

Annual report and resource accounts of the Keeper of Public Records on the work of the Public Record Office : 44th (2002/03)

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LORD CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

**The Forty-fourth Annual Report and Resource
Accounts of the Keeper of Public Records on
the work of the**

Public Record Office

**and the Forty-fourth Report of the Advisory Council
on Public Records**

2002-2003

*Annual Report and Resource Accounts of the Keeper presented to Parliament
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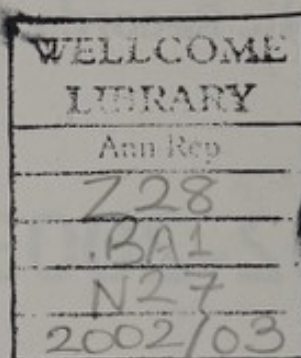
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The Keeper of Public Records, Sarah Tyacke, with members of the Management Board

Keeper's foreword

To the Right Honourable the Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain

I am pleased to present the last Annual Report and Accounts for the Public Record Office (PRO) for the financial year 2002-03.

Following the announcement in Parliament in July 2002, the Public Record Office and the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) came together in April 2003 to form a new organisation – The National Archives.

The National Archives – of England and Wales and of the United Kingdom government – will be able to deploy more effectively our joint resources for the benefit of the public.

We will promote the study of the

past through the public records and other archives held across the country and act as the chief source of advice on records management and archives policy within government. We will also provide impartial advice to custodians of records and papers throughout the public and private sectors.

This new central coherence is intended to improve the safeguarding, selection and preservation of official records and other archives. It will also provide greater on-site and online access for all to the documents, in partnership with other relevant departments and organisations.

Similar objectives have, of course, been pursued by the PRO and the HMC for over 100 years and it is on the experience of them both that the new National Archives

will build. Existing stakeholders, such as government departments and private records owners, will not be neglected and will remain at the forefront of our thinking.

It is in this emerging context that I am happy to report the continuing progress of the Public Record Office in 2002-03.

Popular online services

Amongst the highlights of this year's work, to which everyone in the PRO has worked so hard, are the popularity of the website and our online services – these now run at 77 million information requests a year.

Our website now includes wills from 1700 to 1840 and information about historical documents held in some 300 archives across England through the Access to Archives (A2A) programme – supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Also on our website is the award-winning online National Archives Learning Curve for schools which has just produced an exhibition for the National Curriculum about Britain in the period 1906-18.

Of particular importance to family historians this year has been the completion of the microfilming of the "Burnt Documents", the surviving personal records of the soldiers of the First World War, which were eagerly awaited by people across the world.

The Family Records Centre continues to operate close to capacity at some 15,000 visits a month.

The www.familyrecords.gov.uk website now also includes entries from the Imperial War Museum, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Scottish Archives Network (SCAN), and the Access to Archives (A2A) programme.

The 1901 census website went back online on a trial basis in August 2002. Since its public relaunch in November, it has performed very well, with over 33 million searches completed by the end of March 2003.

For our academic users, apart from all our normal services, we have published, in partnership with Boydell & Brewer, the Calendar of Curia Regis Rolls 1249-1250. We have given many inductions to students as well as organising and contributing to seminars on subjects ranging from medieval history to marriage and divorce records. We have also started working with the University of London's School of Advanced Study and other research bodies in our field.

Taking archives into the community

We have made even greater attempts to engage with the public at large and with specific communities who have not previously used us. MORI research indicates that once people realise who we are and what we have to offer, they become determined to find out more.

Our main thrust has been to take archives into the community. We started this with *Memories from the Islands*, opened by David Lammy MP at Bruce Castle Museum, Haringey, which celebrates the stories of people

moving here through photographs and reminiscences of that time. This new initiative has been augmented by Moving Here and the Pathways to the Past programme, both of which have been supported this year by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). Using exciting websites they engage with new audiences in ways they prefer.

Archiving digital records

We have also continued to provide advice and services for government and for the future. In March 2003 we established our Digital Archive – the first step towards being able to archive the digital records of government. An accompanying international conference was held at Kew, under the auspices of the International Council on Archives (ICA), to discuss the practicalities of archiving digital records, with expert contributions from North America and elsewhere.

We have already taken the digital multi-media records of inquiries such as that into The Marchioness disaster. In partnership with colleagues from the BBC we managed to preserve the original analogue tapes of the 1986 BBC Domesday disk in digital format.

We also have many miles of paper records which need conservation and this year we have, amongst many other documents and photographs, conserved the will of William Wordsworth.

Supporting the public sector

We have also continued to support other government departments in organising and safeguarding their digital records through our Electronic Document

and Records Management 2004 (EDRM) Project. This in turn supports the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, due to come into force in 2005. We prepared the Code of Practice on Records Management for the public sector as a whole, which was required under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act, and have given training to colleagues in the NHS and other similar bodies.

During the year we took the lead in a review of record keeping and archival legislation in the light of legislative and technological and other developments since the Public Records Act was passed in 1958.

We have also continued to develop, both inside and outside government, strategies to improve both records management and archiving, notably through the Interdepartmental Committee on Archives (IDAC) and the Archives Task Force set up by Resource: the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries.

The range of work now undertaken by the staff of the PRO is substantially greater than that of a few years ago, and it is a tribute to their flexibility and commitment that all of these critical developments can be encompassed as well as those of serving the public and preserving the records for the future.

Sarah Tyacke

Sarah Tyacke CB

Keeper of Public Records
and Chief Executive,
The National Archives

A new gateway to British history

The National Archives for England, Wales and the United Kingdom acts as the custodian of the nation's collective memory as revealed in the records of government. We also collect and disseminate information about archives relating to British history wherever they are held.

Building on the achievements of the Public Record Office and the HMC, The National Archives will be better able to safeguard the nation's 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 The National Archives available to everyone – onsite or online.

Over the next 12 months, the National Archives will combine the services and expertise of both the PRO and the HMC but will be greater than the sum of its parts.

We will achieve this by making stakeholders the focus of the new institution – not only those who already use our services, but also those who would like to do so if they knew about them. We will be seeking to communicate more with our users and with expert bodies – the Society of Archivists, the National Council on Archives (NCA), Resource: the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and the International Council on Archives.

The National Archives will take a leading role in the new national archives network which will

Becoming The National Archives

In April 2003 the Public Record Office (PRO) and the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) came together to form The National Archives. Our new combined organisation covers both public records (the records of government and the courts of law) and private archives.

This is therefore the last annual report to cover the work of the Public Record Office. The work of the Historical Manuscripts Commission in 2002/03 is covered separately in the HMC *Annual Review 2002-03*.

allow researchers to search the catalogues of local and national archives from a central website. We will work closely with major players in this field, such as NCA.

Sharing knowledge and collaboration are two of the major themes of the new National Archives: we will share our own expertise freely with others and will learn from them.

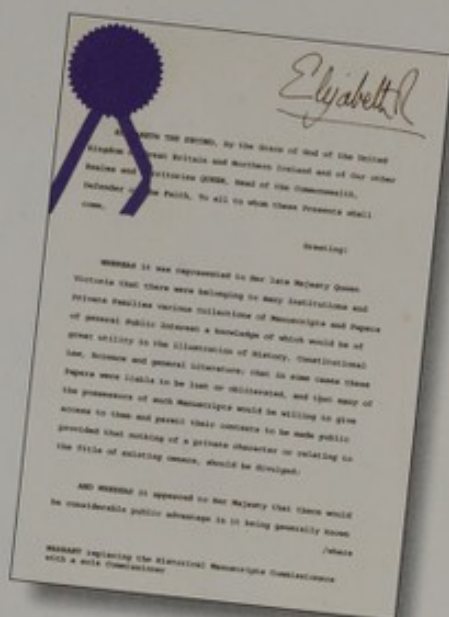
The aims of The National Archives are:

- To assist and promote the study of the past through the public records and other archives in order to inform the present and the future
- To act as the chief source of authoritative advice and guidance on records management, archive policy and related information policy matters within government
- To provide impartial advice to custodians of records and papers throughout the public and private sectors on records and archives management.

Bringing the PRO and HMC together

Following the announcement in Parliament, in July 2002, of the coming together of the Public Record Office and Historical Manuscripts Commission to form The National Archives, extensive work has taken place across both organisations. The Royal Warrant was signed by Her Majesty the Queen, transferring the powers and responsibilities of the Historical Manuscripts

Royal Warrant



Commission to the holder of the post of Keeper of Public Records.

Consultation about the formation of The National Archives took place not only across the PRO and HMC but also with key stakeholders including academics, archivists, museum professionals and representatives from the wider government world. We now issue a regular newsletter, *ArchivistA!*, to the archives community and have placed a number of articles in publications and newsletters to inform this and other groups of stakeholders about the new arrangements.

In the run up to the launch of The National Archives, we developed a new logo and consistent corporate identity for all future publicity. The new logo – which incorporates elements of a traditional letter A (for Archives) and a more modern one – represents The National



Archives' role in preserving the past for future generations.

A new gateway page for The National Archives has also been launched at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Later in 2003 staff from the HMC in central London will move to the PRO site in Kew. The information and advice areas will be redesigned to enable us to provide information not just about public records but also about private archives held throughout the UK and overseas, relating to all aspects of British history.

"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."

Rosie Winterton MP, Parliamentary Secretary at the Lord Chancellor's Department, announcing a new digital archive system at The National Archives to store, preserve, and provide access to government records created in electronic form – such as emails, web pages and databases



The nation's memory

The National Archives carries out the role of the Public Record Office (PRO) in holding the historical records of government for England, Wales and the United Kingdom. We also administer the UK's public records system under the Public Records Acts of 1958 and 1967.

The records we keep span 1000 years – from Domesday Book to the latest Government papers to be released – and fill about 176 kilometres of shelving.

The PRO's aims in 2002-03 were:

- To assist and promote the study of the past through the public records in order to inform the present and the future
- To advise government on public record issues and related information policy matters.

The PRO's core functions in 2002-03 were:

- To oversee records management in government and the selection of public records to provide an information resource for our generation and for future generations
- To preserve the public records
- To provide access to the public records and promote their value and use as a national information and educational resource.

What are public records?

Public records are the administrative and departmental records of the Crown. They include written documents, maps, seals, photographs, moving images, sound recordings, and electronic records created and read by computers.

Public records tell us about the processes and actions of the state and about its relations with citizens. They can also be used for historical and genealogical research, to make government accountable to the people, to

inform government decisions and as legal evidence.

Public records selected for permanent preservation and public access are held by The National Archives (PRO) and other places of deposit appointed by the Keeper of Public Records on behalf of the Lord Chancellor.

The National Archives is open to the public. Anyone with proper identification can consult the records without charge and can buy copies of most documents. Some of the most famous records are on display at The National Archives Museum in Kew.

Most records are opened to the public after 30 years but the Lord Chancellor and his ministerial colleagues may decide to release some records earlier or later than this.

With the coming together of the PRO and the HMC to form The National Archives on 1 April 2003, we are no longer exclusively concerned with public records but also have a general responsibility to promote high standards of care for, and public access to, archival material of all kinds relating to any aspect of British history.

Our vision – The National Archives in 2006

Our vision is that in 2006, The National Archives is at the centre of a flourishing network of public and other archive services, which provides nationwide access to the unique information held by the archive sector and related

material kept in libraries, museums, heritage and higher education institutions.

The network has been forged through imaginative partnerships such as Access to Archives (a nationwide online catalogue for England) and Moving Here (digitised sources relating to the experience of immigration), which have crucially depended on grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the New Opportunities Fund. The network, already galvanised through the implementation of the Action Plan of the Government Policy on Archives, is now ready to tackle the challenge of archiving "born digital" records on a large scale.

By March 2006 practically all initial access to The National Archives – and a high proportion of our services to users – is through our website. This site projects the well-defined branding of The National Archives and is accessible from all relevant heritage, educational and cultural portals. It also has links to all the major historical and genealogical research sites in the UK.

Online services, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, are based on our comprehensive electronic catalogue, which is accessed by all users free of charge. The depth of our catalogue relating to public records is complemented by the National Register of Archives' breath of coverage of archival sources outside the public records. We now provide a "one-stop" shop for information about archival sources relating to any aspect of British history.

We offer online ordering and sales from our shop but, above

all, we supply an increasingly large percentage of our popular records as images online, which can be accessed and downloaded for a small fee.

We also provide online access to the increasing volume of records, which are being transferred from government in digital form.

Royalties from licensing agreements, as well as income from our Documents Online system, provide a significant amount of our receipts, all of which is ploughed back into further online service developments.

These are the five objectives we have set ourselves to help realise our vision in the five years up to 2006, together with some highlights from the year's achievements.

1 To improve electronic access to public records

We have continued to provide greater access to digital images of wills and other records through Documents Online. Wills from 1700 to 1840 were made available during the year and in the coming year earlier wills from 1384 to 1699 will be added.

The second phase of the collaborative Access to Archives (A2A) project (see page 51) has made excellent progress, with over 20 proposals for the digitisation of catalogues and related work receiving grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund. More than 500,000 catalogue pages are now available on the A2A database covering over 300 record offices throughout England.

The result of the additional material and increased publicity

has been that our website handled over 77 million information requests from users, and was regularly among the top five government websites in terms of popularity.

② To enhance the quality and efficiency of our public services, onsite and online

We continue to maintain high standards of public service on and off site.

The results of our four major onsite user surveys conducted this year showed that nearly 97 per cent of users thought that our services were "good" or "excellent".

For the first time we conducted two satisfaction surveys of our vast constituency of online users world wide, and were encouraged to learn that over 85 per cent of them thought our services were "good" or "excellent".

③ To improve the way records are selected and managed

We accessioned 2128 metres of records and most government departments continued to make steady progress towards the target of introducing electronic records management by 2004 under our guidance.

We prepared a Code of Practice on Records Management which was approved by the Lord Chancellor and will help all public authorities meet their obligations from January 2005 onwards to provide access to information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

④ To improve preservation of the public records on conventional and digital media

The highlight of the year was the installation of a specially developed digital archive system, which will store "born digital" records – i.e. records of government which have been produced electronically.

The first accessions into our new archive will include the records of high-profile public enquiries, royal commissions and departmental websites. These records can exist in an enormous variety of formats but we have made a promising start in rising to this immense challenge.

A large number of intrinsically valuable maps, books, photographs, documents and seals have been restored, rebound or preserved in our continuing programme of preserving key objects at risk of permanent damage.

⑤ To promote the value and use of public records

The collaborative *Moving Here* project (see page 40) is now well underway, with the website launched on the Internet in January. By the end of March the site contained over 56,000 catalogue records, containing nearly 115,000 images, audio and video clips.

Our Learning Curve website aimed at school pupils and teachers continues to go from strength to strength. Additions this year included a large new exhibition about Britain in the period 1906-18, as well as snapshots relating to Florence Nightingale, Captain Cook and the V1 Rocket.

Our Pathways to the Past programme aimed at lifelong learners included two online exhibitions, on the First World War and Citizenship.



New Year Openings

Most records are closed for 30 years before being opened to the public, usually in the following January.

On 1 January 2003 we released about 30,000 documents from 1972 and a further 2,500 which had been closed for longer periods. The 1972 records included minutes and memoranda of the Cabinet and the Chiefs of Staff Committee which we made available as scanned images on our website.

The release of these documents – particularly those transferred by the Prime Minister's office, the Cabinet Office, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Northern Ireland Office – gained extensive coverage in the national and international media.

Much of the media coverage concentrated on records relating to the major events in Northern Ireland, notably "Bloody Sunday" and the introduction of direct rule from Westminster.

More recent government documents

Under the Open Government Initiative many documents are released before they are 30 years old. These include computerised statistical surveys organised by central government. If selected for permanent preservation such surveys are held in our National Digital Archive of Datasets (NDAD), managed

Opening up the records

The National Archives makes the Government's historical records available to the public.

Much of the work we do to make this happen goes on behind the scenes. We help government departments identify the most important records to preserve. And we ensure that the records we keep, on behalf of the nation, are looked after properly so that they will still be available for future generations to enjoy.

Photograph of Double Cross agents "Mutt" and "Jeff", from a Security Service file (TNA:PRO KV 2/1067) released in November 2002

under contract by the University of London Computer Centre. In 2002/03 the surveys released have included:

- the Metropolitan Police crime statistics system containing data relating to crime in the Metropolitan Police area, 1976 to 1997
- datasets compiled as part of the annual census of schools (commonly known as form 7) from 1975 to 1993.

These and other datasets are an important resource for researchers. They illustrate the way that in the electronic age government data can be made available to the public online within a relatively short period after creation.

Other records released within the 30-year period include those of the Ladbroke Grove Rail Inquiry 1999-2001.

Subject areas

Here are some of the areas covered by newly released files in 2002/03. Many of them attracted widespread media interest:

- **Lawrence of Arabia:** Air Ministry files on T E Lawrence's service in the RAF from 1922 to 1935. Ten were made available via DocumentsOnline, and have proved to be some of the most popular images on our website
- **Interwar European immigration into the UK:** Further individual files of applications for UK naturalisation from 1934

- **Abdication of Edward VIII:** About 120 previously closed files relating to Edward VIII's abdication were released on 30 January 2003. They documented the role of ministers and senior officials in the crisis, and revealed important new evidence about such matters as the tripartite relationship between the crown, the UK government, and governments of the Dominions. They also documented the investigations into the private lives of the King and Mrs Simpson by the Metropolitan Police Special Branch and the King's Proctor

- **History of the railway industry:** This year saw the culmination of a three year programme to sort and transfer the most important historical records of British Rail. Several hundred metres of railway records arrived at Kew, illustrating the history of the railway industry and its impact on wider society from the great railway boom of the 1840s to the privatisation of the nationalised industry in the 1990s

- **Merchant marine in the Second World War:** The remaining log books and crew agreements of ships in UK coastal waters were released
- **Special Operations Executive:** The final records of the SOE were transferred, comprising personal files of agents and other staff
- **MI5 in the Second World War:** The diaries of Guy Liddell, deputy Director General of the Security Service (MI5)

- **Cold War:** A number of individual documents on the Cold War included the key government assessment of the impact of nuclear attack on the United Kingdom in 1955, and a file relating to the disappearance of Donald Maclean
- **Social conditions in the 1950s:** Witness statements relating to the Notting Hill riots of 1958.

During the year we added about 2,000 metres of records from central government departments to our existing holdings. For the first time, these included electronic records created by committees of inquiry, such as those into BSE, the *Derbyshire* and Bristol Royal Infirmary.



During the year we organised 14 press events to promote new releases of records and received extensive coverage in the national, regional and specialist press and media



Carrying out government policy

Freedom of Information

Over the past year, we have continued to play a major role in implementing the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We have started discussions with the Office of the Information Commissioner on how we will work together to promote good records management in government.

We contribute to cross-government work through the Freedom of Information (Fol) ministerial advisory and practitioners' groups. This includes the project to remove or amend the statutory bars preventing us from providing access to certain records.

The Code of Practice on Records Management under section 46 of the Act was issued formally in November 2002. We have continued our programme of preparing model action plans for different parts of the public sector. These have been published for central and local government, higher education, police forces and NHS authorities and we are currently working on one for schools.

Our staff have also provided training under the auspices of the Society of Archivists, aimed at preparing public authorities for the implementation of Freedom of Information legislation.

Government

The National Archives (PRO) oversees how government manages its records and selects which to release to the public – now and for future generations.

Our work for central government centres around three main activities:

- Carrying out government policy
- Promoting good practice in the way records are managed to support the business of government
- Helping government select records for permanent preservation.

This work also benefits local authorities and other public bodies, who draw on our best practice to guide their own operations.

We have initiated an Order in Council to add three bodies to the list of those whose records are public records: the British Council, the Disability Rights Commission and the Simpler Trade Procedures Board.

We are also working towards our own implementation of FoI. We were one of the central government bodies to pioneer pilot publication schemes and were pleased to receive the Information Commissioner's approval of our final scheme. It can be seen on our website at www.pro.gov.uk/about/foi/pub_scheme.asp

We have revised our guidance to members of the public on how to make a request for information under the Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. This is now on our website at www.pro.gov.uk/about/code_you.htm

Archives legislation

Last year we reported on the start of a review of the effectiveness of the Public Records Act 1958. This was prompted by a suggestion in the 1999 *Government Policy on Archives* (Cm 4516), published by the Lord Chancellor, that the legislative framework for archives might need to be reviewed.

The review is being undertaken by a cross-Government Working Group led by the Keeper, who has been charged by the Lord Chancellor with taking it forward. It is due to be completed during 2003.

Electronic records management

Government departments and agencies are making public services available through electronic channels. This increased use of electronic information produces electronic records which need to be properly managed.

Government organisations also have to be able to comply with information policy legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

To do this, they need to be able to store their electronic records efficiently – know what they have and where to find them – and have clear rules for their retention and disposal.

We are helping government to deliver these substantial changes. The National Archives oversees achievement of the target for putting in place, by 2004, the capability to manage electronic records. We provide leadership for this work, monitor progress, and offer advice and guidance to help departments in their efforts.

Over the last year we have:

- Updated standards for requirements for electronic records management systems, to incorporate new developments in e-government and information policy legislation
- Worked with the Office of the e-Envoy to establish common standards for describing and exchanging records in electronic records management systems

- Worked with the software industry to develop the market place and encourage innovation and competition
- Advised government departments on practical steps, and enabled the sharing of expertise and lessons learned
- Set out to tackle longer-term issues on the sustainability of electronic records
- Continued to publish, on our website, further guidance on electronic records management which is widely used and respected by records managers across the public sector. Our evaluation scheme for electronic records management software has achieved an international reputation, in Europe and the wider world, and our published generic requirements set the standard for the next generation of electronic records management software.

Promoting good practice in records management

Records management in government conference

This year the theme of our annual conference for government records and information managers was *Government and the citizen – records management beyond 2004*.

The highpoint of the conference, attended by over 250 delegates, was an address by the then Lord

Records Management in Government Conference 2002



Lord Irvine

Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, who spoke about the role of effective records management in helping government to deliver better policies and services.

"Full of excellent ideas, help and networking opportunities"

"The conference material was excellent as usual"

"Well worth the time and effort"

"Conference organisation and liaison by PRO staff was excellent"

Delegate comments on our Records Management in Government conference

Training and consultancy

The demands on our records management and consultancy service have increased significantly over the last 12 months.

Many public authorities are increasingly concerned about improving their record keeping systems so that they are well prepared for the implementation of Freedom of Information legislation in 2005. Central government departments have

also been focusing on records management principles and procedures as part of their drive to achieve targets on electronic records management.

Our consultancy service has provided expert advice and guidance on these issues, and also training for over 400 central government staff – mainly on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 but also on the public

records system generally. Staff have also provided training and advice aimed at the local government sector and the National Health Service.

Demand for the introductory course on the public records system, aimed at new staff in government departments, continues to be high. There were nine such courses during the year.

Successful training



We continued to work with the University of Liverpool and the University of Northumbria to support the rm3 programme to provide professional training in records and information management.

Eleven government records managers were awarded the diploma in records and

information management, and five were awarded the certificate.

The successful candidates – seen here with the Keeper of Public Records, Sarah Tyacke – were presented with their awards at the annual Records Management in Government conference.

Selection of records

Operational Selection Policies

Operational Selection Policies (OSPs) govern which public records are selected and whether they should be transferred to The National Archives or other places of deposit.

In developing OSPs, we work in close consultation with government departments and stakeholders. All OSPs are circulated in draft to academics and specialist interest groups for comment. The draft OSP is also placed on our website for general public consultation.

