users which will help to examine priorities as TNA develop the site. Private Beta is purely an exercise to test as it is developed.

Q.	AS & SM asked to be sent the link to 'private beta' for testing purposes. DONE ***Action : LO***
6.	**<u>Any other business</u>**
	NC requested that a workshop be held to discuss UK law on the use and publication of material in public and private archives and access to private / record office collections. The workshop should include how to navigate permissions and copyright. LO replied that this would probably be 2 different workshops with discussion to be had with colleagues from Research & Academic Engagement and Inclusion. ***Action: C/F LO***

Meeting closed at 12:00hrs