

London Archives Partnership

Network Meeting

Friday November 18th 2016

London Metropolitan Archives

10:00am – 12:30pm

NOTES AND ACTIONS

Attendees:

TNA, City of London, Hillingdon, Bexley, Lambeth, Bromley, Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kingston, Hounslow, Brent, Haringey, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth

Apologies:

Hackney, Waltham Forest, Croydon, Southwark

1. Welcome and Project updates

Geoff Pick

Welcome from Geoff Pick to the London Archives Partnership Network Meeting

LMA news

Geoff Pick

LMA roof replacement project in full swing.

Project to scope move (current lease until 2035) ongoing.

Internal reorganisation in City – LMA moving to Town Clerks Department (CEOs Office)

COLLAGE image gallery – if boroughs would like to, it is possible to curate a mini gallery on Collage about your area or sub area.

The GLA & English Heritage are organising a 'London Heritage Day' on 31st May 2017. Could be an opportunity to rebrand some activities and join in?

British Library Save our Sounds project

Geoff Pick

British Library currently applying for the main funding. LMA will be London regional hub. Charlotte Scott will lead – there are still opportunities to get involved.

London Screen Archives

Simon McKeon

Clare Watson the project lead has recently resigned and will be replaced in the New Year.

Films have been used successfully in dementia prevention and there has been a training course on this.

London: the Bigger Picture project continues to be delivered across the outer London Boroughs who are partners in the project. Kino van is parked in the LMA carpark. Use of the van has been very successful, attracting lots of people at events across the boroughs and allowing a wide variety of films to be shown.

Joint programme with the London Museum Development Team

Tina Morton

The Safe and Strong programme has successfully delivered a series of network events, training and guidance for London Local Authority Archive and Museum Services. A further joint event similar to last year's one in April is being planned for the spring.

Advocacy

As part of the wider benchmarking work it is proposed to develop an advocacy document similar to those produced by the West Midlands and [Manchester](#)

Please do send me any case studies you think would make good illustrations.

Aim25/LAP Catalogue project

Geoff Pick

Recap was given on [AIM25](#) for those not familiar - Catalogue portal with over 150 members. Project being scoped to enable enhanced digital access to borough catalogues in partnership with AIM25. This is through a HLF bid building on pilots using the open source ATOM software in Croydon. A HLF Project Enquiry Form centring on benefits, outcomes, stories and access has been submitted and is being refined.

Benchmarking

Geoff Pick

The National Visitor Survey [Distance User Survey run by Archives and Records Association (ARA) through CIPFA See: <http://www.archives.org.uk/about/sections-interest-groups/volunteering-security-and-access-and-surveys-group.html>] is currently taking place. 16 boroughs are taking part this year. We will use the data to do some London wide analysis and benchmarking which will feature in the advocacy document.

Disaster Planning – no further update but is being investigated

2. Borough news round up

Updates from:

Bexley [joint management of Bromley/Bexley to end – Bromley Library service to be outsourced, Bexley to stay in house. Bexley Heritage Trust closing with house going back to council control];

Bromley [Service now Local Studies, Archive & Museum collection all in Central Library; museum will have 2 exhibitions a year. As part of change local studies library has been refurbished. Currently applying for accreditation];

Brent [joint service with Museum; new Heritage Assistant has been recruited; Adlib catalogue has been upgraded with improved front end. Would like to work towards accreditation over the next year];

H&F/K&C H&F has 0.5 archive staff, working on online catalogue presence with CLAM, under pressure to rent out space which archive currently uses but storage at Lilla Husset has been secured for 15 years / K&C not much change. Have run successful London History Festival. Working on getting some images online. HLF funded project including oral histories around carnival; current restructure will see them lose 0.5 fte post];

Haringey [Joint Museum and Archive service, current exhibitions on LTM Battle bus and African textiles; current review into access to council minutes and sensitivities around releasing newer material, also storage of committee papers. Intend to start accreditation planning next year];

Hillingdon [Local Studies, Archives and Museum service. Just had a move out of library service into heritage service. 3 staff left and 1 is on maternity leave – these haven't been covered yet as service being reviewed. Opening hours cut from 66 to 27 per week. Currently revamping Adlib and webpages, planning accreditation and security auditing collections];

Hounslow [new archives assistant Adam recently started, still have split site provision Hounslow and Chiswick. Future uncertain as will need to move when new civic centre library opens - currently on new location as new library is too small.];