The OSP covering records of registration of births, deaths and marriages of UK citizens occurring overseas generated over 400 responses. Discussions are underway with appropriate genealogical societies (such as the Society of Genealogists and the Federation of Family History Societies) to reach an outcome which is satisfactory to all parties.

Modernising the appraisal process

The National Archives has recently appointed an Appraisal Policy Project Manager to consider how the system for selection, instituted by the Grigg Committee on Departmental Records 1954, can be modernised. The project will take account

of electronic records and the increase in paper records from the 1970s onwards and develop a new appraisal methodology.

There are currently four main strands to the work:

- ① **Pilot projects** in four government departments to test new methods of appraisal
- ② **Studies of case files and datasets** – which represent a challenge for appraisal because they create considerable storage pressures and yet contain significant economic, social or scientific data
- ③ **Research on the success of macro-appraisal methods** used in Canada, Australia and many other countries. We are considering the feasibility of testing these methods in selected government departments
- ④ **Taking forward our work on electronic records** to provide guidance to departments on the appraisal of electronic records and the development of fileplans for electronic records management systems.

The involvement of stakeholders is an integral part of the project, which is overseen by a Management Board with representatives from a government department and the Institute of Contemporary British History.

It is expected that a draft paper on Appraisal Policy will be circulated for public consultation in February 2004 with the policy finally approved in June 2004.

To date 22 OSPs have been produced, covering the following subject areas:

- OSP 1: The Department of the Environment 1970-1979
- OSP 2: The Crown Estate 1975-1985
- OSP 3: Industrial Policy 1974-1979
- OSP 4: The Use and Conservation of the Countryside for Recreational Purposes 1974-1983
- OSP 5: The Administration of Social Security 1979-1991
- OSP 6: Records Created by and Relating to Coroners 1970-2000
- OSP 7: The Welsh Office 1979-1997
- OSP 8: The Security Service
- OSP 9: Fiscal Policy 1971-1979
- OSP 10: Nature Conservation in Great Britain 1973-1991
- OSP 11: Nuclear Weapons Policy 1967-1998
- OSP 12: Central Direction and Oversight of Policy 1970-2000
- OSP 13: Britain's Diplomatic Relations 1973-1996
- OSP 14: Home Defence and Emergency Planning 1972-2001
- OSP 15: Control of Central Government Expenditure 1969-1997
- OSP 16: Probation Records 1965-2001
- OSP 17: Preservation of the Built Environment 1970-1999
- OSP 18: Records of Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages of UK Citizens Occurring Overseas
- OSP 19: School Age Education (3-16 year olds) 1974-1988
- OSP 20: Records of the Central Office of Information
- OSP 21: Records of the Criminal Case Review Commission (CCRC)
- OSP 22: Records of the Royal Mint 1975-2002



Enhancing on-site services

The public records we hold can be consulted at the Family Records Centre in Islington (see *'Family historians'*, page 25) and the main National Archives building in Kew. Together they receive over 300,000 visits each year.

Our on-site services include:

- Reading rooms where visitors can consult catalogues, books and online sources, order up and view records, and seek help or advice from expert staff
- Exhibitions, shops, publications, events and seminars to meet and stimulate interest in The National Archives
- Events to attract new audiences
- Facilities for obtaining copies of records in paper, microfilm or electronic formats
- Group visits and tours
- Refreshments and an Internet café.

In 2002/3 we received 108,458 visits to Kew, 192,503 visits to the Family Records Centre, and 77 million requests for page downloads from the website.

Developing our user focus

We encourage visitors to our reading rooms at Kew and at the Family Records Centre to comment on our services and

The public

The National Archives (PRO) provides access to the public records and promotes their value and use – nationally and internationally – as an information and educational resource.

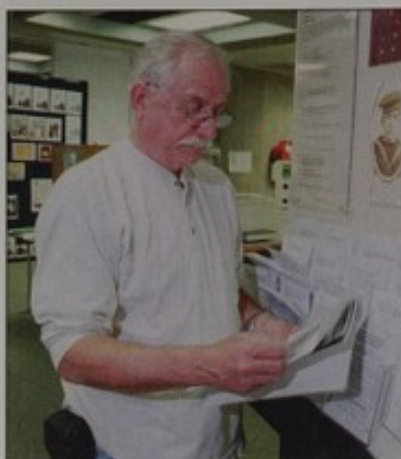
We want to make the treasures of The National Archives (PRO) accessible to all. We continue our efforts to find out what users want and to develop services to meet their needs.

Here we focus on our work for members of the general public and explain how we are:

- Enhancing on-site services
- Digitising our resources and developing online access
- Promoting our collections.

make suggestions for improvement. Some of the changes we introduced in Kew this year as a result of these comments include:

- making the access to the General Record Office (GRO) indexes easier, by changing to a single tier arrangement of fiche cabinets and thus preventing congestion
- improving the space available for the consultation of Army/Air/Navy lists
- allocating more space in the microfilm reading room for laptop usage
- improving signage in the microfilm reading room
- installing three more online terminals in the library
- moving the help point in the main reading room to the public side of the document counter
- introducing a new self-service copying facility
- allowing readers to take digital photographs of documents
- addressing users' comments about overcrowding at the leaflet cabinet by introducing a "print it yourself" system in the lobby
- introducing a facility for new readers to order documents during the Saturday lunchtime closure period
- consolidating the separate 1901 census reception desk with our other reception facilities.



Self help

In December 2002, we introduced a new style of self-help leaflet for researching family history sources in the micro-

film reading room. This should help readers to follow the self-service system more easily by using the leaflet to record their actions as they work through it.

How to find a service record of a soldier serving in the First World War (2c) is the most popular leaflet and we used this as a pilot for the new style. The trial proved a success so in January 2003 we extended the pilot to the whole "How to..." leaflet series in the microfilm reading room.

During the year we have further researched possible developments for our Public Services Development Programme (PSDP), and have continued to monitor user views, particularly through our user surveys, which provide very rich data.

In the latter part of the year we started planning the changes to our on-site services that will be necessary to accommodate the HMC's move to Kew (see page 7). Users at the PRO and HMC sites are being consulted at an early stage as an integral part of the planning of these developments, and the physical changes will take place later in 2003.

Research and development for the a new style of workstation to meet readers' future needs is underway with the help of an expert consultant. We expect a prototype to be available next year.

In December 2002 we introduced electronic on-site signage to improve the way in which we communicate important

"This is a treasure-house of which Britain can be wholly proud"

"Probably the most useful archival material for my research and, luckily enough, the most helpful and friendly"

"To make available such an amazing map and material in this way shows exceptional organisational skills"

"The service has improved enormously in recent years. In the early 1980s I spent a great deal of time here researching a PhD and the document delivery time was very slow. It is now excellent. I found the services, from everyone, very good indeed. I would not have wished for better"

"Immensely improved over the 25 years I have been coming here".

Comments from visitors to Kew

information to users (such as variations to normal opening hours) and to promote our on-site services.

Self-service printing is now available in the research enquiries room and an online help point has been introduced in the research enquiries room to help readers with queries about any online functions. Readers may also print copies of the records information leaflets on demand by using the touch screen facility in the first floor lobby.

This year we introduced self-service copying within the reading rooms. Customers can now photograph documents in a dedicated area, with their own digital camera, normally free of charge. This new service has proved extremely successful and soon desktop scanners will be available to customers who do not have a digital camera, enabling them to make copies of records for a smaller fee than the traditional copying services provided.

We continue to look at ways of making our services more widely available. Following a suggestion from a user we have now increased the number of parking spaces for disabled visitors to Kew and introduced a self-propelling wheelchair. The user was full of praise for our prompt response to his comments.



Preservation copying

This year we completed our "Burnt Documents" project, financially supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Genealogical Society of Utah, to microfilm soldiers' service records from World War I which had been damaged by enemy action in World War II.

The last remaining reels of microfilm of soldiers and non-commissioned officers' service records (1914–1920), in the WO 363 series, were made available to the public during the year. Our film usage survey of February 2003 showed that the two series of World War I soldiers' service records (WO 363 and WO 364) accounted for 50% of film use by readers.

Delivering documents

Behind the scenes, the staff who look after the storage of the documents in the archives are also responsible for producing all the records requested by the public. They effectively met the preservation needs of the archive while handling more than 1,000,000 document movements this year.

First World War exhibition



To coincide with the completion of our "Burnt Documents" project, we staged an exhibition focusing on the careers of two First World War soldiers – Private Horace Dickens and Sergeant Arnold Loosemore – along with a display of artefacts and personal effects of soldiers found among the

original records as they were prepared for filming.

Present at the reception were descendants of Horace Dickens who lost his life in the Battle of the Somme, and of Arnold Loosemore, who was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1917.

Document delivery within the stringent 30 minutes target on weekdays, and 45 minutes target on Saturdays, has been achieved on more than 96% of occasions – exceeding the target objective by 6%.

To improve customer service standards further, archive production services staff are now working directly with researchers in the reading room. A new help point allows staff to interrogate electronic document delivery and finding aid systems. The service has been well received and is set to increase with the proposed expansion of the self-service reading room facility.

Digitising our resources and developing online access

Enhancing our records catalogue

In line with feedback from our users, we are continuing to develop PROCAT, our fully integrated online catalogue which covers all records held by The National Archives (PRO). The catalogue is regularly updated to include newly arrived files.

Our catalogue improvement programme is reviewed and monitored by a group of existing and potential users from different communities in the UK, together with staff responsible for cataloguing and indexing – The National Archives User Advisory Group.

The Group also comments generally on PROCAT's usability and user friendliness and advises on

Maintaining a secure and efficient environment

Visitors to The National Archives in Kew are greeted by one of our team of security officers, whose responsibility is to ensure the integrity of the building, and to protect the documents for future generations. The key to success is their ability to deal with any poten-

tial breaches quietly, but firmly, and all are fully trained in document handling.

Behind the scenes is a professional team supporting the efficient running of the building and its facilities for both the public and staff.

matters of description and use of language.

Over the past year we have had four valuable sessions concerning the issues surrounding social inclusion and archive records. These have covered:

- offensive language
- user surveys and social inclusion questionnaires
- issues concerning physical barriers to PROCAT and
- the creation of an information sheet *Sources for Gay and Lesbian History in the PRO*.

Presentations to the Group have included a database of sources for Caribbean Studies and Black and Asian History (CASBAH), the development of the *Moving Here* project and a demonstration on the cataloguing of correspondence to and from the West Indies.

Since PROCAT was launched in March 2001 we have focused on catalogue data improvement projects, with the overall aim of improving access to public records. Priority is given to popular records and those that meet the following criteria:

- social inclusion (ensuring that all communities represented in

the records are reflected in the catalogue)

- the improvement of access to digitised records
- reduction of the need to use additional index cards and other reference works
- creation of new data for undescribed records and
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

A number of the projects carried out during 2002-2003 continue. They include:

- The provision of descriptions of records relating to lay and clerical taxation, c1190-1690 (E 179). A database of detailed information about records of central government taxation in England from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, which has been prepared in partnership with the University of Cambridge since 1995, was launched on the Internet at a successful conference held at Kew in October (see page 31)
- The addition of regimental names of the British Army (1759-1920) to the online catalogue's index browser, giving a searcher access to PROCAT using a regimental name and/or a regiment's popular name

Contact Centre



Our Contact Centre provides information on records and services at Kew and the Family Records Centre. We also refer customers to other institutions,

records offices and archives, as appropriate.

During the year, we answered 96,280 calls. In response to

customer comments, we made some changes to our automated voice message system and we continue to look at ways to improve our service.

- The provision of descriptions of judges' records on individual criminal cases, 1784-1829 (HO 47)
- The retrospective conversion of the paper map catalogues and entry into PROCAT
- The enhancement of place name information in PROCAT.

Piece level descriptions of background naturalisation papers (found in PRO record series HO 1, HO 45 and HO 144) are currently limited. For example, HO 144 papers are all simply described as Naturalisation papers. All details from the printed indexes, to include full name, country of origin, place of residence, date of naturalisation and naturalisation certificate number, will be added.

This will enable users to make an online name search which will give the full National Archives (PRO) reference, ending the need for a several step process through printed catalogues. The project will also identify those cases where the back-ground papers have not survived.

Cataloguing work by the Friends of the Public Record Office

This year the Friends of the Public Record Office (FPRO) continued their long-standing endeavour to index soldiers' discharge documents by adding the details of almost 6,000 men into PROCAT. They also completed their work on the Equity Pleadings Database with the addition of the last 2,500 records.

The FPRO celebrated this achievement in October and at the same time announced the launch of their next project. This will lead to a name index to the death duty registers (IR26) for courts other than the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC) for the years 1796-1811. It is being carried out in conjunction with staff at the Family Records Centre.

The Resource Centre and Library catalogue

The Resource Centre and Library catalogue was launched on our website in November 2002, providing external access for the first time to the published works held by in Kew.

The project to catalogue electronically all the published works

in the PRO is progressing well and the catalogue is now three quarters complete. The catalogue includes an increasing number of electronic journals, which can be accessed online from within The National Archives (PRO).

DocumentsOnline

After a major programme of enhancements, PRO-Online – our digital image delivery website – was relaunched in March 2003 as DocumentsOnline.

DocumentsOnline provides instant online access to almost 750,000 digital images of some of our most popular records. These include selected records from the 2001 and 2002 New Year's Openings and more than 700,000 wills in the PROB 11 series. There are also records illustrating a cross-section of our collections, such as Magna Carta, papers about T E Lawrence's service in the Royal Air Force, and Churchill's correspondence with Lord Selborne about Special Operations Executive activities during the Second World War.

Our user numbers have risen considerably since the site was first introduced in November 2001. Almost 40,000 images were downloaded in 2002, and in the opening few months of 2003 the income from image downloads was more than five times as much as in the equivalent period last year.

Useability survey 2002-2003

To meet our policies on social inclusion, user need and knowledge management, we

carried out a *Useability Survey* of our electronic resources PROCAT, DORIS (the ordering system) and DocumentsOnline over the winter months. This involved a questionnaire and focus groups.

Users were generally satisfied with PROCAT, DORIS and DocumentsOnline. However, they also said they would like PROCAT's browsing and navigation functions to be enhanced, and would welcome more specific search facilities.

We are currently costing proposals for enhancements based on user responses, and will take these forward in the coming year.

Catalogue Awareness Day

We held a Catalogue Awareness Day on 13 December to tell users about our cataloguing projects and to seek their ideas on how we might spread knowledge and awareness about cataloguing projects to users, both on-site and online.

Reader feedback pointed to the need for:

- publicity about cataloguing projects in progress, and completed, to be made available on PROCAT and in articles in relevant journals
- publicity and information about index term searches
- text improvements on the reader screens.

It was agreed that Catalogue Awareness Day should become an annual event.

Website

Website usage has continued to increase, with the number of page impressions reaching 77 million this year.

As well as increasing the content (see pages 32, 33 and 39) we have also been working to extend the range of services that are available through our website. Users can now shop for books, place orders for copies of documents and book conference tickets online.

Since January 2003 readers have been able to save time on their first visit to Kew by registering online for a reader's ticket up to one month in advance of their visit. Readers can also now order documents in advance. Both these improvements have been introduced in response to user feedback.

Online record copying

This year we responded to more than 7,200 online requests for record copying – an increase of over 15%. More than half of these requests used the secure online order form introduced in 2001 and improved in 2002.

Promoting our collections

Our museum and exhibitions

The Museum at Kew has been refurbished with a new layout and versatile display system designed to boost its visibility, raise environmental conditions to the highest conservation standards, improve access for disabled visi-



Our bookshop at Kew

tors and enhance the interpretation of our wonderful collections.

Relaunched as *Treasures from the National Archives*, the Museum features changing exhibitions promoting different aspects of the records, with an exciting associated programme of events and online resources.

In 2002, we celebrated the 1950s in honour of the Golden Jubilee with our exhibition, **Coronation & Commonwealth**. We explored events from the decade of transition between post-war austerity and the swinging sixties, and featured a fascinating range of documents on all aspects of political and cultural history, from the cold war politics of the Suez Crisis to the public hysteria surrounding the first British tour of Bill Haley and his Comets. This exhibition complimented our ever-popular Open Day, **Revisiting the 1950s**. Due to popular demand, we brought back the exhibition **Christmas Past** in December – a nostalgic look at

the history of Christmas, with some less sentimental exhibits such as Cromwell's ban on Christmas traditions!

We started 2003 in the newly refurbished Museum with the **Memories from the Islands** exhibition, attracting a number of new visitors to Kew.

This was followed by the opening of **Elizabeth** in March 2003, the first exhibition to make use of our improved exhibition facilities which allow us to display original documents and interpret them to a much higher standard. The National Archives' in-house Tudor experts worked with staff in our interpretation and conservation teams to produce a beautiful, informative exhibition which commemorates 400 years since the death of Elizabeth I at Richmond.

Lending to exhibitions

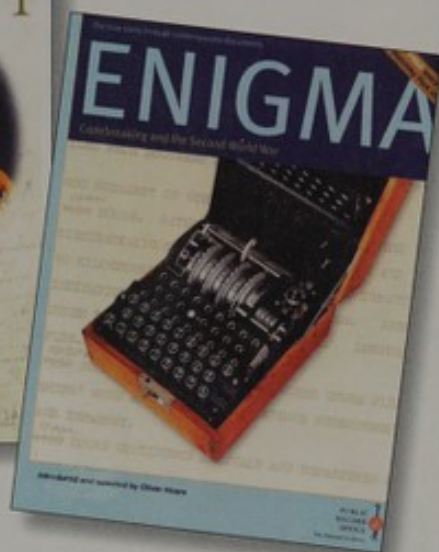
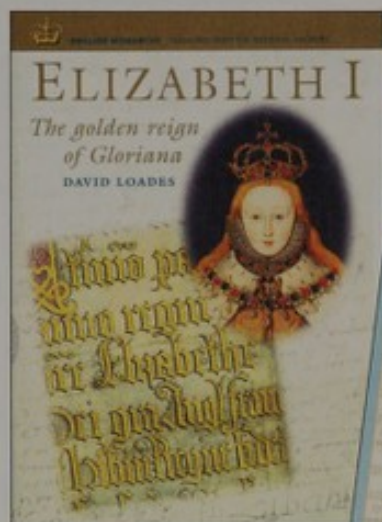
During the year we prepared and loaned documents to external exhibitions on:

- Battle of Cowans Ford – to Guilford Courthouse National Park, Greensboro North Carolina, USA
- The Castle and the Crown – to the Tower of London
- Cartwright's second Loom – to Munster, Germany
- Anthem of Doomed Youth – to Imperial War Museum.

Retail sales

This has been another excellent year for our bookshops at Kew and at the Family Records Centre. Both shops carry an innovative product range and sales have continued to rise, with revenue generated via retail activities now well in excess of half a million pounds.

Both shops have successfully introduced genealogical CDs, and have increased the range of books and gift items stocked.



The National Archives' new document pack, *Enigma: Codebreaking and the Second World War*, published in association with Bletchley Park Trust, tells the Enigma story through 16 document facsimiles ranging from top secret memos and letters to some of the original decrypts themselves.

Online Bookshop

This year has also seen a major revamp of our internet bookshop site and the introduction of a new secure online payment system.

Sales via our online Bookshop have continued to grow substantially, with sales up 23% on 2002/2003 figures. As well as the full range of The National Archives' own books, readers can now choose from a selection of other publications.

Publications

Our own-imprint publishing produces high quality mainstream history titles inspired by the 100 miles of documents held at Kew, spanning over one thousand years of history from Domesday to the present day. We now publish a range of unique and authoritative history titles which are sold in high street bookshops throughout the UK and abroad as well as via our onsite and online bookshops, through book clubs and via mail order.

This year we launched a new prestigious new series – *English Monarchs* – which introduces the lives of England's royal leaders through contemporary historical documents held at Kew. The first titles to appear are *Richard III* and, in the year of the 400th anniversary of her death, *Elizabeth I*.

Each full-colour volume features around 20 key documents – some of which have never been published before – and places them in context through a beautifully illustrated narrative history of the monarch's life and reign.

Our list has continued to reflect the interest generated by the release of Security Service papers.

Lord Haw Haw: The English Voice of Nazi Germany tells the story of William Joyce through the eyes of the British intelligence agents who pursued him from his teenage dalliance with fascism in the 1920s until his execution.

Documentary evidence



The Public Record Office and the archives we hold featured in many television documentaries and news broadcasts during the year.

In November, BBC Radio 4 broadcast a series of five 15 minute programmes, *Public Records, Private Lives*, featuring users of the archives at Kew and at the Family Records Centre.

Family Records Centre

Jointly with the General Register Office (GRO), we run the highly successful Family Records Centre (FRC) in central London. Here, family and social history researchers from around the world gain access to information relating to family history.

The material includes the GRO's indexes of births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales from 1837; and microfilms of the decennial censuses of population from 1841 to 1901 – our most popular documents.

The FRC continues to operate close to capacity, and welcomes over 15,000 visits each month.

Following the successful relaunch of the 1901 census website, a complete set of the microfiche was also made available at the FRC in December 2002, in response to customer feedback. This is in addition to the set already held at Kew.

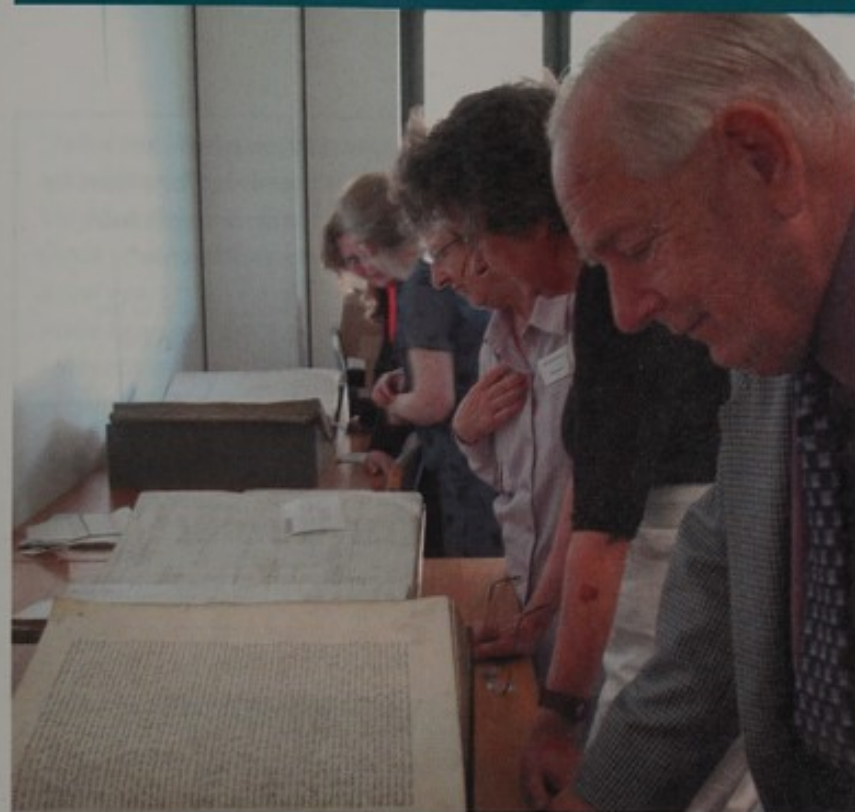
We replaced the microfilm for the whole of the 1841 census and most of 1851, giving FRC users access to higher quality film.

"As a computer novice, the staff helping with the 1901 census were most helpful. Many thanks."

Comment from a visitor, made on a Your Views Matter to Us form

"It is an excellent facility – an immense improvement from when I began on family history in the 1960s."

Comment from a visitor, made on a customer survey form



Family historians

Public records contain many clues that tell us who we are and where we have come from.

The great majority of people visiting the PRO last year did so out of personal interest – researching the history of their own family, a subject of constant appeal, or social history such as the history of their local community.

Our services for these family historians include:

- The Family Records Centre
- Online services for family historians
- Publications for family historians
- Family history events, visits and conferences.

The family history database of resources has continued to develop, in particular with the addition of hundreds of digitised trade directories.

The FRC's website was launched in September and is continually being developed and expanded. We are now including online exhibitions on the site.

Displays

The FRC continued its series of displays featuring famous names from the nineteenth century. Subjects included Lewis Carroll, Charles Darwin and Charles Dickens.

In February, staff and volunteers from the Dickens House Museum visited the FRC, bringing with them a selection of objects including pictures and published works. The event proved

extremely popular, with scores of visitors looking at the items on display and taking the opportunity to try writing with a quill pen such as Dickens used.

Following the success of last year's series of free lectures on family history sources, the FRC hosted another ten talks during the summer, most of which were fully subscribed. A third series is planned for 2003.

"I have never used the internet so did not think I would understand this talk. To my surprise it was understandable and very edifying. Thank you! This will encourage me to do something which I would not have done otherwise"

Comment from attendee at a lecture on internet databases, made on a feedback questionnaire

"Most impressive – an encouragement for others to follow your example with their own family tree"

Comment from a visitor to the Dickens display, made in the comments book

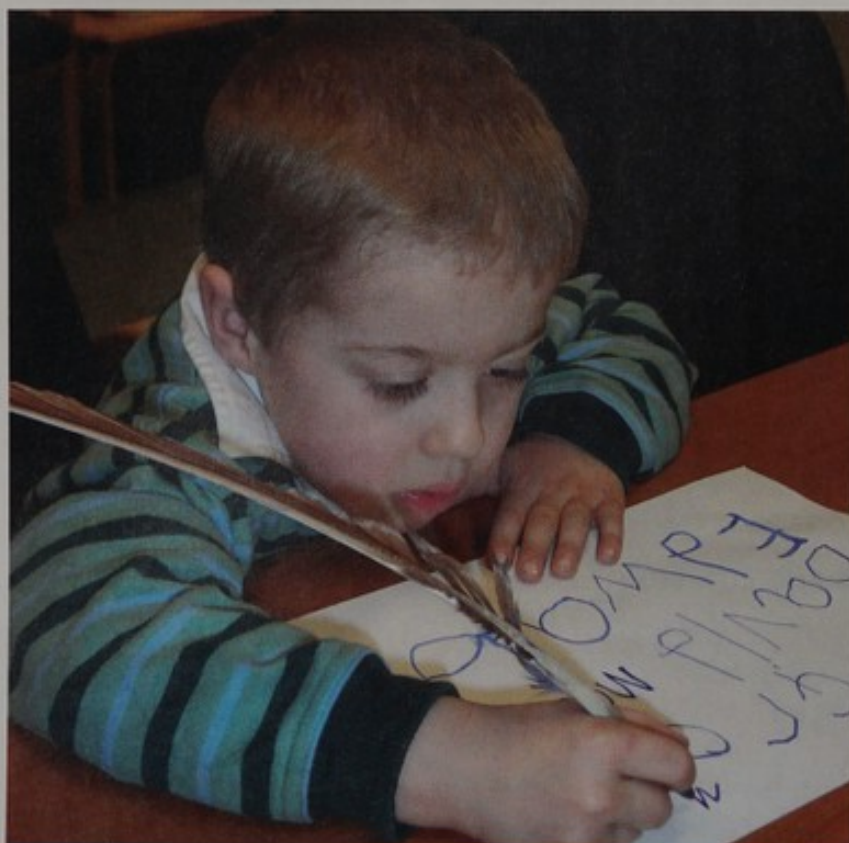
Online services for family historians

www.familyrecords.gov.uk

The National Archives runs the family history website www.familyrecords.gov.uk on behalf of a consortium of government and other public sector bodies. The Imperial War Museum, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Scottish Archive Network (SCAN) and Access to Archives have joined the consortium, alongside existing partners The National Archives, the National Archives of Scotland, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, the General Register Office, the General Register Office for Scotland, Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru/ National Library of Wales and the British Library Oriental and India Office Collections.

The site – which has received very good feedback from users – now has a new look, with content divided into topics, guides and partner sections. There is also a dedicated section for the Family Records Centre.

The first in a series of case studies went online in January 2003. It featured documents held by the consortium partners about the life of Isaac Rosenberg, the First World War poet.



A visitor to the Charles Dickens event at the Family Records Centre

"Fabulous site, really helped me with my English ancestors. Very helpful for beginners and those who have been going for a few years too. I have found some new information and am really excited. Thank you very much."

"Wonderfully laid out brilliant guides"

"Thank you for your informative and intriguing website. I must confess to having been frequently side-tracked by the superb variety of links."

"This is not my first visit but I have not been here many times before. Comparing this to many other sites concerning genealogy, this site is fantastic! I have found it much easier to work out where to find information on my ancestors here, than anywhere else"

Comments made by website visitors on online questionnaire shortly after re-launch

The site is being developed and improved in line with customer feedback and the addition of an address search system has been welcomed by users.

"I am in awe of the technology that allows me to sit at a not very new computer, some 70 miles north from Sydney, NSW Australia, to get a print over cyberspace of a 100 and a bit year old document from a repository some 12,000 miles away on the other side of the world in just a minute or so. Thank you PRO – you have been coping with some brick-bats over this but I think a big bouquet is in order now"

"It has been easy to use, quick to search and filter the information required. An excellent system"

"I was able to access the website this week and was very impressed. I found all the information I had hoped to find and more. It was worth waiting for"

"A wonderful resource"

Comments made by website visitors on the 1901 online census

Publications for family historians

We have continued our tradition of publishing excellent guides for family historians.

A new guide, *Tracing Your Naval Ancestors*, demystifies the wide and diverse range of records and secondary sources which can be used to trace genealogical and career information for those who served from 1660 to modern times.

We also published new editions of two of our most popular titles – *The Family Records Centre: A Users Guide* and *Making Use of the Census*, which was updated to include details of the 1901 census.

Interest in house history has grown considerably in recent years, thanks partly to television programmes such as *House Detectives* and *The 1940s House*. Every property, even a relatively modern one, has a unique story just waiting to be discovered through sources held at The National Archives and elsewhere. Our new *House History Starter*



The 1901 Online Census for England and Wales (www.census.pro.gov.uk) is continuing to provide family historians with unique online access to details of their ancestors' lives in 1901. Since its return to the internet in August, over 37 million searches have been undertaken on the site.



Pack helps readers to plan their research and then record their findings.

Ancestors, our bi-monthly family history magazine, published in conjunction with Wharncliffe Publishing, continues to flourish, with subscriber levels growing by over 25% during 2002/03.

This year has seen the introduction of themed issues. An Irish Special included features on Catholic records in Ireland, the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund and a review of the top sites for tracing Irish Ancestry. The Poverty special issue examined the Charles Booth Archive and explored the Old Poor Law records. It also looked at the lives of inmates and administrators of Victorian workhouses in the New Poor Law records and helped readers to locate online resources relating to workhouses and the lives of poor people.

Family history events, visits and conferences

We have continued our programme of attendance at major family history fairs. As in previous years we have received very positive comments from both organisers and visitors, with invitations to return.

These fairs are a very effective way of getting to meet family historians in the regions, and surveys we run at the fairs provide a regional perspective to compare with the surveys at Kew and the Family Records Centre.



In several cases, staff attending the fairs have also featured on local radio, providing a phone-in question and answer service and generally promoting awareness of The National Archives (PRO) and the records.

A delegation from the PRO travelled to Salt Lake City in May 2002 to visit the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS). We raised the PRO's profile, exchanged information, networked with the staff and patrons of the Family History Library, and reported back on possible marketing opportunities for us and collaboration with LDS in future years.

During the visit our staff provided four 60 minute talks to Family History Library staff and patrons on *The case: records of English law courts for family historians*; *The American Revolution – an insight into sources held at the Public Record Office, UK*

Emigration Records to North America; and *An Introduction to British Isles Genealogy and the Family Records Centre*.

The fourth in our highly successful series of week-long practical Family History Summer Schools attracted over 70 delegates. PRO and FRC staff were the tutors for the four concurrent themes and there was an exhibition of mounted facsimiles of PRO sources. The guest speaker was Dr George Redmonds, whose topic was "Surnames, Genes and Genealogy".

We also ran seven in-depth Family History Induction days at Kew, which included displays of original documents. As ever, they were fully subscribed soon after they were announced.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE READERS' GUIDE

EMIGRANTS *and* EXPATS

A guide to sources on UK emigration and residents overseas

Roger Kershaw



Academic and professional historians

The National Archives enjoys long-standing and constructive relationships with many practising historians and other academic researchers, for whom our collections are vital.

We are investing time and resources to developing new services to help meet the needs of the academic and specialist market, and of future historians.

Our work with and for academics includes:

- Developing alliances and making links
- Academic and specialist publishing
- Events and conferences
- Academic inductions

Developing alliances and making links

We have continued to develop alliances with higher education institutions and the academic community.

Senior staff of The National Archives sit on the Royal Historical Society Council and the Economic and Social Research Council Research Resource Board. Staff who are experts in their field participate regularly in seminars organised by the Institute of Historical Research, speak at academic conferences and write books and articles which are published in professional journals.

School of Advanced Study

During the year The National Archives became an Associate member of the University of London's School of Advanced Study. The main purpose of the association is to explore opportunities for cooperation between the School and The National Archives.

Our staff now have access to the School libraries and there are links to the National Archives on the School's website www.sas.ac.uk. A link to the National Archives Resource Centre & Library catalogue will be added soon.

Future benefits will include an opportunity for a limited number of staff to participate in the School's training programme and for organised visits to the various libraries.

Extending academic networks

We have created new web pages specifically designed to alert academic researchers to our services. Researchers can provide feedback or suggestions for improving our service. A more detailed questionnaire allows academics to submit feedback on more specific matters such as academic publications, academic inductions, Pathways to the Past, the online catalogue (PROCAT), and DocumentsOnline.

The pages include an electronic portal for enquiries about specific areas of our work in which we have invited feedback. A cross-departmental group of staff at The National Archives oversees the development of this initiative and of mutually beneficial links with the academic community.

The Genesis project, which aims to identify and develop access to women's history sources in the British Isles, was funded by the Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) and based at The Women's Library in London. One of our staff has served on the RSLP steering group for Genesis, has edited final datasets for PRO contributions to the project and supervised the work of a RSLP Project Researcher at the PRO. She also attended the RSLP Open Day in Islington as an external expert.

This same member of staff co-ordinated the Women's Suffrage Conference Advisory Panel with the Director of Women's Library, acted as member of the Panel, and

also attended the Mayor's Commission on Black and Asian Heritage focus group organised by the Greater London Authority.

Academic and specialist publishing

Two new major calendar texts have been published in partnership with Boydell and Brewer – *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem* Volume XXI, covering 1418-1422, and the *Calendar of Curia Regis Rolls*, 1249-1250.

Further editorial work has continued on the final volume of the *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* and on the *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem* Volume XXII, the latter in partnership with the University of Cambridge and generously funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

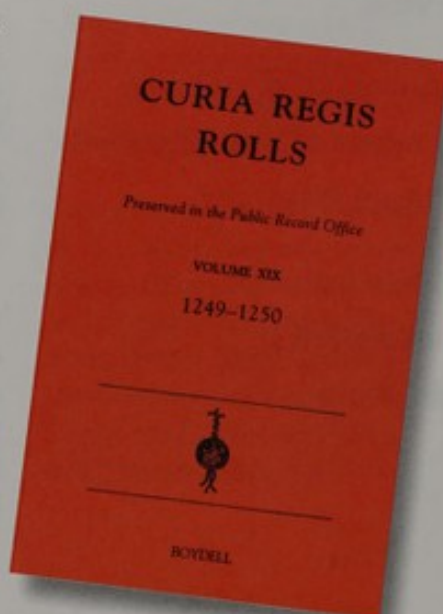
Work has also been revived on the *List and Analysis of State Papers Foreign* series for 1597. Research on two new handbook titles has begun. The Economic and Social Research Council is funding a Guide to *Medieval Irish*

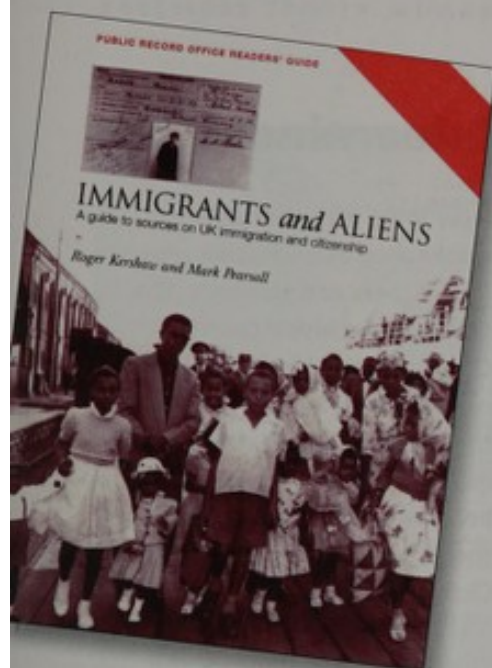
sources in The National Archives, in partnership with Bristol University, and the Arts and Humanities Research Board is funding *A Guide to Naval Records in The National Archives* in partnership with Exeter University.

We have also worked in close association with microfilm publishers on the development of collections of microfilm aimed at the academic community. Together with Adam Matthew Publications we have launched a new product, *Sex and Gender Studies: Manuscript Sources from the Public Record Office*. The first two modules, covering Empire and Suffrage sources, are now available, with further material to follow on Equal Opportunities and Pay.

Other continuing projects with Adam Matthew Publications include Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Newsletters, Special Operations Executive Papers and further updates in the Cabinet Papers series, which provides microfilm versions of complete sets of Cabinet Minutes and Memoranda as they are released.

Our work with Primary Source Media, part of Gale Group, has culminated this year in the publication of Series One of *The Middle East: A Documentary Resource*, focusing on Arab-Israeli Relations 1917-70. The collection of selected documents held at The National Archives offers researchers an opportunity to study documents that are vital to understanding key issues in the political history of the Middle East.





A new Reader's Guide *Emigrants and Expats: A guide to sources on UK emigration and residents overseas* now complements the successful *Immigrants and Aliens: A guide to sources on UK immigration and citizenship*.

Events and conferences

In October 2002, we staged a conference on the history of taxation. The event, at which the E179 (hearth tax) database (see page 20) was launched, drew together academics from a range of disciplines. We also hosted a highly successful conference for the Overseas Pensioners Association (OSPA). Feedback from both conferences was excellent.

We also hosted visits from, among others, the Greenwich Group and the International Map Collectors Society.

Preparations have also been underway for a new series of seminars on subjects as varied as the Merchant Marine, West Indian Ancestry, Prisoners of War, and Marriage and Divorce records.

Our staff have contributed to the following academic events:

- Medieval and Early Modern Records Information Service (MEMRIS)
- The Oxford Medieval Seminar, All Souls College, in November 2002, on "Council, Chancery and Rule by Recognisances under Henry VII"
- A lecture at Lancaster University in November 2002 to North-Western lecturers, students and archivists on researching at the PRO, and the PRO's archival network
- The Institute of Historical Research methods and sources course on Women's History
- Expert talks on copyright at conferences, seminars and colleges at several venues in England and Wales
- The international history seminar at the Institute of Historical Research
- An expert meeting on the Ethics of Digitisation and Digital Photography.

We held a successful workshop on the digitisation of archival resources for higher education in March.

Academic inductions

To meet rising demand, we have held 26 onsite and four regional academic inductions this year. Much of the induction content is available to researchers on the National Archives website and we are now actively investigating the provision of more specialised inductions and document tutorials.

We are receiving more requests for inductions from departments not necessarily offering traditional history courses; one example being the MA in Garden History offered by Birkbeck College, University of London. In future we will also provide inductions for groups of librarians and information professionals. Feedback from the induction sessions continues to be very positive and encouraging.



Schools and colleges

Promoting the value of the public records as a national education resource is one of our key functions.

The services we offer to schools and colleges are rapidly expanding both on-site and online.

By making use of new technologies and methods, we are reaching an ever-wider audience, through:

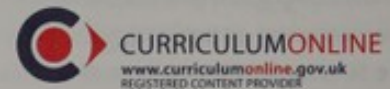
- E-learning
- Educational workshops.

A display at the PRO about our String of Pearls Golden Jubilee project on the Royal Seals – which involved secondary school students from Westminster, Camberwell and Southwark

E-learning

Now in its fifth year and firmly established as a valuable resource for teachers and students, The National Archives' Learning Curve website has added more new content, forged new partnerships and yet again substantially increased its audience. It has also become a registered provider for the government's Curriculum Online service.

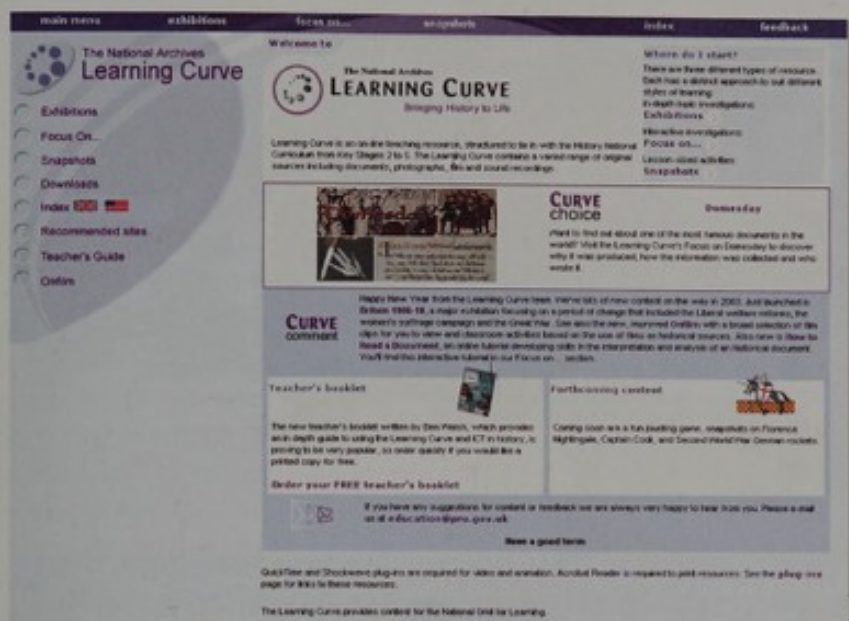
The page impressions for the year were just over 5 million, an impressive increase of 69% on last year.



New content on the Learning Curve for 2002/03 includes an exhibition on *Britain 1906-18*, designed to support the teaching of this new area of study in GCSE syllabuses.

Our biggest single piece of content, this uses an exciting range of original source material including documents, photographs, posters and film to investigate the varied life of the British people in 1906-18. The content includes the Liberal Welfare Reforms 1906-11, Early 1900s Women's Suffrage and Civilians and War 1914-18. The site has been endorsed by the OCR examining board for their GCSE courses.

Other new content included three new Snapshots and Focus on How to Read a Document, the latter featuring a new approach to working with documents online. The new software takes the user through the analysis of original source material in a truly



the South East network and across the country.

Positive feedback continues to arrive and in an independent survey conducted by the Fischer Trust we came second only to the BBC in the list of ICT (information and communications technology) resources rated by teachers for impact on learning.

Helping teachers to use the Learning Curve is a new teacher's booklet which can be downloaded from the website for free. We have sent out a printed version to over 200 teachers who were unable to download a copy.

Educational workshops

In 2001/02 we reported a huge 300% increase in the number of students from schools and colleges visiting the PRO. The high volume of visits has continued, with a further 32% increase during 2002/03.

A total of 195 separate groups (4309 individuals), compared to 139 groups (3275 individuals) in 2001/02, have taken part in educational workshops onsite or via videoconference. The increase has levelled out and as we start to reach capacity: during school term time, there is at least one and very often two school groups taking part in a variety of activities at Kew each day.

A regular programme of workshops for primary and secondary schools, developed to suit the requirements of the History National Curriculum, is available for booking by schools throughout the year.

interactive way. Answers, entered in response to questions, receive tailored feedback from the application, encouraging progression through the document. The sources focus on the period of mounting tension during the winter of 1937-38. They show how the central characters, Eden and Chamberlain, reacted to the threats posed by Germany, Italy and Japan.

Partnerships with a variety of organisations have proved very

"Finding this site (National Archives Learning Curve) has made my night. I have very little time now to search for additional resources and when I found such an excellent ICT lesson I was ecstatic. The students will love this as they can work through the sources at their own pace and produce some excellent revision notes, plus enhance their writing skills! Well done!"

History teacher

fruitful for the Learning Curve. We have published a Tudor Site with Hackney Archives featuring an immersive 3D model, a jousting game with the Victoria and Albert Museum and a revised version of a film website – Onfilm – with the South East Grid for Learning.

This last partnership has led to other partnerships being formed with Broad Band Consortia Regions, in particular the West Midlands. We are also providing a "mirror copy" of the Learning Curve to be hosted on a special broadband server, which can be accessed direct from schools on



Knights from our Tudor jousting game

"Acting was really good because I learnt more how the people felt, what ways they used to come up with so the officials would not find out certain things like how many pigs they had and more. Because it's hard for me to think a thousand years ago so acting a scene out helped me even more. I felt like I was a real person in that time facing those problems ... When we went after the play to see the Domesday Book, I was really excited because I'd never ever seen it before. I was amazed when I saw it!"

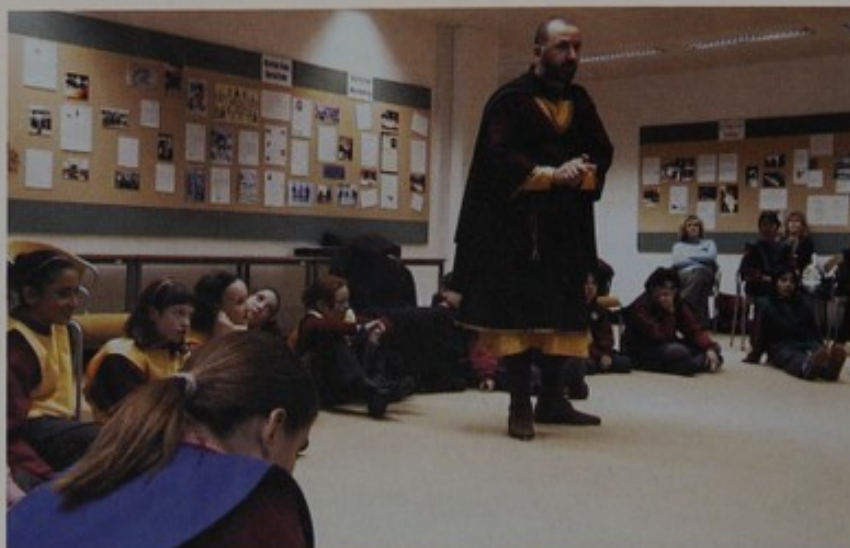
Feedback from a pupil at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops

"It felt like I was really there, I was really talking to the commissioners...I really loved the bit when we went to see the Domesday Book. I never knew it really had survived for nearly 1000 years."

Feedback from a pupil at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops

"The girls were so involved in the action, and it brought history alive in a way which would have been impossible in the classroom...the workshop was one of the most interesting and successful I have attended."

Feedback from a class teacher at one of our Domesday Book, Day of Judgement workshops



Role-playing with the "Reeve of the Manor of Mortlake, Surrey" in our "Day of Judgement" workshop – based on Domesday Book, which is on display in our Museum

As reported last year, we continue to attract a wide range of state and independent schools both from London and the South East, as well as across the country – pleasingly, from as far afield as Sheffield and Newcastle.

The National Archives has also continued to provide introductions for undergraduate history students and teacher training students. A total of 39 groups visited the PRO for such a workshop this year.

In addition to the standard onsite programme, we have commissioned and delivered more special events using actors and interpreters in new and innovative ways to help us bring the past and our documents back to life.

Domesday Book, one of the most famous and important documents in our collection, was the subject of a new onsite role-playing workshop, "Day of Judgement", based on the videoconference workshop in last year's report, developed in conjunction with the Museum

of the Moving Image Actors' Consultancy.

The actors played the roles of the reeve of the manor of Mortlake, Surrey and one the Domesday Commissioners, while the pupils were each allotted a role as either a commissioner or one of the villagers of Mortlake.

Together they acted out the story behind the making of Domesday Book. This enabled the pupils to gain a greater understanding of life nearly 1000 years ago when the survey was made, as well as helping them to appreciate what an incredible historical source Domesday Book itself is. They also had an opportunity to see Domesday itself, in the National Archives' Museum.

Videoconferencing

Videoconference workshops, which involve making a live video link to a school in order to deliver a workshop to them in their classroom wherever they are in the country, have undergone the greatest expansion – from 5 workshops

in 2001/02 to 39 in 2002/03.

Videoconferencing is very new technology not just within the heritage education sector, but also for schools, and the increase in the number of workshops delivered reflects this. The National Archives works closely with Global Leap, a DfES-funded body which promotes videoconferencing in schools, and has also contributed to training days in order to help raise awareness and encourage use of this technology both within schools and within other institutions such as Imperial War Museum, Tower of London and the Women's Library.

The videoconference workshops we offer replicate as closely as possible the experience of visiting The National Archives for a workshop onsite. Pupils still get to see and work closely with original documents, which they can read very easily over the camera on screen and National Archives education staff take them through an enquiry or activities related to the documents.

A number of special events have been delivered this way. Captain Bligh's Log Book, with his account of the Mutiny on the Bounty, was used in a joint event involving two schools, the National Maritime Museum and the PRO videoconferencing with each other simultaneously. A workshop on slavery was delivered to pupils at a City Learning Centre in Hammersmith and Fulham.

Two special workshops using actors have been developed for videoconferencing. In one, a Victorian detective takes pupils

through the Jack the Ripper case. In the other, a soldier from a First World War Pal's Battalion takes pupils through his experiences of the trenches and his thoughts as he prepares to go over the top. Both workshops make use of original documents in our collection.

"The actor brought many emotions to the role...our History Department were highly impressed by the session and the 'empathy' that was required of the students ...thank you for your efforts in setting up the event... we cannot praise it enough"

Feedback from one of our First World War videoconference workshops

Videoconferencing has also proved to be an ideal way to develop partnerships with new institutions and reach out to new audiences. The Tower of London Local Schools week is one such event: the Tower of London invites schools from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to take part in free workshops for one week each year.

This year we ran a joint workshop via videoconferencing in which pupils working at the Tower were able to see and research our Tudor documents, under the guidance of the Yeoman of the Revels based at Kew, in order to get a life-size model of Henry VIII and his jousting horse ready for a tournament. This event proved extremely popular with the schools, who commented that the technology used as well as the activities provided really engaged and motivated pupils to learn.

New audiences

Reaching out to new audiences is something we are developing through special projects. The Tower of London event has been one way in which we have been able to work with schools in an area of London with pupils from a wide range of social, economic and ethnic backgrounds.

The String of Pearls Golden Jubilee project on the Royal Seals, reported in last year's annual report, has led to more partnerships in this area. One school that took part in this has already booked to run the same workshop for a new group of students this year.

This project also led to a member of our education team being invited to sit on the Southwark Education Business Alliance Management Board. This has proved to be an invaluable source for making contacts with schools and developing new projects in a borough where pupils and their families would be unlikely to come across The National Archives without this link.

Special needs

A class of autistic pupils from a special school in Surrey came to research wax seals in our collection as part of a project on heraldry.

A group of deaf and hard of hearing adult learners from the City Lit adult learning institute had a general introduction to the PRO and a tour of the Kew building, enabling them to feel confident to make full use of the resources at Kew in the future.



Reaching out to new audiences

Amateur and professional historians, and schools, have an obvious interest in our collections.

But we also realise the huge potential appeal of our collections to everybody. Through creativity and innovation, we seek to adapt our documents and the stories they tell to engage the widest possible audience.

Here we draw together this work into three strands:

- Marketing initiatives
- Attracting new target audiences
- Online resources for lifelong learners

Celebrating the sound of the 1950s at our Open Day in Kew in September 2002

Marketing initiatives

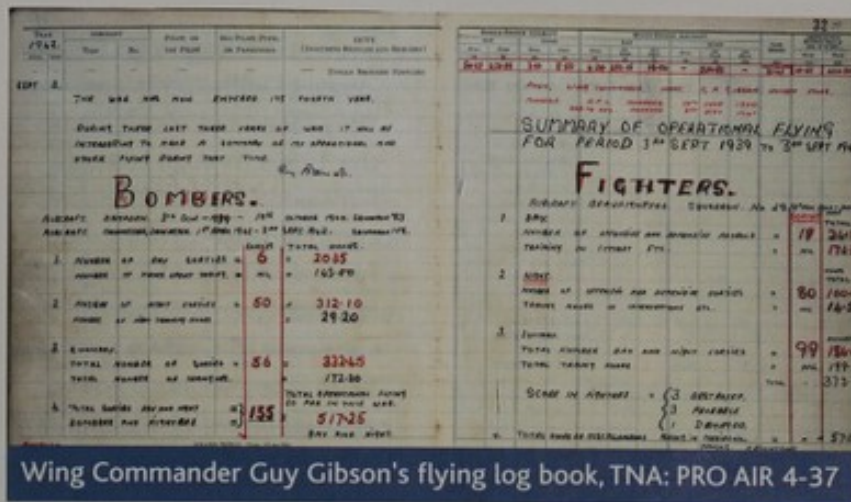
New email newsletter

In October 2002 we launched our first e-mail newsletter. Each month we send the latest news on document releases, events, publications, new online services and special offers and competitions to a rapidly growing list of subscribers (25,000 as at March 2003).

Our newsletter, which is also on the home page of the new National Archives website, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk, has now become one of the most popular history e-mail newsletters.

Marks and Spencer, Past Times, The History Channel, the Royal Horticultural Society and Imperial War Museum Duxford have provided some highly attractive prizes - one of the newsletter's top attractions.





Wing Commander Guy Gibson's flying log book, TNA: PRO AIR 4-37

E-marketing

In the spring of 2003 we initiated a marketing campaign, which is still in progress, to attract new users to the website.

Through partnerships with the History Channel, BBC History, Channel 4 and the Imperial War Museum, a "Dambusters" microsite was put together. It features original sources and the chance, courtesy of Dragon Helicopters and Ringwood Hall Hotel, Chesterfield, to win tickets to "fly like the dambusters" themselves.

MORI research

In February and March we ran focus groups with MORI to find out how we could effectively tailor our marketing to reach new audiences. Focus group participants were chosen for their interest in history and the fact they had never used the PRO before.

The results were very positive. Once people understood what we held, and the fact it was accessible to them, they were determined to come back and find out more. The results of the research will inform our future efforts to attract new audiences.

Attracting new target audiences

Taking archives into the community

A key factor in our outreach activity for 2002 was the development of new partnerships across the museums, archives and libraries sectors. This resulted in the display of our travelling exhibitions, the co-hosting of our events and development of projects that take our holdings into the heart of new communities.

The main outreach project for 2002 was the community-led exhibition *Memories from the Islands*, a partnership project between our interpretation team, the on-line digitisation project *Moving Here* (see page 40), Bruce Castle Museum in Haringey, London and representatives of Haringey's Afro-Caribbean community from the University of the Third Age.

Members from this group worked over a six month period to select PRO photographs depicting scenes of Caribbean life taken in the 1950s and 1960s. The chosen images then provided the

inspiration for the exhibition's narrative – childhood memories and words of wisdom that the group wished to have recorded for the benefit of future generations.

The resulting exhibition was opened by David Lammy MP at a special event at Bruce Castle Museum in October 2002, attended by over 100 members of the local community.

The exhibition created much interest from schools and the general public and secured extensive media coverage in the Black press and on BBC Radio 4.

During the same period, two of our exhibitions, *From Strangers to Citizens* and *An Indian Album*, were loaned to Leicester Archives and Hounslow Library for display. At the Family Records Centre, Paul Crooks gave an informal reading from his book *Ancestors* and discussed aspects of his own research into his Jamaican and African ancestry.

In January 2003, *Memories from the Islands* re-opened at Kew and received over 4,700 visitors during its six week run.

"A very emotional trip in history. Something every West Indian should view"

"I learned more about you and your islands than in six visits to the Caribbean!"

"Memories told full of friendship and warmth. Thank you."

Some of the many visitor comments from our *Memories from the Islands* exhibition.

Other events were timed to coincide with the exhibition's display at Kew including a costumed event celebrating the life of the 19th century nurse Mary Seacole. Many of the Haringey participants and their friends attended the performance and stayed to view documents and maps relating to the Caribbean and search the *Moving Here* website for relatives' passenger lists. The group revisited the exhibition and saw displayed personal items relating to the Caribbean that they had loaned for the exhibition's duration. The event was very successful in strengthening existing friendships and paves the way for future projects.

Events

This year we attracted many new visitors to Kew with an exciting, popular programme of events.

Our costumed events, talks and Open Day spanned a huge range of history and records. These are some of the highlights:

- A series of free costumed events on Saturdays brought a wide range of historical characters and records to life from a lady preparing for a Victorian Royal Wedding, to a First World War Tommy with a moving, funny account of life at the front and a 13th Century Knight explaining the rituals of medieval warfare and armour. Other costumed events included Mary Seacole, a Notable Nurse and Samuel Pepys, The Bawdy Civil Servant.
- Our lectures were also very well attended and received.



Dr David Starkey, who gave a lecture at Kew

Dr David Starkey gave a vivid, hugely entertaining lecture on **The Six Wives of Henry VIII** which culminated in a visit to our Museum to look at documents from the period. Professor David Stafford's fascinating and intriguing account of the **Berlin Spy Tunnel** also related closely to research he had done in the archives here. Alison Weir's excellent lecture on Elizabeth I posed the provocative question, **The Virgin Queen?** and was part of our programme of events in 2003 celebrating the life and commemorating the death of Elizabeth.

- There were 1,500 visitors to the **Open Day**, which was a chance to **Revisit the 1950s**. Visitors young and old enjoyed

authentic swing music and joined in with 1950s dancing. They found out about life in the 1950s through lectures, films and document displays covering subjects from the Festival of Britain to the 1950s kitchen. Over half the visitors were new to Kew, many of them brought here by our association with London String of Pearls Golden Jubilee Festival, and their feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

- We also hosted a highly successful sell-out performance by the **Kew Sinfonia**. For our Christmas extravaganza, we held a beautiful Victorian-style **Magic Lantern Show**. This included music and mulled wine, and a display of historic lantern slides in the Museum by our Photographic Conservator.
- Our monthly **Behind-the-Scenes Tours** remained popular with the public throughout the year and are now consistently fully booked.

Many of our events throughout the year were over-subscribed – a testament to the growing popularity of our What's On programme and proof that we



Dancing 1950s style at our Open Day in Kew in September

are meeting our goal – to promote the records and reach new audiences.

We have also made important advances in improving services for existing and new audiences. A custom-built database has allowed us to keep in touch with our ever-expanding audience and respond to their enquiries, suggestions and bookings more efficiently.

"Splendid talk, full of humour and information..."

"A wonderful evening"

"First Class"

Visitors' comments on Alison Weir's lecture about Elizabeth I, *The Virgin Queen?*

"I was mightily impressed by the atmosphere. I hope to visit further events. The PRO's efforts to reach out to the public are excellent"

"Better every year"

"Enjoyed first visit, can't wait to come again"

"Thank you to all for a most informative and enjoyable day. Also all the hard work involved in the presentations and activities"

"A very good day out and extremely interesting"

From the Open Day, *Revisiting the 1950s* visitor feedback forms

"I did not know what to expect, but it was brilliant."

Comment by a visitor to our Mary Seacole, *A Notable Nurse* costumed event

"I was transported back in time, a wonderful evening."

Comment by a visitor to our Samuel Pepys, *The Bawdy Civil Servant* event

"Thank you for sending my What's On 2003. It is great being on your mailing list – what a super programme of events you offer"

From a letter to our Interpretation Team

Online resources for lifelong learners

Funding from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) has enabled us to develop:

- a series of online exhibitions on *Pathways to the Past*, the resource for lifelong learners on our website at www.pro.gov.uk/pathways/
- *Moving Here*, a web-based resource for lifelong learning on the theme of migration to England.

Pathways to the Past

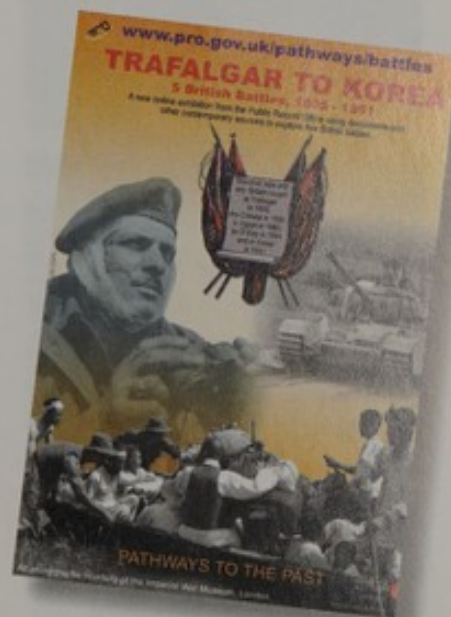
In the past year we have substantially added to the content of *Pathways to the Past* and provided new resources in a variety of areas of interest.

Three of the new web exhibitions have benefited from substantial NOF funding. *The First World War: Sources for History* gives online access to documents illustrating all aspects of the war, from the collections of the Imperial War Museum, our project partner, as well as The National Archives. Its launch was celebrated early in November (together with the completion of the "Burnt Documents" project – see page 19). *The Sunday Times* called the web exhibition "a multi-layered

marvel... as gripping as it is rewarding to explore".

Citizenship: A History of People, Rights and Power was a joint project with the House of Lords Record Office, and makes available extracts of some of the major documents in the history of Britain, from Domesday Book to the Beveridge Report.

The third NOF-funded exhibition, launched in June 2003, will be *Black Presence: Sources for Asian and Black History in Britain, 1550-1850*. This presents a little-known history and complements the National Archives-led *Moving Here* website, which deals with a more modern period.



In 2002/3 we also launched "Trafalgar to Korea: 5 British Battles, 1805-1951", which gives an insight into events in military history over a century and a half. *Pathways to the Past* now provides a solid online basis for research for family, local and military historians, students and those with a general interest in history.

Moving Here

Moving Here is a web-based resource for lifelong learners about migration to England. It records and illustrates the migration experience of Caribbean, Irish, Jewish and South Asian communities over the past two centuries.

The website (www.movinghere.org.uk), went live in January 2003. Developed in partnership with 30 museums and libraries and with user groups, it provides free online access to a unique "digital" network of national, regional and local resources.



A metal-worker's shop in Old Delhi in 1961
(TNA:PRO INF10/138/002)

The 30 heritage partners have provided more than 150,000 digitised items, ranging from art objects and maps to photographs, government documents, film and sound. We are also encouraging individuals and community groups to contribute their own digitised objects, documents and stories.

The National Archives is the lead partner in the project, financed by the New Opportunities Fund, with a consortium of supporting partners including, as 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; and
- West Yorkshire Archive Service.

Many of the contributing organisations have strong community links and can bring cultural resource-based community knowledge to Moving Here.

Community activity co-ordinated with partners is a key way of reaching its audience. For example, the PRO, 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 in Kew and is also touring around the country. The Museum of London is developing a joint project with Newham Heritage service, working with Asian elders.

Moving Here is introducing new people to heritage material as well as to their own heritage. It is also encouraging wider access, as museums, archives

and libraries find new ways to make their collections relevant to specific audiences.

Users will be able to approach the subject of migration from different perspectives and at different 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 the Moving Here catalogue to illustrate their story, or accompany it with their own photographs/images/audio. This section of the site is already proving a popular method for individuals to express their creativity and use the Moving Here content in the manner most meaningful to them.
- **The Gallery** will provide highlights of the catalogue arranged according to subjects such as sport, food and style – allowing people to randomly view images according to what catches their eye.



Licensing

The images held by The National Archives are an amazing resource for merchandisers, designers, publishers and information providers. Many potential licensees are looking to develop product ranges based around our collections.

Licensing opportunities have traditionally fallen into two key areas: the development of merchandise based around pictorial images – for example stationery, giftware, ceramics or textiles – and the creation of commercial products by publishers or other information providers, including contextualised or indexed collections of our images.

Over the past year we have once again been approached by a range of organisations wishing to use our images commercially, and we have also been proactive in seeking out development opportunities for the use of our images.

Each licensee signs a formal contract with The National Archives which governs their use of the selected images. Contracts are granted on a non-exclusive basis and we derive a royalty payment from the sale of licensees' products.

Merchandising

One of the most recent licensed products, launched by Museums and Galleries Marketing Limited under licence from The National Archives, is a collection of notelets and greetings cards

Business-to-business

In addition to our public-facing markets, The National Archives also deals extensively with the commercial sector. Under the Government's Wider Markets Initiative of 1998, we are encouraged to maximise the benefits to be gained from working with the private sector.

This chapter provides an overview of our activities in this area and illustrates the range of business opportunities developed over the past year:

- Licensing
- Commercial sales and loans of images
- Record copying services.

An image from The National Archives: Construction workers erecting the Marconi factory at Chelmsford, 1912 (TNA:PRO COPY 1/566)



A new range of notelets and greetings cards, based on posters in The National Archives

based around public information posters discovered in the files of various government departments.

The posters date from the 1930s through to the 1970s. They make an attractive and innovative range of social stationery which is on sale both via high street retail outlets and through our own on-site shops.

Data licensing

A range of publishers and data providers use The National Archives' genealogical images to provide products and services. Contracts have been signed with S&N British Data Archive, Archive CD Books and Stepping Stones, all of which market CD-Rom products containing images from the census returns held at The National Archives.

In September 2002, we signed a contract with MyFamily.com, an internet-based genealogical services company, which subsequently launched an online service containing digitised images of the 1891 census.

Licensed Internet Associateships

As part of our e-business strategy, in response to the Government's target to enable citizens to have electronic access to government services by 2005, we have introduced a new scheme aimed at providing access over the internet to digitised images of our key genealogical documents.

Our Licensed Internet Associates Programme offers enhanced, preferential licensing opportunities for potential associates wishing to produce online services in close association with The National Archives.

Associates will be able to use our logo and branding on all online services developed to demonstrate our official accreditation of the particular service. Online services will be developed in accordance with specialist advice and input from our expert in-house staff.

Our website will act as a portal for online services developed under the Licensed Internet Associates Programme. All co-branded services approved

under the scheme will be promoted on relevant areas of our website, with direct hyperlinks.

Successful Licensed Internet Associates will fund investment in the digitisation, cataloguing, indexing, hosting, delivery and marketing of Online Services of key sets of records we hold and will provide technical support for the licensed services developed.

The Licensed Internet Associates Programme was launched in November 2002 via an announcement on our website and approaches were made to a range of online content providers. Initial submissions were made to us during December 2002 and first-stage high-level meetings took place during March 2003.

Discussions to progress this exciting initiative will continue during the 2003/04 financial year, with the first contracts expected to be awarded during the summer of 2003. The first services to be launched under this initiative are likely to focus around the census returns, the First World War soldiers' records in WO 363 and WO 364, earlier soldiers' records in WO 97 and the BT 27 passenger lists.

Commercial sales and loans of images

Images from The National Archives Image Library are loaned or sold commercially to publishers, design companies, exhibitions and websites and prints or transparencies are produced privately for individuals.

Our primary customers are publishers, museums, exhibition centres, documentary companies and web users. Our major customers this year have included BBC Publications, The Folio Society, Penguin Books and English Heritage. The novelist Patricia Cornwell used 25 images from files on Jack the Ripper for her controversial investigative book *Portrait of a Killer*, a major bestseller in 2002.

Commercial Online Digital Image Library

In August 2002, we also successfully launched an online digital presence with Heritage Image Partnership (HIP).

The HIP site features a vast collection of heritage-based images for hire, drawn from a range of museums, galleries and libraries including the British Library, the British Museum and the National Monuments Record of English Heritage. It now also includes over 1,000 images from The National Archives and we plan to increase the number of images available during 2003/04 and beyond.

Our relationship with HIP is non-exclusive, and in return for a share of royalties, HIP market our images around the clock to an international commercial market of publishers, designers and advertisers. The images are watermarked to afford additional protection.

Our partner page, with links to the images, is at www.heritage-images.com/partners/default.asp?partner=PRO

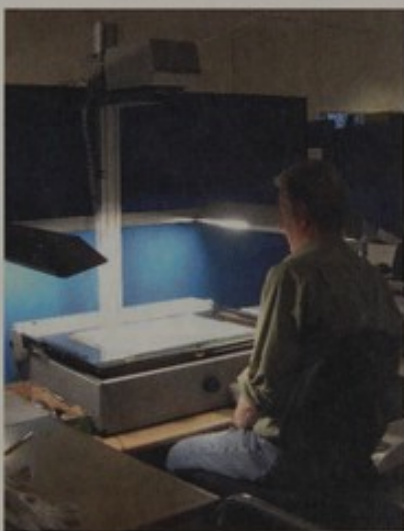
Record copying services



© Hugh Alexander

Our record copying services have been chosen by the publishers Adam Matthew and Gale Group for long-term publishing programmes aimed at an academic audience.

Several museums and institutions have also purchased our top of the range reprographic services for various purposes, such as filming for preservation (Imperial War Museum), digitising for exhibitions (Coal Authority) or legal requirements such as the Rights of Way (Countryside Agency).



© Hugh Alexander



Meeting the need for long-term digital preservation

The Public Record Office has a long history of preserving paper, parchment, film and other media. But, in the 21st century, we are faced with a new and urgent challenge – the need to preserve digital materials.

Digital records – such as email, web pages, and databases – are produced by government departments in growing quantities. If properly preserved, and made available to the public electronically, these records will provide a wealth of historical evidence for future generations.

But the task of preserving digital records poses a number of difficult challenges. Records on magnetic tape or disc may become wholly or partially unreadable in less than ten years, and so need to be copied on to fresh media every few years.

As new computer systems are developed, current hardware and software soon becomes obsolete, making it impossible to read records in formats that were once widely used. Two possible solutions to this problem are to migrate old data formats to new, and to replicate old systems on new hardware. Whilst these methods are being thoroughly tested, we will store records in their original formats.

The Digital Archive

In March 2003, a newly developed digital archive system, to

Future generations

In helping government departments and others select the archives of the future, and by cataloguing, storing, preserving and conserving our holdings, we can pass on the nation's recorded heritage to future generations.

Even producing records for today's readers can affect the future, as daily wear and tear corrodes the condition of the records themselves. Paper can degrade and computer systems can become obsolete.

This section brings together all our work in safeguarding the physical condition of our records, so that users in the future will be able to access the records they want. It describes how we are:

- Meeting the need for long-term digital preservation
- Maintaining our excellence in traditional conservation
- Preservation copying by microfilming

support the preservation of records that were originally created and stored electronically, was installed at Kew.

Access to records stored within the Digital Archive is currently available to members of the public visiting the reading rooms at Kew. At a future stage of this project, researchers will be able to access digital records over the internet.

Preserving BBC Domesday



BBC Domesday was a national project carried out in 1986 to celebrate the 900th anniversary of Domesday Book. Schoolchildren and researchers from all over the United Kingdom collected huge amounts of information about the communities in which they lived. This information, in the form of text and photographs, was recorded onto two special videodisks that could be played using a BBC Master computer and an LV-ROM player.

A user of the BBC Domesday system was able to zoom in on a map of the British Isles and gain

detailed information about any part of the UK. BBC Domesday was very innovative for the time and it was organised on a scale that has not been seen since 1086.

In 1986 a full BBC Domesday system was presented to the then Keeper of the Public Records. By 2003, however, this system was one of the few working examples of BBC Domesday in existence. After 16 years of use, most of the LV-ROM players produced have reached the end of their working lives. As a storage technology, LV-ROM has been superseded by CD-ROM and DVD, leaving the BBC Domesday disks perilously close to being unreadable.

Working with the BBC and others we have managed to preserve the content of the BBC Domesday project in a digital storage medium, using the original analogue videotapes. We are now working to make this resource available to generations of future users.

Maintaining our excellence in traditional conservation

We have continued to raise staff's and readers' awareness of preservation.

We have run training sessions for readers and departmental record officers on preservation, and bought photographic book cradles and scanners to prevent possible damage while documents are being microfilmed or digitised.

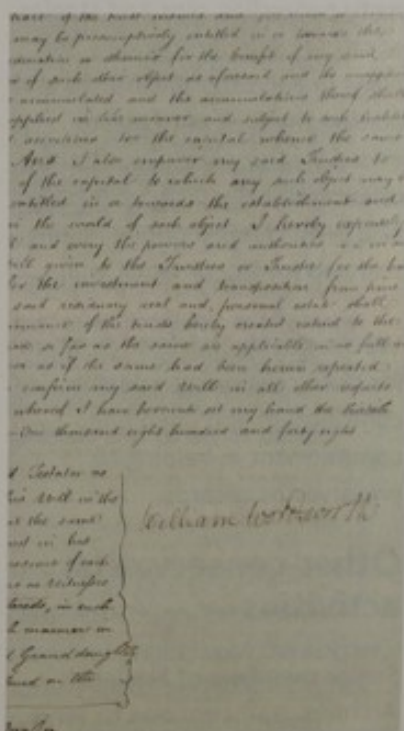
We have also improved access by



conserving those popular records most in demand and those withdrawn from use because of their condition.

Pieces which have received conservation treatment include:

- An indenture between Henry VII and John Islip, abbot, and the convent of St Peter's Westminster 1504 (E 33/2)
- The Will of William Wordsworth (PROB 1/90)



- A piece from the Edward Muybridge collection. In the foreground is "Female descending stairs with basin in hands" Plate 134 - 25 April 1887. In the background is "Female descending stairs and turning". Plate 135 - 25 April 1887 (COPY 1/384)
- Doodles found in E 179/341.

As a result of an independent review of our current preservation activities we have appointed a preservation manager to be responsible for coordinating preservation across The National Archives. We are also looking at developing a series of research projects with other leading institutions.

Help from volunteers

For the past 12 years, we have enjoyed the valuable services of our volunteers from the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS).

Their work has included removing rusty paperclips, pins and staples, encapsulating photographs and plans in polyester enclosures and placing the files onto plastic ended treasury tags. Four boxes of exceptionally dirty wills have also been cleaned prior to being scanned for DocumentsOnline.

We are deeply indebted to them for their continuing valuable contribution and unending commitment in helping to preserve the records.

Other conservation activities

Senior members of National Archives staff continue to serve

on several external bodies concerned with conservation, including the National Preservation Office.

The first phase review of our current Risk Management Framework was undertaken during the year. The Framework provides plans and controls to guard against significant risks, and the primary aim is prevention. However, if confronted with a disaster situation we also have recovery plans for prompt organised action to minimise any damage.

Preservation copying by microfilming

In our programme for preservation copying we have continued filming documents that are popular with users (such as First World War soldiers' records – see page 19), for their preservation

and to make them more accessible. As usual with popular series, copies are made available on open access in the microfilm reading room, widening user choice and extending the range of information on open access.

We are also broadening our approach to preservation copying to include digitisation, which will increasingly play a larger role in making records available online.

Among the series included in our programme this year are the Royal Navy seamen's registers of service in ADM 188, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve service records for the First World War in ADM 337, and Royal Naval Reserve ratings' service in BT 377.

The nominal index to passport registers in FO 611 and length of service pensions' admission books of the Royal Hospital Chelsea in WO 117 have also recently been filmed and are now on open access.





National liaison and support

Interdepartmental Archives Committee

In December 1999 the Lord Chancellor published the first ever official statement of policy on archives in the *Government Policy on Archives* [Cm 4516].

Since then the UK Inter-Departmental Archives Committee (IDAC), chaired by the Keeper of Public Records with representatives from government departments and the leading archive bodies, has developed a detailed and comprehensive Action Plan.

The Plan, published in September 2002, provides the archives sector with a work programme of professional activity over the next three to four years, which will be achieved on an entirely voluntary basis. The National Archives will monitor progress on specific action points and evaluate how far the six main objectives in the main policy document are being attained.

The six main objectives in the Government Policy on Archives are:

Objective 1: To ensure that access to archives, in the most useful and convenient way, is offered to all the nation's citizens and to other users

Nick Kingsley, Chair of the National Council on Archives, seen here (right) with the Keeper, Sarah Tyacke, and Bruno Derrick from The National Archives

The archives and records management communities

At The National Archives, we are committed to developing partnerships with others in the archival and records management communities, bringing our rich national holdings to wide public notice and creating easier access for all.

We also seek to coordinate our efforts and resources with those of other archivists in the UK. By working together we can achieve even more, for the benefit of all archive users.

Increasingly, our work has gained an international dimension as we tap into the experience of archival colleagues around the world.

Here we focus on:

- National liaison and support
- Our international role
- Working with other archival organisations.

Objective 2: To enable the educational sector at all levels to have proper access to the nation's archival resources, so that national educational needs are met

Objective 3: To ensure that public institutions, at local, regional and national level, select, preserve and manage their current records and their archives, regardless of medium, in accordance with the relevant legislative requirements, guidance and agreed professional standards

Objective 4: To encourage private organisations and individuals to manage their records effectively, to preserve their historical archives and wherever possible to facilitate public access to them

Objective 5: To enable the archive sector to prepare for the processing of increasing quantities of electronic data

Objective 6: To add maximum value to the information resource held by the archive sector.

Archives Task Force

The Action Plan forms the general context to the current work of the Archives Task Force currently being led by Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, in which we are taking part enthusiastically.

The Task Force has been set up to develop a "coherent set of strategies" for archives and to report by autumn 2003. Its findings will have an effect on

the development of our own policies and services in the coming years.

We expect that the Task Force will complement the formation of The National Archives by further developing the already flourishing archives structures in the regions and by pointing the way forward to more partnership between archives, libraries and museums, especially in the light of the emerging national archives network.

The driving force for any recommendations is likely to be wider public access to archives, particularly online. There will need to be underpinning programmes on, for example, cataloguing, preservation, education and interpretation using archives, and the education, training and development of the work force.

At the same time The National Archives is pursuing legislation within government to deal with issues, for example, about e-records, records management in central and local government and the wider public sector and the role of archives services. Any recommendation will go out to public consultation in due course.

The National Council on Archives

During the year we agreed to part fund, along with Resource, a two-year policy and development officer post for the National Council on Archives (NCA), in recognition of NCA's important role as an independent advocate for the archives community.

The new post directly supports delivery of the 15 wide-ranging targets for the NCA outlined in the Government Policy on Archives Action Plan in partnership with The National Archives, Resource, the Society of Archivists and others.

The post-holder is co-ordinating efforts for Archive Awareness Month (September 2003), has organised the NCA 2003 conference around the theme of social inclusion and is supporting plans to develop methodologies to prioritise cataloguing and conservation backlogs. The post-holder will also co-ordinate NCA's response to the Archives Task Force.

National Archives representatives attended NCA's Westminster event *Changing the Future of our Past*, sponsored by Sir Patrick Cormack MP (who chairs the Parliamentary All-Party Arts and Heritage Group). This event promoted archives as a vibrant sector, with UK wide record offices carrying out vital work to ensure the preservation of and access to archives. It was a first stage in a continuing programme of briefings about the archives sector for members of both Houses of Parliament.

We have continued to support the work of the Regional Archives Councils in England and the Archives Council Wales (Cyngor Archifau Cymru) for which we act as national observers.

Our close involvement with archivists across the UK has been strengthened through our



Sir Patrick Cormack MP (second from right) at the National Council on Archives event at Westminster in which we took part

engagement with groups such as the Health Archives Group. We have been able to share with the Group our experience and knowledge of issues ranging from the application of the Freedom of Information Act to the safekeeping of archival materials.

We have also helped the NCA's Public Service Quality Group to develop national performance indicators for archives and a national standard for access to archives, and to review the relevance of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy statistics for archives.

In November, we hosted the Group's 7th annual NCA Public Services Quality Forum, *Auditing for Quality*. The 95 delegates looked at best practice in service delivery for archives and local studies libraries and the use of methods for measuring and monitoring performance.

The National Archives and stakeholders

In preparation for becoming The National Archives in April 2003, we sought stakeholders' views on the role of the new organisation and what they would like to see from it.

In November 2002, representatives from the archival, museum, arts and education sectors attended a meeting hosted by the Royal Historical Society, in which the Keeper of Public Records and the Secretary of the HMC set out their vision for The National Archives and invited comments.



Our new quarterly newsletter for the archival community, *ArchiVISTA!*, keeps archivists and records managers up to date with developments.

Through newsletters, other publicity and specific events, The National Archives will seek during 2003 to invite comments from all its stakeholders and users, with particular emphasis on the integration of advice services and the further development of guidance in electronic record keeping and preservation.

Supporting the regions

The archives sector has been one of the main recipients of the over £135 million of lottery funding awarded since 1994 to documentary heritage projects. We have played a key part in enabling archives around the country to take advantage of these opportunities by jointly funding the post of the Archive Lottery Adviser along with Resource and (until January 2003) the Society of Archivists.

The Archive Lottery Service is available to anyone who works with archives and wishes to gain more insight into current funding opportunities and to maximise their chances of success.

The Archive Lottery Adviser offers advice and support on how to take projects forward and during the year practical support has been given through project development consultations, workshops on how to apply for funding and reviews of draft bids.

Archive Inspection Service

Almost a third of the UK Government's public records selected for permanent preservation is held in the 234 recognised "places of deposit" in England and Wales. The majority are run by local authority archive services, while others include museums, universities, hospitals and other specialised bodies.

We inspect each place of deposit at least once every five years, to ensure that acceptable standards of storage and access to public records are being maintained. In 2002/03, we carried out 50 inspection visits throughout the UK, taking in local authority record offices, specialist repositories and scientific places of deposit such as the British Antarctic Survey.

These inspection visits are an opportunity for us to offer guidance on wider issues relating to public records and archives. In particular, we have been able to provide assistance, guidance and training on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other recent information legislation, helping to ensure that public bodies are able to comply with the Act's requirements.

Our record office inspection work enables us to maintain close relations with professional, regional and government bodies. We participate in initiatives designed to foster co-operation and understanding of archival issues at local, regional and national levels.

The records management community

Conferences (such as our annual Records Management in Government conference – see page 14), seminars and publications contribute to the good working relationship we enjoy with the central government records management community.

The National Archives also fosters relationships with departments through the Records Management Advisory Group, which allows us to exchange views with senior records managers on policy initiatives. The Records Management Liaison Group, meeting in London and the North West, keeps practitioners up to date on operational procedures and processes. Contact is also mediated by the Association of Departmental Records Officers.

We also maintain a solid relationship with non-governmental organisations and have delivered presentations at conferences organised by the British Records Association, the Society of Archivists and the International Council on Archives. Our quarterly bulletin, *Records Management News*, keeps the records management community up to date with news, views and comment.

Records Management Advisory Service

This year we began planning for the formal extension to local government, from April 2003, of our (e-) records management advisory service to central government. This is very much

in response to demand as local public authorities strive to meet the business needs of (e-) local government, including satisfying the 2005 target for e-government transactions, the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.

As The National Archives, we will offer a more co-ordinated approach to central and local government and support the development of (e-) records management across local government. We will liaise closely with key stakeholders in the local government field.

Our international role



Through our continuing involvement with the International Council on Archives (ICA) and the European Union National Archivists Group, we play a full role in the international archive community. We also benefit from sharing knowledge and experience with other national archives, especially in the field of managing electronic records.

We are a founding member of the new DLM Network European Economic Interest Group. This aims to provide an effective forum for European national archives to share their expertise

on electronic records management development. At the DLM Forum 2002 in Barcelona, we gave presentations on functional requirements and sustainability of electronic records.

The Keeper of Public Records attended the ICA CITRA meeting in Marseille in November. She was accompanied by another staff member acting in his capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM).

For many years we have welcomed colleagues from abroad on placements at the Public Record Office in Kew, in order to share experience and best practice. In the coming year The National Archives will place these arrangements on a more formal footing as part of its international strategy.

General records management training has been given to staff of the Estonian National Archives as part of their contract with a private consulting company.

Standards for archival description

This year we have continued to support the development of Encoded Archival Description (EAD), the international data structure standard for archival description.

In August 2002 one of our staff, representing the UK and Ireland, attended an EAD Working Group meeting held as part of the Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. At this meeting the Group, which is the international body that develops and maintains the standard, unveiled the revised second edition known as EAD 2002.

A staff member was also active in the development of best practice guidelines for the use of EAD as part of an international advisory group convened by the Research Libraries Group.

Safeguarding photographs in Europe

The second stage of the SEPIA (Safeguarding European

Photographic Images for Access) project is now in its third and final year. Funded by the European Commission, SEPIA is led by the European Commission on Preservation and Access in Amsterdam. Besides The National Archives and the British Library, its partners and associated partners are in Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden.

The project has mounted a virtual exhibition on the Internet of photographs held in participating institutions on the theme "Constructing Europe", to which we contributed images on transport.

Working with other archival organisations

Access to Archives (A2A)

Access to Archives (A2A) is a database containing catalogues describing archives held throughout England and dating from the 10th century to the present day. The A2A programme – whose lead partners are The National Archives (PRO and HMC) and the British Library – is the English strand of the national archive network for the United Kingdom.

This year saw the start of the second phase of A2A, which involves over 30 A2A content projects. Once again archivists and curators throughout England are working with us and with archives users to provide catalogue content for the A2A database.



Hauser y Menet (photographer)
Sevilla. Plaza de la Constitución, 1891.
Collotype – National Library of Spain

The A2A team held a successful *A2A Uncovered* event at Kew in November. Researchers and other members of the public enjoyed a concert of English songs and readings from a 19th century thriller and Black theatre archives – based around the current and future content of the A2A database. Guests had the opportunity to use A2A, to view displays and to talk to representatives of A2A projects who took part in the event.

Over four million catalogue entries have now been added to A2A since 2001, and we have made substantial progress towards our goal of a further 300,000 catalogue pages (in electronic form) by March 2004.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has continued to support A2A content projects and has made 20 such grants this year.

Projects supported include:

- *Cosmic Rays and the Solid State*, delivered by the National Cataloguing Unit for the Archives of Contemporary Scientists, which is providing new catalogues to the hitherto-inaccessible personal papers of six leading 20th-century Bristol physicists
- *A Place in the Sun*, led by the London Archives Users Forum, which has recruited volunteers to provide detailed descriptions of individual policies in the 19th century registers of the Sun Insurance Company held at the Guildhall Library
- *Private Faces in Public Places*, which will provide new catalogues for archives held in the South East by four

museums, a university and the Tolkien Society, and add some key digital images of original documents

- *South West Family Fortunes*, which will convert to electronic format 66,000 existing catalogue pages for family and estate, business and solicitors' archives held in 13 repositories in the region.

Interoperability and the National Archives Network

The various strands of the National Archives Network are currently looking at how to ensure that archival services in the future can operate between one another – through cross searching, cross-linking, and cross referral between partners and between archival databases.

A small group convened by NCA is developing a concordat or protocol which will ensure the close co-ordination of services in the future.

Moving Here and the heritage community

The Moving Here website www.movinghere.org.uk (see page 40) 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.

National Museum Directors Conference

National Archives staff have participated enthusiastically in meetings organised by the

National Museum Directors Conference (NMDC). The Keeper of Public Records chairs NMDC's Learning and Access Committee.

Archives for Education and Learning Group

The National Archives is represented on the Archives for Education and Learning Group. A Group training day at Kew in October 2002 involved our education and conservation departments looking at combined approaches to providing activities for educational workshops.

The design and making of seals and paper were taken as examples for the training day, which was attended by archive education officers and conservation staff from all over England and Wales and from the Channel Islands.

The Leaders Project

By undertaking reader surveys we are contributing to the Leaders Project based at University College London which is developing TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) and EAD applications linked with digitised images to meet user needs.



Key Skills

As reported last year, we started work in 2002 on a new development scheme for all staff called Key Skills. The scheme is designed to help staff perform more effectively and to plan their future development and career.

Key Skills is a direct response to comments from staff in recent Investors in People Assessments and staff surveys, seeking an organisation-wide development scheme to facilitate progress to different roles.

The framework was developed through focus groups in which 25% of staff across the PRO contributed their views. The framework defines 13 areas of key skills and behaviour that are important for present and future business efficiency. The programme was rolled out to 167 managers and all staff were thoroughly briefed as to what this means for them.

All job roles in the PRO were assessed to identify the key skills applicable to them. All roles and the key skills needed for them are displayed on our intranet to help staff plan their development.

From April 2003 the framework will be part of our staff development procedures. During 2003/04 we will monitor the use of Key Skills, seeking feedback from our staff, and integrate them further in our personnel and development policies.

"This is a superb organisation. I am impressed by the courtesy of the staff"

Comment by a visitor to Kew

Our staff

At The National Archives we deliver our services within a constantly changing environment – and we seek to deliver them to a high standard.

The announcement, in July 2002, of the creation of The National Archives (from April 2003), impacted on all staff. Within the new structure, we will continue to explore new ways to ensure that staff are offered opportunities to enhance their skills, or develop new skills, to meet the continuing challenges.

In this chapter we focus on:

- Key Skills
- Getting the best from our people – equality of opportunity
- Communications
- Accountability
- Working with the trade unions
- Becoming The National Archives.

Getting the best from our people – equality of opportunity

We recruit staff on the basis of fair and open competition and selection on merit. We comply with the recruitment code laid down by the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners and carry out regular internal audits to ensure compliance. Independent external audit also takes place.

Between April 2002 and March 2003, we ran 94 recruitment campaigns and appointed 136 staff. Of these appointments, 74 were women, 22 were from ethnic minorities and 2 declared themselves as having a disability.

There were no permitted exceptions, under the Civil Service Commissioner's Recruitment Code, to fair and open recruitment during the year.

In March 2003 we successfully achieved reaccreditation under Investors in People for the third time. Congratulations go to all staff for their participation and

Equality in employment

Bands	Total Appointments	Women	Ethnic Minorities	Disabled
1-2	23	12 (52.2%)	2 (8.7%)	1 (4.3%)
3-4	48	20 (41.7%)	7 (14.6%)	0
5-6	65	32 (49.2%)	13 (20.0%)	1 (1.5%)
Total	136	74 (54.4%)	22 (16.2%)	2 (1.5%)

support in this achievement.

In October 2002, 62% of staff responded to a staff attitude survey. Action plans have been put in place to address concerns as well as building on areas where staff had expressed satisfaction. A further staff survey will take place in spring 2004.

During the year we developed a diversity strategy, building on our existing equal opportunities policy. A representative group of staff is taking the work forward. From April 2003 all managers will have a diversity target in their individual target objectives.

Working jointly with the diversity group and local trade unions we reviewed the retirement age policy. Staff can now choose to remain in employment until the age of 65, subject to meeting

certain criteria. We have also undertaken an equal pay audit and the resulting action plan will be submitted to the Cabinet Office.

We published a Race Equality Scheme in 2002 as required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act. This sets out our commitment to ensuring a socially inclusive service and how we intend to meet this commitment.

During 2002/03 staff used study, training and development time to research and update a number of publications and information leaflets. They also created training packages, contributed to the development of our online resources, and undertook a number of cataloguing projects as well as creating small exhibitions in our Museum.

These statistics are set out as part of our requirement to publish information under our Race Equality Scheme and reflect the ethnic classification used in the 2001 Census

Ethnic origin	Staff in post	Staff trained	Staff suffering detriment under performance assessment procedures	Staff involved in grievance procedures	Staff subject to disciplinary	Staff who ceased employment
Asian	35	33				5
Black	21	20				8
Chinese	3	3				0
Mixed	4	4				0
Other Ethnic Minorities	20	16				2
Total Ethnic Minorities	83	76		0	0	15
Unknown	57	48	2	0	0	9
White	394	359	1	0	10	77



Some of the staff who qualified this year for our Long Service Award – recognising their 25 years' service with the Public Record Office

To enhance their knowledge and expertise, staff also visited archives of other similar organisations such as the House of Lords, British Library, and National Maritime Museum. A series of shadowing initiatives has been set up.

A review of our pay and grading systems was undertaken in early 2003 to inform the pay negotiations for 2003/04.

Work experience – schools and the local community

We have improved our work experience programme – whereby students are offered work placements in our repositories. We write to the school or institution and ask for feedback on the experience gained.

For the first time we have also accepted a mature work experience placement – from the Kingston Training for Work scheme. This proved successful with the individual applying, and being offered, a permanent post.

Communications

Our intranet, re-launched in March 2002, has increased ease of communication across the PRO. In the staff survey, 91% of staff said they found it either useful or very useful as a primary means of communication. The intranet is now key to our internal communications approach.

Link Groups have continued to act as a valuable source of discussion for matters of PRO-wide interest. The Keepers Link Group, which meets regularly with the Keeper of Public Records, and the Director of Public Services' Link Group, dealing with Public Service issues, bring valuable information and feedback from staff. These are supported by a number of other groups such as the Investors in People Champions Group and less formal structures such as the Corporate Services Directorate information meetings.

In early 2003 we awarded the contract for the supply of Electronic Record Management software which will be implemented across The National Archives (PRO) by the end of 2003. This will meet the government target for electronic record management by 2004. It will also improve record keeping and communication across the organisation.

Accountability

We have developed a risk management framework which covers decision making. At all levels we assess the likelihood and impact of risks which may threaten the achievement of departmental and project target/milestones. A corporate risk register

informs the Management Board's decision-making.

Stewardship statements from each business area within the department, signed off by Heads of Departments, indicate that the functions for which they are responsible have been properly managed. This provides further assurance.

All these, together with the opinions provided by the Head of Internal Audit and statements of assurance from others who have taken independent reviews, inform the Keeper in her Statement on Internal Control.

Working with the trade unions

Throughout the year joint working with the departmental trade union side continued. A number of employment policies have been revised or developed and the trade union side continued to participate in employment matters across the PRO.

This contribution is welcome, in particular in taking forward aspects of development for all staff across the PRO.

Becoming The National Archives

Staff from both the PRO and HMC have worked closely together to achieve integration of the key service delivery aspects of both organisations. They are to be congratulated for the tremendous efforts expended in this area, in addition to carrying out their normal business.

Performance against key ministerial targets and milestones¹

Target
Outturn

	Targets and Outturns			
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	Targets for 2003-04
Efficiency				
Unit cost of selecting and preserving the public records per metre	£97.15 £88.47	£102.81 £97.01	£107 £90.92	To ensure that the unit cost does not exceed £96
Unit cost of giving access to records ²	£0.86 £0.34	—	—	
Onsite transactions	—	£8.69 £5.59	£8.80 £7.22	To ensure that the onsite unit cost does not exceed £9.90
Online transactions	—	£0.16 £0.13	£0.15 £0.09	To ensure that the online unit cost does not exceed £0.11
To reduce the backlog of records in departments reported as being over 30 years old and awaiting review (in metres)	397 558.1	179 707	115 305.8 ³	247

¹ This performance report has been audited by the Department for Constitutional Affairs Internal Assurance and, in respect of the financial targets, by the National Audit Office.

² In 2001-02 the access unit costs were disaggregated into onsite and online elements.

³ The opportunity was taken to clear significant backlogs in departments in the course of the year.

	Targets and Outturns			Targets for 2003-04
	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	
Quality of Service				
Achievement of six separate Charter Standard targets for:				
Answering letters within 10 working days	98.5% 99.63%	98.5% 99.24%	98.5% 99.6%	98.5%
Record copying services	98.5% 98.5%	98.5% 98.01%	98.5% 98.78%	98.5%
Keeping visitor appointments within 10 minutes	98.5% 94.2%	98.5% 99.29%	98.5% 98.8%	98.5%
Delivering documents to users (90% within 30 minutes on weekdays, 45 minutes on Saturdays)	105.8%	107.6% ⁴	107.7%	Specified time targets
Making newly opened records and their catalogues available to users	114.5%	109.7% ⁵	107.1%	Specified time targets ⁶
Answering 80% of telephone calls within 20 seconds ⁷	110%	120.7% ⁸	118.3%	Specified time target
Onsite user satisfaction surveys: assessments of 'good' and 'excellent' from those expressing a view	90% 95.6%	90% 95.6%	90% 96.7%	90%
Online user satisfaction surveys: assessments of 'good' and 'excellent' from	—	—	80% 85.6%	80%
Income Generation				
To increase revenue generated by commercial activity	£736,000 £777,000	£800,000 £863,000	£850,000 £947,000	£1,000,000
Electronic Service Delivery				
To deliver a specified number of digital record images to users through Documents Online ⁹	—	50,000 46,545	20,000 29,994 ¹⁰	60,000

⁴ The percentage reflects the extent to which the specified time target has been exceeded.

⁵ See footnote 4.

⁶ See The National Archives Corporate Plan 2003-04 to 2005-06 and Business Plan 2003-04, Annex 1: www.pro.gov.uk/about/plans/cp_bp.pdf

⁷ In 2000-01 and 2001-02 the target was to answer 80% of telephone calls within 30 seconds; in 2003-04 the target will be to answer 85% of calls within 20 seconds.

⁸ See footnote 4.

⁹ This target also included images downloaded from the 1901 census website in 2001-02; in 2003-04 it will include free accesses as well as paid image downloads.

¹⁰ This target was comfortably exceeded because demand for online images of wills proved to be even more popular than anticipated.

Performance against milestone targets 2002-3

Electronic Records Management ¹¹

To encourage other government departments to achieve electronic records management (ERM) by 2004 by

Achieved

i. monitoring progress in departments against milestones and reporting to the Lord Chancellor, the e-Government sub-group and departments every six months and to others as appropriate to the level of action required

Half-yearly reports submitted to the Lord Chancellor

ii. targeting under-achieving departments and developing action plans to accelerate progress

Priority departments identified and action plans completed

iii. delivering a programme of workshops to support the action plans

Three workshops held

Social Inclusion

To raise an awareness of the PRO's holdings among under-represented groups in our user profile by means of a rigorous social inclusion programme, the chief components of which are:

Achieved

i. To make available 90,000 images online as part of the 'Moving Here' project

116,654 images available by end March 2003

ii. To conduct an evaluation exercise with users (remote, at Kew and at the FRC) of the usability of PROCAT, DORIS and PRO Online

Web surveys and focus groups held and analysis completed by end March 2003

iii. To organise an event as part of Black History month and to produce one other targeted event;

'Memories from the Islands' exhibition and special lecture held in October 2002

iv. To organise an educational focus event as part of the London String of Pearls Golden Jubilee programme

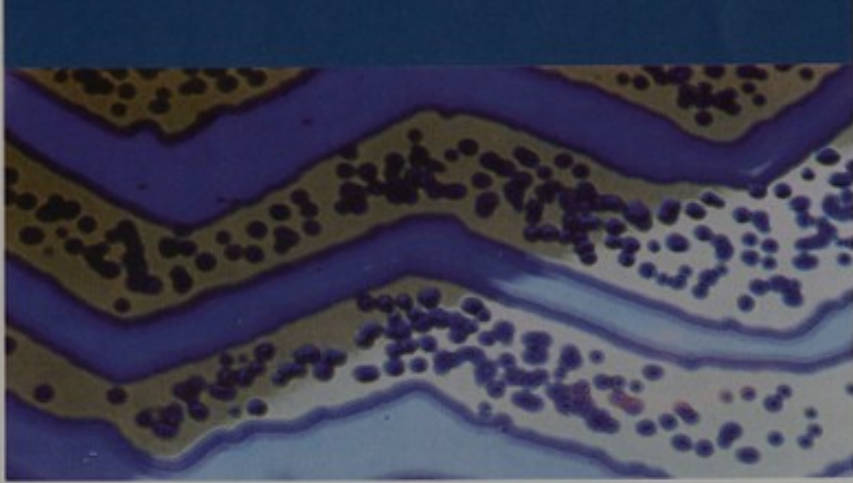
Exhibition of work designing royal seals launched in June 2002

¹¹ This target will be exactly the same in 2003-04.

Social Inclusion Programme 2003-04: Key Targets

- i. To make available a total of 150,000 images¹² online in four galleries as part of the 'Moving Here' project by 30 September 2003
- ii. To commence the first stage of the project to redesign PROCAT public interface screens in order to improve their usability, partly based on the findings of the usability evaluation exercise completed in 2002-03
- iii. To broaden the ethnic, cultural and social mix of school groups visiting the National Archives by organising 10 workshops in partnership with the Tower of London and Cross River partnership

¹² By the end of March 2003 90,000 images should be available, so the target is to provide an additional 60,000 images by the end of September 2003



The Public Record Office

Resource accounts 2002/2003

The National Archives

A Government Department and Executive Agency

Foreword to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2003

Background information

The Public Record Office (PRO) is a government department in its own right established under the Public Records Acts of 1958 and 1967, and the Chief Executive, the Keeper of Public Records, reports directly to the Lord Chancellor. The PRO became an executive agency on 1 April 1992 and is funded by a request for resources from Parliament.

From April 2003, the PRO joined together with the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) to form a new body, The National Archives. The National Archives administers the public records system of the United Kingdom under the Public Records Acts of 1958 and 1967 and exercises the powers accorded to the Historical Manuscripts Commission by the Royal Warrant of 1959. We advise government on public record issues and related information matters.

Aims

For the year under review the aims of the PRO were:

- to assist and promote the study of the past through the public records in order to inform the present and the future;
- to advise government on public record issues and related records management and information policy matters.

Objectives

For the year under review the objectives of the PRO were:

- **Records Management and Selection:**
Overseeing management of records in government to support its business; selecting and acquiring public records of enduring historical value for public access.
- **Preservation:**
Preserving the selected public records permanently so that present and future generations can have access to them.

- **Access:**

Providing online and onsite access to the public records and promoting their value and use as a national information and educational resource.

Management and structure

During the year under review three groups carried out the PRO's functions and duties:

The **Public Services Group** was responsible for making the records available to the public, both electronically on the Internet and on site. The directorate was responsible for the PRO's web site, catalogues, digitisation programme and e-learning initiatives. It provided expert advice and other services to readers and remote users (including record copying, education, publicity and marketing services, publishing, retailing and income-earning activities), provided expert knowledge about the records through the creation and refinement of traditional and electronic finding aids; promoted the work of the Public Record Office and advised the Lord Chancellor on issues of public access.

The **Government and Archival Group** was responsible for overseeing the management of current records in government, with emphasis on helping Departments prepare for electronic records management. It guided and supervised government departments and other public record bodies in the selection and transfer of records to the Public Record Office or other suitable archives and then preserving those records by ensuring that they are maintained and stored in good order. The directorate developed special provisions for selecting and preserving electronic records; dealt with relevant aspects of government information policy and advised the Lord Chancellor on the records system in general and specifically on variations to the thirty year rule. The directorate also liaised with other record offices designated as places of deposit for public records.

The **Corporate Services Group** ensured the efficient, effective and proper use of the PRO's financial, staff and other resources. It was responsible for essential support services. These included the functions of Finance, Personnel and Development, Procurement, Training and Internal Audit, and the maintenance and development of the Information and Communications infrastructure.

Security and the general management of the estate and of its facilities were also the responsibility of this directorate. All of these functions were in support of the PRO in meeting its business and corporate objectives.

Departmental report

The PRO departmental report was presented to Parliament as part of *The Lord Chancellor's Departments – Departmental Report*. It described progress in meeting strategic objectives and looked forward to the spending plans of the next three years. The report was published in May 2003 (CM 5910).

Pension liabilities

Present and past employees are covered by the provisions of the Civil Service pension arrangements. These are explained in detail in note 2 to the accounts. Benefit expenditure for Civil Service pensions is borne on the Civil Superannuation Vote. Where the National Archives bears the cost of pension provision for staff, it is by the payment of an annual accruing superannuation charge. The charge is shown under "Other pension costs" in note 2 to the accounts.

Employment policy

The National Archives is committed to equality of opportunity for all. Policies are in place to guard against discrimination and to ensure that there are no unfair or illegal barriers to employment or advancement within the National Archives. Suitability for employment is based on qualifications and eligibility of individuals irrespective of race, age, gender, marital status, disability or sexual orientation. The National Archives follows the Civil Service Code of Practice on the Employment of Disabled People, which aims to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability. At the end of 2002/03 there were 534 PRO employees (503 full time equivalents) of whom 235 (44%) were women, 18 (3.4%) would be recognised as disabled in the context of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 83 (16.5%) were from ethnic minorities. The National Archives through its senior managers meets regularly with staff and Trades Union representatives in a wide spectrum of areas, including Whitley Council, Health

& Safety Committees and link groups. The National Archives provides a welfare service for its employees.

Statement of payment practice

The National Archives operates a policy of paying within 30 days of receipt of goods and services, or the invoice, whichever is the later. In 2002-03, 99% by the PRO were paid within agreed credit periods.

Preparation of the accounts

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the direction given by the Treasury in pursuance of section 5(2) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

Financial Control

The PRO is funded through the Supply Estimates. These are the means by which Government seeks authority from Parliament for its own spending each year. The PRO net resource outturn for which authority was sought and approved through the Supply Estimates was £39.038m. The actual outturn for the financial year was £34.666m, a saving of £4.372m. The cash requirement of the Office is projected on a monthly basis. The Office liaises with Her Majesty's Treasury to enable these funds to be made available through the Paymaster General's Office, which is the Office's main banking facility. The Office also maintains facilities with the National Westminster Bank to clear retail transactions through to the PGO and also arranges for electronic transactions (debit and credit cards) to be collected on behalf of the Office by Nat West Streamline.

Capital expenditure, administration costs and income are monitored and reported monthly to the Management Board, which considers and agrees actions to be taken as appropriate.

Audit

The financial statements have been audited by the National Audit Office on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Review of activities

The main activities during the year were:

- re-launching the 1901 census website to the public on the Internet in August 2002
- the further development of access to digital images of wills and other records through PRO On-line (relaunched in April 2003 as DocumentsOnline)
- enhancements to the online catalogue (PROCAT) and the launch of the Library catalogue on the Internet
- enhancements to the online and onsite Education Services increasing their take-up by 70% and 33% respectively
- the completion of the project to microfilm WW1 Soldiers service records, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund
- the completion of two 'Pathways to the Past' online exhibitions funded by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF)
- the further development of the Access to Archives (A2A) programme, the creation of a virtual archive catalogue for England
- the launch of the 'Moving Here' online exhibition relating to the immigration experience, funded by a grant by NOF
- the development of three Pathways to the Past online exhibitions funded by NOF
- implementing a storage system for electronic records selected for permanent preservation
- release of all official papers relating to the abdication of King Edward VIII
- the continuation of work towards the achievement of the cross-government target for Departments to introduce electronic management systems for their digital records by 2004.

Future activities

Future activities to include:

- the creation of The National Archives in April 2003
- enhancements to and streamlining of onsite public services including launching the HMC services at Kew
- the opening of newly refurbished National Archives Museum
- a major role in Archive Awareness Month (September 2003)
- continuing developments of standards for records management across government
- finalising work towards the achievement of the cross-government target for Departments to introduce electronic management systems for their digital records by 2004
- further developing the National Archive's digital preservation strategy for electronic records
- continuing preparation for the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 with its expected implementation in 2005
- the completion of a third NOF funded 'Pathways to the Past' online exhibition
- finishing work on making available digital images of the censuses, wills from 1700 to 1820, and the minutes and memoranda of the Cabinet and Chiefs of Staff from 1971
- completing the development of the National Archive's (internal) Electronic Records Management (ERM) system.

In 2002-03 the members of the Management Board were

Mrs. Sarah Tyacke
Keeper of Public Records

Dr. Elizabeth Hallam Smith
Director of Public Services

Mrs. W. Jones
Director of Corporate Services

Dr. Duncan Simpson
Director of Government and Archival Services
(to 31 August 2002)

Dr. David Thomas
Head of e-Access (to 31 August 2002) then
Director of Government and Archiving Services

Mr. Chris Cooper
Head of Reader Information Services

Miss. Elizabeth Honer
Head of Records Management (to 27 June 2002)

Dr. David Leitch
Head of Central Management

Mr. David Ryan
Head of Archiving Services

Ms. Meg Sweet
Head of Records Management
(from 12 September 2002)

Mrs. Alison Webster
Head of e-Access (from 22 August 2002)

Mr. Nick Worrall
Head of Financial Services

Ms. S. Coutu
Non-executive member (to 17 October 2002)

Mr. Barry Glassberg
Non-executive member

Mr. Meyrick Vevers
Non-executive member (from 20 March 2003)

Mrs. Sarah Tyacke was appointed in December 1991 by competitive recruitment as Keeper of Public Records by the Lord Chancellor. Her contract expires on 31 March 2004, but it can also be terminated under the standard procedures of the Civil Service Management Code. Her salary is determined by the Lord Chancellor.

The Directors, Dr. Elizabeth Hallam-Smith, Mrs. W. Jones, Dr. Duncan Simpson and Dr. David Thomas were appointed by competitive recruitment. They are permanent employees and are members of the Senior Civil Service. Their salaries are determined by reference to the Senior Salaries Review Body. Procedures for termination are as set out in the Civil Service Management Code.

The other members of the Management Board (excluding the non-executive directors) were all appointed by competitive recruitment. They are permanent employees. The determination of their salaries is through a locally negotiated scheme to which all National Archives employees, other than the Keeper and Directors, are subject. These Management Board members have standard contracts of employment and the termination of their employment is governed by employment law.

Details of the remuneration for the Keeper and Directors are shown in note 2 to the accounts.

Events since the end of the financial year

As noted above, from April 2003 the PRO joined together with the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) to form a new body, The National Archives.

Sarah Tyacke

Sarah Tyacke
Accounting Officer

11 July 2003

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, the Public Record Office is required to prepare resource accounts for each financial year, in conformity with a Treasury direction, detailing the resources acquired, held, or disposed of during the year and the use of resources by the Public Record Office during the year.

The resource accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Public Record Office, the net resource outturn, resources applied to objectives, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

The Treasury has appointed the Keeper as Accounting Officer of the Public Record Office with responsibility for preparing the Public Record Office's accounts and for transmitting them to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

In preparing the accounts the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the *Resource Accounting Manual* prepared by the Treasury, and in particular to:

- observe the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, as set out in the *Resource Accounting Manual*, have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on the going-concern basis.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which an Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Department's assets, are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum, issued by the Treasury and published in *Government Accounting*.

Statement on the System of Internal Control 2002/03

1. Scope of Responsibility

1.1 As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control which supports the achievement of PRO policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Government Accounting.

2. The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

2.1 The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of policies aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

3. Capacity to Handle Risk

3.1 Strategic leadership on risk management issues comes from the Management Board and the Audit Committee. Both are able to draw on the expertise of non-executive members with experience of the private sector and other government bodies.

3.2 The Audit Committee acts in an advisory capacity. It takes an overview of the entire risk management framework. In 2002/03 we reviewed the format of meetings, ensuring a sharper focus on governance and risk management issues. Further review will take place in 2003/04, considering the structure of the Committee and development/training for members. Following on from this we will issue a handbook to guide members in their roles and responsibilities.

3.3 A number of workshops and seminars have been used to give senior and middle management an understanding of governance processes. In 2003/04 we will introduce a risk management training module and ensure that more staff (particularly junior managers) are equipped with skills and an understanding of corporate governance. We have introduced departmental risk registers in 2002/03, and seek to make these as accessible as possible, with staff at all levels able to contribute to the identification and evaluation of risk.

3.4 One of the non-executive Audit Committee members led a session for managers with responsibility for key areas of risk. One of the main themes of the event was the communication of risk management information. A number of ideas will be developed in the course of 2003/04, including initiatives to demonstrate a closer link between planning processes and the identification of risk.

4. The Risk Environment

4.1 The PRO embraces the principles and requirements of good corporate governance. The culture of the organisation supports responsible risk taking. There is a risk management framework which illustrates the various roles and communication responsibilities that individuals/departments/committees have with regard to corporate governance.

4.2 At a strategic level, management of risk is embedded in the planning and policy making of the organisation. The Management Board has identified a number of priority areas for discussion. Apart from the regular financial/resource/planning issues, Management Board time is focused on items which:

- are of wider significance to key stakeholders/customers;
- involve the commitment of staff and resources across the organisation;
- are connected to wider political, EU and international questions;
- relate to an innovative project or a new way of carrying out a business activity; or
- have major implications for the structure and culture of the National Archives.

4.3 The high level corporate risk register is considered by the Management Board on a quarterly basis. This provides information on 11 strategic risks (an additional risk relating to Freedom of Information legislation was added in the course of 2002/03). Changes in the level/impact of all key risks are clearly identified. At lower levels there are risk registers for programmes/projects/departments which assess the risks relating to targets and assign responsibilities.

4.4 In 2003/04 we will draw on the conclusions of the Strategy Unit Report on "Risk: Improving government's capability to handle risk and uncertainty", and ensure that systems reflect any guidance produced by the Treasury's Risk Support Team.

4.5 As our buildings are open to the public, we have particular regard to the safety and security of the public on site. The environment, facilities, equipment, and emergency procedures are subject to regular review.

5. Review of Effectiveness

5.1 As Accounting Officer, I also have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- the work of the **internal auditors**. The Internal Audit Department follows Government Internal Audit Standards and HM Treasury's Good Practice Guidance. The Head of Internal Audit provides a formal, independent and objective opinion on risk management, control and governance. In addition to the formal annual report there are arrangements for interim reporting to the Audit Committee in the course of the year. Such interim reports address emerging issues in respect of the whole range of areas to be covered in the formal annual report;
- a formal **assurance process** for managers with responsibility for development and maintenance of the internal control framework. This provides detail on the steps taken to guard against the key risks identified in the corporate risk register;
- the twice yearly **stewardship reporting** by heads of department. They are asked to assess the areas they are responsible for and rate aspects of

control. The Audit Committee is presented with an analysis of the statements, which includes information on all aspects of control that have been given a rating to indicate a need for further action;

- the **Gateway Review** process. We are developing systems to ensure that information on trends and items of particular concern are raised at Audit Committee meetings;
- advice from the **Audit Committee** on the promotion of corporate governance, the evaluation of the risk management framework, and internal/external audit matters;
- advice from the **Management Board**. We have refocused the agenda of the Management Board so that there is sufficient time for discussion of high risk items; and
- comments made by the **external auditors** in their management letters and other reports.

5.2 During the course of 2002/03 we have enhanced existing risk management procedures and introduced a number of additional ones. My review of effectiveness also ensures that there is continuous improvement of the system of internal control. I am confident that all key corporate governance processes were in place by the end of March 2003. At the end of 2003/04 I will be able to complete a statement that confirms that these processes have been in place for the full year.

6. Significant Risk Management Issues in 2002/03

6.1 In the early part of the year the PRO dealt with a range of issues linked to our project to make 1901 Census data available on the internet. Our contractor's website was not sufficiently robust to cope with the volume of interest. By August we agreed that the site could be made available to the public on a test basis. Some problems persisted and the site was intermittently unavailable. As these problems were resolved we extended access, and achieved a full service with 24 hour access in November 2002. We faced a number of contractual, project and reputational risks during this period. The lessons learned from this experience will be applied to future plans.

6.2 During the course of 2002/03 we have worked to improve our position with regards to central government targets for electronic records management (ERM). At the start of the year we were aware that we had to replan our internal ERM project. We have now successfully undergone an OGC Gateway 3 review. We are now satisfied that we will be successful in rolling out the new ERM system across the organisation by the end of 2003.

6.3 During the course of 2002/03 we have established systems to plan for and coordinate the creation of The National Archives. This has involved the introduction of a communications plan (which includes all stakeholders), review of policies and procedures, liaison with the Lord Chancellor's Department and Treasury Solicitor's Department regarding legal arrangements, and providing the Management Board and senior management from the Historic Manuscripts Commission with an overview of progress and risk.

6.4 In October 2002 we established a Project Support Office (PSO). We aim to develop this as a centre of excellence for project management disciplines. It is vital that we have high standards of project management; particularly as IT systems become more complex, electronic traffic increases, and dependencies between systems need to be developed and managed effectively. The PSO is also used to coordinate Gateway Reviews throughout the Office, and selected staff have been specifically trained in the application of this review process.

6.5 We have started to assess the risks associated with our overall programme of work on the IT infrastructure. The aim is to direct resources to the most critical areas which will impact on the delivery of business/strategic objectives. We will be addressing our technical infrastructure as to how it not only meets our current requirements but also those of the future.

6.6 We are reassessing our approach to contingency planning. This has included a visit to the National Library in Prague to learn about recovery methods from last year's flood disaster. We have also introduced new bomb procedures, and provided an additional base for relaying messages in the event of the control room being out of action. Further work to revise procedures will take place in 2003/04.

6.7 During the year we reviewed the programme for implementation of FOI projects to ensure preparedness for the government's 2005 target. As a result we restructured the programme of activity and re-focused the various projects across the office.

6.8 We face a number of issues relating to accommodation at Kew and how we develop our public services whilst accommodating staff and functions. A further dimension is added with the physical integration of the Historic Manuscripts Commission due to take place later in 2003. During the year we have assessed the risks and problems associated with space deployment. We commissioned an audit of our space requirements in the near, medium and long term. This has provided a strategic framework which integrates the various key elements, and recognises critical dependencies and timescales. We now have a long-term plan, the first phase of implementation will begin in 2003/04.

Sarah Tyacke

Sarah Tyacke
Keeper of Public Records
Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

11 July 2003

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House Of Commons

I certify that I have audited the financial statements on pages 71 to 90 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000. These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention as modified by the revaluation of certain fixed assets and the accounting policies set out on pages 77 to 78.

Respective responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and Auditor

As described on page 65, the Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and Treasury directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. The Accounting Officer is also responsible for the preparation of the other contents of the Annual Report. My responsibilities, as independent auditor, are established by statute and guided by the Auditing Practices Board and the auditing profession's ethical guidance.

I report my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and Treasury directions made thereunder, and whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. I also report if, in my opinion, the Foreword is not consistent with the financial statements, if the Public Record Office has not kept proper accounting records, or if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report, and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my certificate if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements.

I review whether the statement on pages 66 to 68 reflects the compliance of the Public Record Office with Treasury's guidance entitled 'Corporate Governance: Statement on Internal Control'. I report if it does not meet the requirements specified by the Treasury, or if the statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information I am aware of from my audit of the financial statements.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with United Kingdom Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the Public Record Office in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Public Record Office's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by error, or by fraud or other irregularity and that, in all material respects, the income and expenditure have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I have also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

Opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Public Record Office at 31 March 2003 and of the net resource outturn, resources applied to objectives, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year then ended and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and directions made thereunder by the Treasury; and
- in all material respects the income and expenditure have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General
14 July 2003

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London SW1W 9SP

Schedule 1

Summary of Resources Outturn 2002-03

		2002-03						2001-02
		Estimate			Outturn			
		Gross expenditure	A in A	NET TOTAL	Gross expenditure	A in A	NET TOTAL	Net total outturn compared with Estimate saving/ (excess)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Note								
Request for Resources 1	4 & 7	42,638	(3,600)	39,038	38,266	(3,600)	34,666	4,372
Total Resources		42,638	(3,600)	39,038	38,266	(3,600)	34,666	4,372
Non-Operating-Cost A in A		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Cash Requirement				31,250			27,827	3,423
Reconciliation of Resources to Cash Requirement		Note	£000				£000	£000
Net Total Resources				39,038			34,666	4,372
Capital:								
Cash purchase of fixed assets		8, 9 & 10	3,360				2,230	1,130
Non-Operating-Cost A in A				0			0	0
Net book value of fixed asset disposals				0			(6)	6
Accrual adjustments								
Non-cash items		3	(11,648)				(9,715)	(1,933)
Changes in working capital other than cash		11	500				455	45
Changes in creditors falling due after more than one year								
Use of provision		16	0				197	(197)
Net Cash Requirement (Schedule 4)				31,250			27,827	3,423

A Explanation of the variation between Estimate and Outturn (net total resources)

The variation is the result of re-scheduling budgeted expenditure for the electronic service delivery programme and the electronic records management programme. The updated forecast for the PRO, in respect of the related Government targets for 2004 and 2005, is that they will be met in full.

B Explanation of the variation between Estimate net cash requirement and Outturn net cash requirement

This variation is partly related to the variation in net total resources above, but also relates to some payments anticipated in March which were not invoiced until April.

Schedule 1 (continued)

C Analysis of income payable to the Consolidated Fund

In addition to appropriations in aid the following income relates to the department and is payable to the Consolidated Fund (cash receipts being shown in italics):

	Note	2002-03 Forecast		2002-03 Outturn	
		Income £000	Receipts £000	Income £000	Receipts £000
Operating income and receipts – excess A in A	4	–	–	578	578
Non-operating income and receipts – excess A in A		–	–	–	–
Subtotal		–	–	578	578
Other operating income and receipts not classified as A in A		–	–	–	–
Other non-operating income and receipts not classified as A in A		–	–	–	–
Total		0	0	578	578

D Actual outturn – resources

Request for resources 1: Net total outturn £34,665,871.92

Actual amount of saving compared with Estimate £4,372,128.08

E Actual outturn – cash

Net cash requirement: Outturn net cash requirement £27,827,005.46

which is £3,422,994.54 less than the Estimate.

F The actual receipts surrenderable to the Consolidated Fund are £577,780.92

The notes on pages 77 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Schedule 2

OPERATING COST STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 March 2003

	Note	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Administration Costs			
Staff costs	2	13,676	11,823
Other administration costs	3	24,590	23,770
Gross Administration Costs		38,266	35,593
Operating income	4	(4,178)	(4,517)
Net Administration Costs		34,088	31,076
Net Operating Cost	6	34,088	31,076
Net Resource Outturn	7	34,666	31,076

All income and expenditure are derived from continuing operations.

Statement of Recognised Gains and Losses for the year ended 31 March 2003		2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Net gain on revaluation of tangible fixed assets	18	2,210	3,106
Prior year adjustment		0	5,539
Total recognised gains and losses for the financial year		2,210	8,645

The notes on pages 77 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Schedule 3

BALANCE SHEET

as at 31 March 2003

	Note	31 March 2003		31 March 2002	
		£000	£000	£000	£000
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	9	93,148		92,661	
Intangible assets	10	87		53	
			93,235		92,714
Debtors falling due after more than one year	13		46		76
Current Assets					
Stocks	12	332		351	
Debtors	13	2,071		1,283	
Cash at bank and in hand	14	2,183		1,514	
		4,586		3,148	
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	15	(3,639)		(2,688)	
Net Current Assets			947		460
Total Assets less Current Liabilities			94,228		93,250
Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	16		(401)		(235)
			93,827		93,015
Taxpayers' Equity					
General fund	17		79,860		80,775
Revaluation reserve	18		13,967		12,240
			93,827		93,015

The notes on pages 77 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Sarah Tyacke

Sarah Tyacke
Accounting Officer

11 July 2003

Schedule 4

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

for the year ended 31 March 2003

	Note	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Net cash outflow from operating activities (<i>Note a</i>)		(25,021)	(21,456)
Capital expenditure and financial investment (<i>Note b</i>)		(2,230)	(1,324)
Payments of amounts due to the Consolidated Fund		0	(233)
Financing (<i>Note c</i>)		27,920	23,258
Increase in cash in the period		669	245
Notes:			
a See the table below giving a reconciliation of operating cost to operating cash flows.			
b See the table below giving an analysis of capital expenditure and financial investment.			
c See the table below giving an analysis of financing and a reconciliation to the net cash requirement.			
Reconciliation of operating cost to operating cash flows			
		2002-03	2001-02
Net operating cost		34,088	31,076
Adjustments for non-cash transactions	3	(9,721)	(9,841)
Adjustments for movements in working capital other than cash	11	457	150
Use of provisions	16	197	71
Net cash outflow from operating activities		25,021	21,456
Analysis of capital expenditure and financial investment			
		2002-03	2001-02
Fixed asset additions	9 & 10	2,230	1,324
Proceeds of disposal of fixed assets		0	0
Net cash outflow for investing activities		2,230	1,324
Analysis of financing and reconciliation to the net cash requirement			
		2002-03	2001-02
From Consolidated Fund (Supply): current year		27,920	23,258
Advances from the Contingencies Fund		0	3,500
Repayments to the Contingencies Fund		0	(3,500)
Net financing		27,920	23,258
Increase in cash in the period	14	(669)	(245)
Net cash flows other than financing		27,251	23,013
Adjustments for payments and receipts not related to Supply:			
Amounts due to the Consolidated Fund – received in a prior year and paid over		0	(233)
Amounts due to the Consolidated Fund – received and not paid over	15	578	0
Transitional adjustment for working capital	11	(2)	(109)
Net cash requirement (Schedule 1)		27,827	22,671

Amount of grant actually issued to support the net cash requirement = £27,920,000.00

The notes on pages 77 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Schedule 5

Resources by Departmental Aims and Objectives
for the year ended 31 March 2003

Aims: To assist and promote the study of the past through the public records in order to inform the present and the future.

To advise Government on public record issues and related information policy matters.

Objectives:	Gross £000	2002-03 Income £000	Net £000	Gross £000	2001-02 Income £000	Net £000
Selection Overseeing records management in government and selecting the public records to provide an information resource for our generation and for future generations.	2,864	(41)	2,823	3,268	(47)	3,221
Preservation Preserving the public records	13,416	(241)	13,175	14,303	(497)	13,806
Access Providing access to the public records and promoting their value and use as a national information and educational resource.	21,986	(3,896)	18,090	18,022	(3,973)	14,049
Net Operating Cost	38,266	(4,178)	34,088	35,593	(4,517)	31,076

see note 19

Key ministerial targets	Outturn	2002-03 Target	Outturn	2001-02 Target
Unit cost of selecting and preserving the public records per metre	£90.92	£107.00	£97.01	£102.81
Unit cost of giving onsite access to records per information transaction	£7.22	£8.80	£5.59	£8.69
Unit cost of giving online access to records per information transaction	£0.09	£0.15	£0.13	£0.16
Enterprises & Information Income (£000)	947	850	863	800

The notes on pages 77 to 90 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1 Statement of Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual issued by HM Treasury. The particular accounting policies adopted by the Public Record Office are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of fixed assets at their value to the business by reference to their current costs.

1.2 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets other than land and buildings consist of computer hardware and software and office equipment. Computer software includes the capitalisation of costs relating to the development of databases such as Documents Online. Public records and other heritage assets held by the PRO are not valued and capitalised. The records held by the PRO span one thousand years and fill about 176 kilometres of shelving. They are held in many formats from medieval vellum and parchment to modern computer disks. They are made up of a variety of items ranging from traditional paper records to seals, maps, costumes, paintings, films, items of court evidence etc. Most of the records are unique and irreplaceable and have been preserved for their historical, legal and administrative value. In accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual, the records have not been valued as it would be impractical to do so.

The Public Record Office is the beneficial owner of the freehold land and buildings at Kew.

Freehold land and buildings are stated at current cost using professional valuations every five years and appropriate indices in intervening years. Other tangible assets have been stated at current cost using appropriate indices.

The minimum level for capitalisation of an individual tangible fixed asset is £1,000.

1.3 Intangible fixed assets

Intangible fixed assets comprise software licences purchased from third parties. They are amortised over their estimated useful life of 5 years. Previously these assets were included within tangible fixed assets. Following a review of accounting policies during the year it was decided that these assets should be reclassified in accordance with the Resource Accounting Manual. The amounts involved can be seen in note 10.

1.4 Depreciation

Freehold land is not depreciated.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the valuation of freehold buildings and other tangible fixed assets by equal instalments over their estimated useful lives. Lives are normally in the following ranges:

Freehold buildings	50 years
Computers and software	up to 5 years
Office equipment	up to 10 years
Conservation equipment	up to 25 years
Electric trucks	up to 10 years

1.5 Stocks and work in progress

Stocks and work in progress are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

1.6 Operating income

Operating income is income which relates directly to the operating activities of the Public Record Office. It principally comprises fees and charges for services provided to external customers, but it also includes grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the New Opportunities Fund.

1.7 Deferred income

This comprises payments in advance for work, which has not been undertaken at the balance sheet date.

1.8 Administration expenditure

Administration costs reflect the costs of running the Public Record Office as defined under the administration cost-control regime, together with associated operating income.

1.9 Programme expenditure

The Public Record Office does not incur any programme expenditure.

1.10 Capital charge

A non-cash capital charge, reflecting the cost of capital utilised by the department, is included in operating costs. The charge is calculated at the Government's standard rate of 6 per cent in real terms on the average of opening and closing net assets employed except amounts to be surrendered to the Consolidated Fund and cash holdings with the Office of the Paymaster General, where the charge is nil.

1.11 Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Civil Service Pension Schemes which are described at Note 2. The defined benefit elements of the schemes are unfunded and are non-contributory except in respect of dependents' benefits. The department recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (PCSPS) of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS. In respect of the defined contribution elements of the schemes, the department recognises the contributions payable for the year.

1.12 Early departure costs

The PRO is required to meet the additional cost of benefits beyond the normal PCSPS benefits in respect of employees who retire early. The PRO provides in full for this cost when the early retirement programme has been announced and is binding on the Agency. The PRO may, in certain circumstances, settle some or all of its liability in advance by making payment to the Paymaster General's account at the Bank of England for the credit of the Civil Superannuation Vote. The amount provided is shown gross of any such payments. In previous years the provision was shown net of any prepayments.

1.13 Operating leases

Operating lease rentals are charged to the operating cost statement in equal amounts over the lease term.

2 Staff numbers and costs

A. Staff costs consist of:

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Wages and salaries	11,440	9,850
Social Security costs	755	684
Other pension costs	1,481	1,289
	13,676	11,823

B. The PCSPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Public Record Office is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 1999. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk).

C. For 2002-03, employers' contributions of £1,480,955 were payable to the PCSPS (2001-02 £1,288,672) at one of four rates in the range 12 to 18.5 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. Rates will remain the same next year, subject to revalorisation of the salary bands. Employer contributions are to be reviewed every four years following a full scheme valuation by the Government Actuary. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

D. Employees joining after 1 October 2002 could opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £234 were paid to one or more of a panel of four appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 3 to 12.5 per cent of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3 per cent of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of £20, 0.8 per cent of pensionable pay, were payable to the PCSPS to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees.

Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the balance sheet date were £nil. Contributions prepaid at that date were £nil.

E. The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed, including senior management, during the year was as follows:

	2002-03 No.	2001-02 No.
Selection	66	58
Preservation	68	78
Access	369	315
	503	451

F. The salary and pension entitlements of the Keeper and Directors of the Public Record Office were as follows:

	Age	Salary (as defined below)	Real increase in pension at age 60	Total accrued pension at age 60 at 31 March
	Yrs	£000	£000	£000
Mrs. Tyacke – *Keeper of Public Records				
2002-03	57	85-90	0.0-2.5	5-10
2001-02	56	85-90	0.0-2.5	5-10
Dr David Thomas – **Director (w.e.f. September 2002)				
2002-03	52	55-60	0.0-2.5	15-20
Dr Hallam-Smith – Director			Consent to disclosure withheld	
Mrs. Jones – Director			Consent to disclosure withheld	
*opted to join classic **opted to join classic plus				

The accrued pension of Mrs. Tyacke relates solely to her tenure as Keeper of Public Records.

The salary of Dr David Thomas represents his total earnings for the year.

Salary

(i) 'Salary' includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

Pension

(ii) Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based "final salary" defined benefit schemes (**classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus**). New entrants after 1 October 2002 may choose between membership of **premium** or joining a good quality "money purchase" stakeholder based arrangement with a significant employer contribution (**partnership pension account**).

(a) Classic Scheme

Benefits accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. Members pay contributions of 1.5 per cent of pensionable earnings. On death, pensions are payable to the surviving spouse at a rate of half the member's pension. On death in service, the scheme pays a lump sum benefit of twice pensionable pay and also provides a service enhancement on computing the spouse's pension. The enhancement depends on length of service and cannot exceed 10 years. Medical retirement is possible in the event of serious ill health. In this case, pensions are brought into payment immediately without actuarial reduction and with service enhanced as for widow(er) pensions.

(b) Premium Scheme

Benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum, but members may commute some of their pension to provide a lump sum up to a maximum of 3/80ths of final pensionable earnings for each year of service or 2.25 times pension if greater (the commutation

rate is £12 of lump sum for each £1 of pension given up). For the purposes of pension disclosure the tables assume maximum commutation. Members pay contributions of 3.5 per cent of pensionable earnings. On death, pensions are payable to the surviving spouse or eligible partner at a rate of 3/8ths the member's pension (before any commutation). On death in service, the scheme pays a lump-sum benefit of three times pensionable earnings and also provides a service enhancement on computing the spouse's pension. The enhancement depends on length of service and cannot exceed 10 years. Medical retirement is possible in the event of serious ill health. In this case, pensions are brought into payment immediately without actuarial reduction. Where the member's ill health is such that it permanently prevents them undertaking any gainful employment, service is enhanced to what they would have accrued at age 60.

(c) Classic Plus Scheme

This is essentially a variation of **premium**, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per **classic**.

Pensions payable under **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus** are increased in line with the Retail Prices Index.

(d) Partnership Pension Account

This is a stakeholder-type arrangement where the employer pays a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, these will be matched by the employer up to a limit of 3% (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement). The member may retire at any time between the ages of 50 and 75 and use the accumulated fund to purchase a pension. The member may choose to take up 25% of the fund as a lump sum.

Benefits in kind

(iii) The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the Inland Revenue as a taxable emolument. Neither the Keeper nor Directors listed above received benefits in kind.

3 Other administration costs

	£000	2002-03 £000	£000	2001-02 £000
Rentals under operating leases:				
Hire of plant and machinery	358		101	
Other operating leases	573		567	
		931		668
Non-cash items:				
Depreciation				
Civil Estate	2,012		2,004	
Other tangible fixed assets	1,333		1,730	
downward revaluation of fixed assets	343		275	
loss on disposal of fixed assets	6		37	
Cost of capital charge				
Civil Estate	5,071		5,041	
Other Items	534		525	
auditor's remuneration	59		57	
notional early departure costs	0		36	
Provisions:				
Provided in year	363		136	
		9,721		9,841
Other expenditure				
Accommodation	5,212		4,668	
Consultancy	2,406		713	
University of London	945		961	
Agency Staff	1,696		2,367	
Microfilming	594		1,660	
Travel, subsistence and hospitality	167		220	
Recruitment	392		348	
Training	239		183	
Digitisation	408		49	
Other expenditure	3,638		3,499	
Less VAT recovery on contracted out services	(1,759)		(1,407)	
		13,938		13,261
		24,590		23,770

Note a – the total of non-cash items included in the Reconciliation of Resources to the Net Cash Requirement comprises:

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Total non-cash transactions as above	9,721	9,841
Adjustment for loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(6)	(37)
Non-cash items per reconciliation of resources to net cash requirement	9,715	9,804

4 Operating income

Operating income not appropriated-in-aid (transferred to the Consolidated Fund) is analysed for resource budget purposes between that which is included in public expenditure and that which is not (see note 6).

2002-03			
a)	Resource Outturn	Operating Cost Statement	
	Appropriated in aid	Payable to Consolidated Fund	Income
	£000	£000	£000
Operating income analysed by classification and activity, is as follows:			
Administration income:			
Fees and charges to external customers	3,600	578	4,178
	3,600	578	4,178

2001-02			
	Resource Outturn	Operating Cost Statement	
	Appropriated in aid	Payable to Consolidated Fund	Income included in Operating Cost Statement
	£000	£000	£000
Operating income analysed by classification and activity, is as follows:			
Administration income:			
Fees and charges to external customers	4,517	0	4,517
	4,517	0	4,517

4 Operating income (continued)

- b) An analysis of operating income from services provided is as follows:

	2002-03 Income £000	2002-03 Full cost £000	2002-03 Deficit £000
Record Copying services	1,383	1,551	(168)
Information and Enterprises	947	1,462	(515)
Other	1,848	1,848	0
	4,178	4,861	(683)

	2001-02 Income £000	2001-02 Full cost £000	2001-02 Deficit £000
Record Copying services	1,399	1,465	(66)
Information and Enterprises	863	1,340	(477)
Other	2,255	2,255	0
	4,517	5,060	(543)

- c) The PRO is required, in accordance with the Treasury's Fees and Charges Guide, to disclose performance results for its areas of activity. The segmental analysis is not intended to meet the requirements of Statement of Standard Accounting Practice 25: Segmental Reporting.

and accommodation developments, which the PRO is undertaking. These developments will continue in 2003-04.

- d) As a matter of policy, the full cost of services should normally be recovered. However, it has not proved possible in 2002-03 to recover the full cost of services provided. The main reason for the increasing deficits of Record Copying and Information & Enterprises is the share of infrastructure costs, such as IT investments

5 Administration cost limits

The outturn within the administration costs control regime shown against individual administration cost limits is as follows:

	2002-03 Outturn £000	Limits £000	2001-02 Outturn £000	Limits £000
Request for resources 1	31,451	35,168	31,076	35,715

6 Reconciliation of net operating cost to control total and net resource outturn

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Net operating cost (Note a):	34,088	31,076
Consolidated Fund extra receipts (CFERS)	578	0
Net resource outturn (Note a)	34,666	31,076

Note:

a) Net operating cost is the total of expenditure and income appearing in the Operating Cost Statement (Schedule 2). Net resource outturn is the total of those elements of expenditure and income which are subject to parliamentary

approval and included in the department's Supply Estimate. The outturn against the Estimate is shown in the Summary of Resource Outturn (Schedule 1)

7 Analysis of net resource outturn by function and reconciliation to Operating Cost Statement

2002-03								Net Total Outturn compared with Estimate £000
	Admin. £000	Other Current £000	Grants £000	Gross resource expenditure £000	A in A £000	Net total £000	Estimate £000	
Request for Resources 1								
Records registrations and surveys	38,266	—	—	38,266	(3,600)	34,666	39,038	4,372
Total	38,266	—	—	38,266	(3,600)	34,666	39,038	4,372
Resource Outturn	38,266	—	—	38,266	(3,600)	34,666	39,038	4,372
Reconciliation to Operating Cost Statement								
Non A-in-A operating income					(578)	(578)		
Gross operating expenditure				38,266				
Operating income					(4,178)			
Net operating Cost						34,088		

2001-02								Net Total Outturn compared with Estimate £000
	Admin. £000	Other Current £000	Grants £000	Gross resource expenditure £000	A in A £000	Net total £000	Estimate £000	
Request for Resources 1								
Records registrations and surveys	35,593	—	—	35,593	(4,517)	31,076	35,715	4,639
Total	35,593	—	—	35,593	(4,517)	31,076	35,715	4,639
Resource Outturn	35,593	—	—	35,593	(4,517)	31,076	35,715	4,639
Reconciliation to Operating Cost Statement								
Non A-in-A operating income					0	0		
Gross operating expenditure				35,593				
Operating income					(4,517)			
Net operating Cost						31,076		

8 Analysis of capital expenditure, financial investment and associated A in A

2002-03					Outturn Compared	
	Capital expenditure £000	Loans, etc. £000	A in A £000	Net total £000	Estimate £000	with Estimate £000
Request for Resources 1						
Records registrations and surveys	2,230	–	–	2,230	3,360	1,130
Total	2,230	–	–	2,230	3,360	1,130
2001-02					Outturn Compared	
	Capital expenditure £000	Loans, etc. £000	A in A £000	Net total £000	Estimate £000	with Estimate £000
Request for Resources 1						
Records registrations and surveys	1,324	–	–	1,324	1,384	60
Total	1,324	–	–	1,324	1,384	60

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £000	Equipment £000	IT including databases £000	Total £000
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2002	93,689	8,280	4,777	106,746
Additions	0	60	2,097	2,157
Disposals	0	(331)	(1,935)	(2,266)
Revaluation	2,267	(58)	(343)	1,866
At 31 March 2003	95,956	7,951	4,596	108,503
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2002	9,188	1,817	3,080	14,085
Charged in year	2,012	373	920	3,305
Disposals	0	(331)	(1,929)	(2,260)
Revaluation	222	3	0	225
At 31 March 2003	11,422	1,862	2,071	15,355
Net Book value at 31 March 2003	84,534	6,089	2,525	93,148
Net Book value at 31 March 2002	84,501	6,463	1,697	92,661

a) Freehold land and buildings were valued on 25 March 2002 at £84.5m on the basis of depreciated replacement cost by an external firm of Chartered Surveyors, Atis Real

Weatheralls Limited. Their valuation was carried out in accordance with the Appraisal and Valuation Manual issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Software Licences £000
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2002	124
Additions	73
Disposals	(18)
Revaluation	0
At 31 March 2003	179
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2002	71
Charged in year	39
Disposals	(18)
Revaluation	0
At 31 March 2003	92
Net Book value at 31 March 2003	87
Net Book value at 31 March 2002	53

11 Movements in working capital other than cash

	Notes	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
(Decrease)/ Increase in stocks	12	(19)	8
Increase in debtors	13	758	448
Increase in creditors	15	(282)	(306)
		457	150
Transitional adjustment		(2)	(109)
Increase in Supply working capital		455	41

The transitional adjustment of £2,040 (£109,000 in 2001-02) is for receipts brought forward at 1 April 2001 that reduced the Net Cash Requirement.

12 Stocks

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Reprographic materials	17	20
Work in progress	25	20
Publishing and shop stocks	290	311
	332	351

13 Debtors

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
VAT	1,504	416
Trade debtors	105	167
Deposits and advances	33	28
Prepayments and accrued income	409	636
Prepayments - early retirement	20	36
	2,071	1,283
Amounts falling due after one year:		
Prepayments and accrued income	26	35
Prepayments - early retirement	20	41
	46	76
	2,117	1,359

14 Cash at bank and in hand

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Balance at 1 April	1,514	1,269
Net cash inflow	669	245
Balance at 31 March	2,183	1,514
The following balances at 31 March are held at:		
Office of HM Paymaster General	2,180	1,510
Commercial banks and cash in hand	3	4
	2,183	1,514
The balance at 31 March comprises:		
Cash due to be paid to the Consolidated Fund:		
Consolidated Fund extra receipts received and due to be repaid to the Consolidated Fund	578	—
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for Supply but not spent at year end	1,605	1,514
	2,183	1,514

15 Creditors

	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	292	292
Accruals and deferred income	1,164	882
Amounts issued from the Consolidated Fund for supply but not spent at year end	1,605	1,514
Consolidated Fund extra receipts received and receivable and other due to be paid to the Consolidated Fund	578	0
	3,639	2,688

16 Provisions for liabilities and charges

	Early departure costs £000
Balance at 1 April 2002	235
Provided in the year	363
Provisions utilised during the year	(197)
Balance at 31 March 2003	401

Early departure costs

The Public Record Office (PRO) meets the additional costs of benefits beyond the normal PCSPS benefits in respect of employees who retire early by paying the required amounts annually to the PCSPS over the period between early departure and normal retirement date. The PRO provides for this in full when the early retirement programme becomes binding on the department by establishing a

provision for the estimated payments discounted by the Treasury discount rate of 6 percent in real terms. In past years the PRO paid in advance some of its liability for early retirement by making a payment to the Paymaster General's Account at the Bank of England for the credit of the Civil Service Superannuation Vote. The balance remaining is treated as a prepayment.

17 Reconciliation of Net Operating Cost to changes in General Fund

	Note	2002-03 £000	£000	2001-02 £000	£000
Net Operating Cost	6	(34,088)		(31,076)	
Surrender of excess appropriations in aid and CFERs	4	(578)		0	
			(34,666)		(31,076)
Net Parliamentary funding			27,920		23,258
Transferred to general fund in respect of realised element of revaluation reserve on depreciation	18		258		350
Consolidated Fund creditor for unspent cash	15		(1,605)		(1,514)
Settlement of previous year creditor for unspent cash	15		1,514		924
Notional charges:	3				
cost of capital charge		5,605		5,567	
auditor's remuneration (notional)		59		57	
notional early-departure costs		0		36	
			5,664		5,660
Net decrease in General Fund			(915)		(2,398)
General Fund at 1 April 2002			80,775		83,173
General Fund at 31 March 2003			79,860		80,775

18 Reserves

	Revaluation reserve £000
At 1 April 2002	12,240
Arising on revaluation during the year (net)	2,210
Transfer in respect of realised depreciation	(225)
Transferred to general fund in respect of realised element of revaluation reserve	(258)
Balance at 31 March 2003	13,967

The revaluation reserve reflects the unrealised element of the cumulative balance of indexation and revaluation adjustments (excluding donated assets). There were no donated assets in 2002-03.

19 Notes to Schedule 5

The PRO's capital is employed exclusively for administration purposes. Its distribution amongst objectives is therefore not markedly different from the proportion of the related gross administration cost.

Administration costs and income have been attributed to objectives in accordance with the department's normal management accounting practices.

20 Capital commitments

There were no commitments for capital expenditure contracted for at 31 March 2003 for which provision has not already been made in the accounts.

21 Commitments under operating leases

Operating leases

Commitments under operating leases to pay rentals during the year following the year of these accounts are given in the table below, analysed according to the period in which the lease expires.	2002-03 £000	2001-02 £000
Obligations under operating leases comprise:		
Land and buildings		
Expiry after more than 5 years	564	564
	564	564
Other		
Expiry within one year	184	32
Expiry between two and five years	243	63
	991	659

22 Other commitments

The PRO has entered into a seven year service contract with the University of London for the preservation of government datasets (UK National Data Archive for Datasets). At 31 March 2003,

commitments under this contract totalled £1.6m. The PRO has not entered into any other non-cancellable contracts, other than the one disclosed above.

23 Contingencies

There were no contingent assets or liabilities at 31 March 2003.

24 Collaborative projects

QinetiQ

In January 2000, the PRO awarded a contract to QinetiQ to digitise the 1901 census and make it available on the Internet for January 2002. Due to technical difficulties the site was not permanently launched until August 2002. Providing the service is operating as specified, the income on the contract

has been underwritten by the PRO up to a maximum of £250,000 per annum. The first payment, if required, will be made in 2003-04. All assets relating to this contract are owned by QinetiQ. Costs incurred in the management of this project during 2002-03 amounting to £390,111 were expensed in the year.

25 Related party transactions

The Public Record Office is a government department in its own right. The Keeper reports directly to the Lord Chancellor.

None of the board members, key managerial staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the PRO during the year.

26 Financial Instruments

FRS 13, *Derivatives and Other Financial Instruments*, requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks an entity faces in undertaking its activities. Because of the largely non-trading nature of its activities and the way in which it is financed, the Public Record Office is not exposed to the degree of financial risk faced by business entities. Moreover, financial instruments play a much more limited role in creating or changing risk than would be typical of the listed companies to which FRS 13 mainly applies. The Public Record Office has very limited powers to borrow or invest funds and except for relatively insignificant forward purchases of foreign currency, financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational

activities and are not held to change the risks facing the department in undertaking its activities.

Liquidity Risk

The Public Record Office's net revenue resource requirements are financed by resources voted annually by Parliament, as is its capital expenditure. The Public Record Office is not therefore exposed to significant liquidity risks.

Interest Rate Risk

The Public Record Office is not exposed to any interest rate risk.

Foreign Currency Risk

The Public Record Office's exposure to foreign currency risk is not currently significant.

27 Accountability

No exceptional kinds of expenditure such as losses and special payments that required separate disclosure because of their nature or amount were incurred.

28 Post Balance Sheet Event

From April 2003 the PRO joined together with the Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC) to form a new body, The National Archives.



Independent Complaints Reviewer to The National Archives

Summary of Annual Report 2002-2003

Foreword

Mrs Jodi Berg, Independent Complaints Reviewer for the National Archives (the ICR), has published her third annual report.

She commented: "As people become more assertive of their rights to prompt, efficient and courteous public services, public bodies face increasing scrutiny over the quality of service they provide. People who turn to my office do so because they want an unbiased but informed view of problems they have encountered. We are robust in our approach to this task and people can have confidence that we will deal with their complaints in a professional, open-minded and impartial manner."

As ICR, Mrs Berg focuses upon the way in which The National Archives responds to complaints and the lessons that can be learned from them. The National Archives' customers rely on it to acknowledge their dissatisfaction, try to resolve matters and facilitate access to the ICR should the need arise. The ICR welcomed the fact that The National Archives continued to do this last year. She also commented that, with rare exceptions, the Agency offers a very good quality of service to its customers and handles complaints efficiently. Very few customers have found the need to access the ICR service.

Cases received

Last year over 112,000 people visited National Archives sites and nearly 100,000 telephone calls were received. Increasingly, people are making use of Agency websites and over 30 million hits were recorded last year.

Despite the frequent use of its services, between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003, The National Archives recorded only 53 complaints. By any measure, this is an excellent achievement. During the reporting period, we received 10 complaint referrals. This continues the trend of the last two years, which also saw very low numbers of complaints referred to the ICR.

Only one complaint was formally reviewed by the ICR. Two were resolved by mediation and the customers' subsequent satisfaction with the Agency's response. Other cases did not proceed to review because complaints were resolved and/or complainants decided not to take matters forward.



The Independent Complaints reviewer, Jodi Berg

Access to records

Mr A was researching military records from the Great War, which required him to access index cards from the Microfilm Reading Room at Kew. He needed to look through very large numbers of cards at frequent intervals during the course of a day's work. Mr A said that, initially, he had received permission to take out several cards at a time. However, he reported that this was then withdrawn. He was upset about the response he received when he sought to get this decision reversed. He asserted that the rules governing access to the cards should be changed.

Mr A complained to the ICR that the Agency had failed to properly address his complaint about these matters and that the responses that he received

from various officers had been dismissive and/or aggressive. He said that senior management had not shown themselves to be accountable for their decisions to a member of the public.

The ICR noted that initial and limited permission had been given to Mr A to access more than one card at a time. She regarded this as a flexible response to his particular needs. However, she considered that the Agency had sound reasons for limiting access to the cards, and it had acted in accordance with established procedures in later insisting that Mr A observed the rules for access. In her view, the Agency had made the decision clear to Mr A and had explained its reasons for it.

The ICR concluded that the Agency had looked into Mr A's complaints with vigour and objectivity. It had produced a

courteous and businesslike report. The ICR noted that the personal situation between Mr A and some officers had become highly charged. This had led to his complaint about staff behaviour and attitude. She noted that Mr A had also made some inappropriate personal remarks about some officers in his letters. She commented that public servants are entitled to the same degree of courtesy and respect as that expected by members of the public.

Finally, the ICR did not consider that senior management were not accountable. She found that the Agency's procedure had been properly observed and Mr A's complaint was escalated in an appropriate manner. External review had provided an independent opinion on his complaint. The complaint was not upheld.

What we found

The ICR will not uphold a complaint if, at the time it is accepted for investigation, we find that the Agency has already fully addressed the complaint and appropriate redress has been provided, offered or instigated.

In the one complaint that we reviewed, three allegations of maladministration were made: two relating to complaints handling and one to discourtesy. None of these allegations were upheld.

This is very encouraging and demonstrated that a good quality of service is given to customers, even in what can be quite difficult circumstances.

Across our caseload, the majority of the complaints we accept for investigation comprise a number of allegations of maladministration, which often pertain to entirely different issues or events. We respond to and record each element of a customer's complaint.

Complaint handling by The National Archives

The National Archives has developed feedback mechanisms for capturing customer comments, concerns and complaints. It records all complaints, including those made by telephone.

In response to an ICR recommendation, last year the Agency took steps to improve the information provided to the Management Board on customer feedback. This year, the Agency's Public Services Development Unit will take this

Mediation through discussion

Mrs B contacted the ICR to complain that the Agency had published a book in which some of her work was reproduced without her permission. She had complained about this to the Agency, but considered that she had been "fobbed off". She said that all that she really wanted was an apology

and an acknowledgement of her contribution.

After discussion, it was agreed that the ICR would try to mediate with the Agency on Mrs B's behalf. The ICR contacted the Agency about Mrs B's concerns. The Agency agreed to invite Mrs B to enter into discussions to achieve an amicable resolution of her complaint.

further by including an analysis of specific comments and trends.

In cases we review, the ICR routinely comments on the quality of internal complaints handling. Where this falls short of the required standard, she can ask the Agency to acknowledge this by an apology or by awarding a consolatory payment.

The standard of complaint response was very good in the small number of cases that we saw last year. However, the Agency must take care to ensure that a similar quality of response is given to people, even where it works with other organisations to provide a service to the public, for example at the Family Records Centre.

The Agency's complaints policy and procedure is currently under revision. When this task is completed the Agency will publish new information for staff and undertake appropriate training. It will also be necessary to ensure that customers are fully aware of the new procedures by revising information leaflets and by continuing to offer on-line complaints access.

The ICR Team

ICR

Jodi Berg

Senior Investigations Officer
Andrew Robertson

Investigations Officers

Linda Miers
Sarah Jennings
Catharine Campbell

Copies of the full text of the annual report can be obtained from:

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2002-2003 was a momentous year for archives, with the announcement in Parliament of the creation of a new National Archives service from April 2003, and linked to this the planned creation of a new body to advise the Lord Chancellor on all issues of concern to those interested in records and archives.

Next year I expect to be reporting to you on behalf of your new Advisory Council on National Records and Archives. Its report will include the annual report of your Advisory Council on Public Records, so this will be the final report in this form.

Forty-fourth report of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on Public Records

**To the Right Honourable the
Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Lord
High Chancellor of Great Britain
and Secretary of State for
Constitutional Affairs**

While considering the planning for these changes, the Council has maintained a close interest in records management, especially in the electronic environment, the selection of and access to public records, and the services provided to users of the Public Record Office. We were especially pleased to be able to congratulate the Keeper on the successful re-launch of the 1901 Census website, following extensive reworking after the failure of the service in the face of huge demand early in 2002.

The National Archives

The Advisory Council was excited to learn of the Government's plan to create a new National Archives service, by bringing together the Public Record Office and the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. It can see major advantages in a co-ordinated approach to archival policy for the United Kingdom and in particular in England and Wales, and the consolidation, over time, of the services provided to the



archival community and the public by the PRO and HMC. We have been impressed by the evident care taken to reassure those who might have felt that public services would suffer, especially historians and the owners of private papers.

In common with other commentators, we were very pleased to see that this is not to be merely a cost-cutting exercise, and we look forward to studying evidence of the expansion of public services by the use of resources gained from the efficiency savings which will accrue.

Advisory Council on National Records and Archives

With advice from the Keeper we gave much thought to the Lord Chancellor's need for advice on all matters relating to archives, records and manuscripts, following your predecessor's assumption

of ministerial responsibility for them. Our Secretary assisted the Keeper in putting the resulting proposals to your predecessor, which he accepted. The "Russian doll" arrangement, of this Council and a new Advisory Council on Historical Manuscripts within an umbrella Advisory Council on National Records and Archives, appears clumsy but is (we believe) the solution best calculated to serve your needs while recognising our continuing statutory functions. I was very pleased to receive Lord Irvine's invitation to me to become, as Master of the Rolls, the chairman of the new bodies.

In anticipation of the creation of the new structure, our meeting in February was held jointly with the commissioners of the HMC and we were introduced to some of the issues which are of concern to them. We look forward to working with our new colleagues,

to learning about the needs of private owners of papers and the problems associated with non-public records, and to introducing them to the challenge of seeking to look after the public interest in access to and the efficient management of public records.

Archival legislation

The Keeper has kept us informed about the progress of work on new archival legislation. We can see considerable benefits from providing a statutory foundation for archival services of all kinds. Legislation would also of course provide the opportunity to formalise the creation of The National Archives and permit the establishment of a single independent advisory body. We have been pleased to see the care with which this important question is continuing to be addressed.

We have until now been forced to limit our attention in this area to public records issues, as I acknowledged in our report last year. The wider remit of the new Advisory Council on National Records and Archives will enable us, with our new colleagues from the HMC, to look at the benefits new legislation would bring to the whole of the archival and records field.

Extended closure and retention of public records

We have continued to give close attention to applications from departments for the extended closure and retention of public records. It is clear from the lists of documents for which your predecessor approved accelerated opening that departments are

continuing to release material for which closure or retention are no longer justified. Even so, there continue to be items for which applications are made where we are not persuaded that the public should be denied access.

We continue to be grateful to the staff in departments for responding to our concerns constructively, and I have pleasure in reporting that several files have been released which would otherwise have been withheld. These included material on nuclear testing, the award of honours, Rhine transport policy and the late Bobby Moore, formerly the captain of the England football team. We were grateful too to officers of the Scottish Administration for consenting to the release of papers concerning the succession of Dr Ewan Forbes-Semphill to the Craigievar baronetcy, following the death of his widow Lady Forbes of Craigievar.

Files containing sensitive personal papers are the subjects of a significant proportion of applications for closure.

We reported last year on the Home Office's helpful treatment of personal files on applicants for naturalisation as British citizens (known at the time as "aliens") since the 1930s. We have agreed to a further batch of these being closed for 100 years after the birth of the individual, but again the Home Office has expressed itself willing to consider applications from researchers for the release of particular files and, where necessary and possible, to blank out sensitive material from a file so that the remainder may be released.

The personnel files of the wartime Special Operations Executive are all closed for 85 years from the end of the last War (on the basis that some locally recruited agents could have been as young as 15 at the time). Again exceptions may be made, for files relating to individuals about whom the PRO has received conclusive evidence of their death.

The government has been considering the release of papers concerning the abdication crisis in 1936, in line with the guidance on the release of records relating to the Royal Family. We have kept a close eye on this process in the belief that the bulk of such material should be made available to the public, and we were delighted when the withheld files on the subject were released at the end of January.

We understand that the approach of the date in 2005 when the access provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will come into force is giving some urgency to government consideration of the many statutory bars on access to particular series of records. Some of these bars offer no prospect of release. We share the PRO's view that "never" is a very long time, and look forward to being involved in the review of such bars that has begun.

Records management

We share the concerns of the Keeper and other archivists about the problems posed by electronic records. We have been given some very useful briefing by the PRO on the issues that need to be addressed, in particular on the

Appeals

I reported last year that we were considering an appeal from Mr Reg Hargrave for our assistance to secure the release of a Metropolitan Police file on the unsolved murder of a friend of his in 1954. In the event we concurred with the Commissioner's view that release could hinder any future prosecution, but we were pleased that the period of extended closure of this file was greatly reduced.

We dealt with two further appeals during the year. Mr Charles Beral sought the release of retained papers from the file on the naturalisation of his late father, and discussions about this are continuing.

We were very pleased to be able to secure a positive outcome to an appeal from a constituent of Mr Andrew Lansley MP for access to a hospital register containing an entry relating to his great aunt who died in 1900. Although the entry was over 100 years old, the whole register remained closed because it contained more recent entries. We are grateful to the Department of Health for issuing a blanket authorisation to archivists holding National Health Service records to permit access to personal material over 100 years old so long as the security of more recent material is not compromised.

problems surrounding the authenticity and integrity of e-records which I mentioned in my report last year. We were pleased to learn of the attention which was being paid to these matters by the PRO and others, and we look forward to giving further consideration to them.

Backlogs of reviewing in government departments are an issue which we take very seriously, as you will appreciate from the attention which I have paid them in our earlier reports.

The Customs and Excise is responding positively following receipt of the letter which I asked Lord Irvine to send last year. We were relieved to be told that those records which were at the greatest risk of damage or even destruction had been moved to more suitable accommodation. The initial discoveries of locally accumulated material appear to have prompted C&E to look more carefully, and further quantities of material of considerable historical interest relating to local commerce around the country have been found during this year. We have been impressed, nevertheless, by the determination of C&E to abide by its undertaking to complete work on the appraisal of all of the backlog by the end of the calendar year 2003, so that I hope to have the pleasure of reporting next year that historians will be able to consult a large quantity of valuable records hitherto unknown to them.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the Forestry Commission continued to respond positively to the concerns which we brought to the attention of your predecessor,

and its backlog had been cleared by the time we met in June.

Unfortunately though, while one problem was dealt with another appeared, this time at the Civil Aviation Authority as a result of the privatisation of National Air Traffic Services which had previously done the work. We were concerned to be told that this backlog would take four years to clear, and so we shall be keeping a close eye on progress in the hope that the task can be completed rather faster.

Government Communications Headquarters

In 1998, Lord Irvine agreed to a request from the Home Secretary that he might invite my predecessor Lord Woolf to ask the Council to undertake a review of the criteria used to select records of the Security Service for permanent preservation. After publicising the review, visiting the Security Service and receiving public submissions, the Council published its recommendations and they have since formed the basis of the PRO's operational selection policy for the Security Service.

We were delighted to learn in February that the precedent set by the Security Service had inspired the head of Information Services at GCHQ to seek a similar review for the records of his service. He therefore requested that, on the Lord Chancellor's behalf, the Keeper invite me to ask the Council to undertake the work. A small group of members of the Council has kindly agreed to form a sub-committee to prepare recommendations, and I shall report on the outcome next year.

Freedom of Information

The Council is an authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and so will be required to make its non-exempt records available to enquirers when the access provisions come into force in 2005. In the meantime it is required to publish a Publication Scheme, and thereafter to publish information which is identified in the scheme. The Council's scheme was approved by the Information Commissioner then published at the end of November.

Membership

I have great pleasure in reporting that two members of the Council were made Commanders of the Order of the British Empire during the year, Ted Rowlands in the Birthday Honours for services to the History of Parliament Trust and Andreas Whittam Smith in the New Year Honours for services to the film industry during his term as president of the British Board of Film Classification.

The membership of the Council remained unchanged during the year, and consisted of:

Professor David Cannadine, Director of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London

Sir Charles Chadwyck-Healey Bt, retired, formerly academic publisher

Sir John Chilcot GCB, retired, formerly Permanent Under Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office

Mr Ian Coulson, teacher, schools inspector in Kent

Mr Peter Fox, Librarian, Cambridge University Library

Mrs Anne Hanford, film librarian and consultant in the management of media collections

Mrs Gillian Hughes, professional researcher and record agent

Professor Angela John, Professor of History, University of Greenwich

Dr Dorothy Johnston, Keeper of Manuscripts and Special Collections, Hallward Library, University of Nottingham

Professor Rodney Lowe, Professor of Contemporary History, University of Bristol

Professor Lord Renfrew, Disney Professor of Archaeology, University of Cambridge and representative of the Conservative Party

Mr Ted Rowlands CBE, formerly MP for Merthyr Tydfil; representative of the Labour Party

Professor the Earl Russell, Emeritus Professor of Modern History, Kings College London and representative of the Liberal Democrats

Mrs Shahwar Sadeque, educational and information technology consultant

Miss Elizabeth Shepherd, Lecturer in Archives and Records Management, University College, London

Mr Andreas Whittam Smith CBE, journalist, First Church Estates Commissioner; formerly editor of *The Independent*, chairman of the Sir Winston Churchill Archive Trust and president of the British Board of Film Classification

All meetings were attended by Mrs Sarah Tyacke, the Keeper of Public Records. Meetings were also variously attended by officers of the Public Record Office: Dr Duncan Simpson, until his retirement director of Government and Archival Services; Dr David Thomas, Dr Simpson's successor; Dr Elizabeth Hallam Smith, director of Public Services; Miss Elizabeth Honer, head of Records Management until her departure to the House of Commons; Ms Meg Sweet, Miss Honer's successor; and Mr Stephen Twigg of Records Management Department. Miss Jeanette Martin and Mrs Gabrielle Firestone of the Lord Chancellor's Department each attended one meeting to observe our work. The Secretary is Mr Tim Padfield.

On behalf of the members,

Rt Hon Lord Phillips
Master of the Rolls
Chairman



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