Kingston [new history centre has been open for a year has seen increase in visitor numbers, heritage currently at the heart of council thinking as leader is supportive. Much of collection currently in storage at Upper Heyford, looking for in borough solution. Implementing CALM project and auditing collections. Planning to do accreditation next year. ;

Lambeth [Minet Library closed but archive still open! Consultants Creative Cultures looking at options for a move; records held within council has raised profile of archive especially as there is a project to look at records management also scrutiny of children's home records while challenging has brought benefits. 4th successful heritage festival has been delivered];

Tower Hamlets [Reading room has reopened after roof repairs, current exhibition on Brick Lane, have been planning for the Right Ideas festival];

Wandsworth [new archivist has started, looking at Digital collections management and investigating who in the council is responsible for information management. Working to widen schools access];

Westminster [Successfully achieved accreditation. Building has been undergoing eco-friendly sustainability refurbishment e.g. energy efficient lighting; boilers replaced and will have solar panels on the roof. Big HLF project on soldier's Waterloo stories. Current reorganisation plan would see service lose 2.5 FTE posts].

3. Response to the Draft Strategic Archive Vision (The National Archives)

Geoff Pick/Tina Morton

BACKGROUND:

Over the summer, [we engaged](#) with users, the archives sector, partners and key stakeholders to develop the new strategic vision for archives, published in October 2016:

[Read the new strategic vision for the archives sector](#) (PDF, 0.27 MB).

A period of consultation running from 11 October 2016 to 11 January 2017 is underway and we want as many people as possible to get involved in shaping the future vision and the action plan underpinning it.

You can get involved by filling in the survey which will take between 10-15 minutes to complete:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/F3NZZXD> And/or by sending us your comments to

ArchiveVision@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

We want to know if you think that the vision responds to your needs and opportunities, in particular the overarching vision of a digitally enabled sector with a rich range of on-site experiences to cater to a diverse and varied audience.

Group discussion:

Who is the vision for?

Seems to be back to front – challenges set out well but when you get to 3 umbrella themes it seems to confuse and dilute them.

Theme 3 is core to what we do but people reading the document might think that this is the first time we have thought of it! The idea is not brand new!

Will need a practical action plan to underpin this.

Theme 1: not just information and data but evidence; the evidence is reliable because of our work. The phrase 'information and data' dilutes the message.

3rd sentence – not just reputation – archives enable transparency by being well run, transparent organisations. Archive's research skills enable users to hold outside organisations to account – the archive staff are impartial.

Theme 2 :

'Innovation' is not helpful or appropriate – creativity or engagement might be better – the tone doesn't come through in the bullets making 'innovation' a red herring

Will need support to put into action in a local authority context. Need to involve key partners from local authority. Especially for implementation around digital and evidence.

Skills and flexibility key. Need help to share these across boroughs and possibly link up with groups such as London Museum group.

Could TNA have a fund or a team of consultants to help with practical implementation? A task force for intervention and support? – Not 'just' training sessions.

Information & data – need to go back to basics – need help in local authority explaining what it is and the potential it has.

Without seeing the action plan it is hard to see how this will practically apply on a local level, but it will be good for advocacy and bids.

Will be challenging to match this with council strategy. Need to balance the aspirational with the practical. World class archival practice sets the bar very high. In small teams, which lack resources, can we ever really provide this?

How will the action plan tackle diversity in collecting and in the profession? Could regions work collaboratively to look at collecting and if it represents area. Evidence of local impact.

Bigger challenge is that general public are largely ignorant about what we do and that we exist. Need to raise awareness so they know we are there as and when they may need us.

- Need for user support until a generational transition has taken place and more people are confident with the technology. Support for users with less education/confidence on digital platforms and research - there will always be some in need of the support
- Needs to be a slow trickle of change not a major overhaul as organisations need realistic timeframes in which to respond to and implement change - change management training for staff, employers and higher managers in local authorities
- Examples of how to use evidence to support the changes
- Should Local Authorities undertake an exercise in how to match sector priorities and LA priorities?
- TNA and ARA should run sessions for liaison with different professionals in the council (like with digital and Friends groups)
- Requirements around skills and flexibility challenging for small services. Experience won't give you skills in all areas, and when in a busy and small role you don't have the time to attend training. Experts to come in and show you what to do, support and consult would be a great solution.

4. Actions and Next steps (including ideas for future meetings)

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

tbc

Ideas for future meetings:

Volunteer digitisation projects

London CIPFA results

Reuse of Public Sector Information

Goddard enquiry: transparency of government

Any additional ideas please send through to Tina Morton tina.morton@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk