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### UK national preservation initiatives

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#### **1. Introduction**

The speakers in the session were asked to address a number of questions. This was in order to explore the concept that *“it is necessary to agree on a common national policy to give priority to the preservation of specific national heritages to make preservation of printed, written and electronic material feasible on a global scale”*.

We were given a number of questions to be answered or topics to be addressed. These were;

- Does or would your country/government/national library support the above statement?
- What kind of national preservation initiatives have been developed in your country so far or which plans are under development?
- Who took the initiative and why? If it failed why?
- What's the organisational structure behind the implementation of a national plan?
- Where does the money come from? Central/local government sponsors, institutions?
- What initiatives were taken by whom to get this topic on the political agenda and what were the considerations from the government to create a budget for implementation?
- Is there a co-ordinated effort between different memory institutions: archives, libraries, and museums? Does it work? If not why?
- How can we collaborate on an international scale? Who takes care of important English collections outside the UK etc? How is duplication of effort to be avoided? Do you participate in international registration services (EROMM, RLG, LAROMM etc). How is this co-ordinated a national scale?
- Do you fully depend on commercial services for microfilming, deacidification etc in your country or region; or have you made other arrangements?

This paper takes the form partly of a snapshot of UK preservation initiatives as at September 2002 and plans for the next 3-5 years and it partly takes the form of analysis, comment and observation based on the questions that speakers were asked to address. This is from the perspective of a national library, namely the British Library, which helped found and helps fund some of the preservation bodies that are not funded directly by government.

Some key initiatives and some key documents are highlighted as a picture of now and the next 3-5 years. The political imperative and strategic direction are outlined, and the salient features, the current and declared future work plan, national preservation programmes, funding sources, and practical help available to everyone such as advisory and informational services (including good examples of useful publications, edited e-mail lists) are reviewed.

The paper concludes with some analysis of good models, some comment on why things do and do not work and where there are gaps. This is restricted to the UK mainly, with some reference to European, Australian and US initiatives, and mainly from libraries' perspective.

## **2 UK political landscape**

Firstly, a definition of the UK and the implications of the defining political feature of devolution. In 1999 the Scottish Parliament was established. In 1999 the Welsh Assembly was established. In 1999 the Northern Irish Assembly was established. The Parliament of Ireland (Houses of Oireachtas) has been in existence since 1922. There are eight new mayors in cities and towns around the UK, including for the first time, a Mayor for London, and four more elected mayors are planned. The move towards devolved government and towards increased regionalism is one of the major defining features of the UK political scene.

The Comprehensive Spending Review announced by the UK government in July 2002 for the next three year's allocation to all ministries, included a £257million per year increase for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, under which the British Library comes. The major increase was for the Department for Education and Skills of £12.8billion over the next three years, which covers the higher education library sector. How this additional funding will be allocated to individual institutions, such as the BL and higher education institutions, is not known yet.

The snapshot of UK initiatives as at September 2002, starts with those directly funded by the UK government.

### 3 Political cultural scene

#### 3.1 Strategic bodies with a preservation remit directly funded by UK-government

- **Resource**

The main body directly funded by the UK Government is Resource, the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. It was established in April 2000, through the merger of the Library and Information Commission and the Museums and Galleries Commission. Whilst it is directly funded by the UK government through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, its remit covers primarily England. It is a strategic body that “seeks to forge closer links between the museum, library and archives sectors” underlying all of which is the need “to promote cultural diversity, audience development and social inclusion”.<sup>1</sup> This reflects the current Labour government’s agenda. The other major Government policy it reflects is regionalism, meaning an increased devolution of power to the regions. Regional agencies (for museums, archives and libraries) are to be established in the nine English regions, with a network of proposed regional ‘hubs’ consisting of one museum and gallery service with up to three partners. The relevance of these so-called ‘hubs’ in the context of this paper is that they will be leaders of regional museum practice, including preservation and conservation practice.

There are several strategic strands within Resource and the main one for preservation originally came under the Stewardship Strategy. This has now become the collections management strand as articulated in the recently published ‘Collections Management. Preserving the Past for the Future’ (July 2002).<sup>2</sup>

A principle feature of Resource’s remit is that it crosses the different heritage and memory institutions of museums, libraries and archives. The Collection Management document recognises that there is “ great deal of common ground and growing evidence of collaboration across the sector[s] despite the distinctive approach to stewardship identifiable in each of the three domains”.

The main aim of the Stewardship programme is “to develop a framework, co-ordinated by Resource, which will deliver improved collection management across the sector” and has “set up a Collection Management and Development Group comprising key funders and practitioners, to advise on and co-ordinate the work”.

There are eight areas of activity; the first four are underway and the other four represent the core plan for the next three years.

They are

- (A) Increasing funding opportunities
- (B) Developing a standards-based approach
- (C) Ensuring an adequate supply of staff and skills
- (D) Increasing use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- (E) Mapping the Distributed National Collection
- (F) Developing the framework for the Distributed National Collection
- (G) Ensuring high standards of collections management
- (H) Raising awareness of the importance of conservation and collections management

The idea of a Distributed National Collection is a key feature of current cultural and information strategic thinking in the UK. It resonates, for example, with the DNER (Distributed National Electronic Resource) in the further and higher education sector. DNER is the 'networked environment that provides UK further and higher education with a range of digital collections and advisory services to support their use ... in other words it will bring together the various resources and collections funded by JISC, the Joint Information Systems Council'<sup>3</sup>(The Joint Information Systems Committee promotes the innovative application and use of information systems and information technology in further and higher education across the UK). In the case of Resource, what such a national collection is and how it is managed and preserved are not answered yet. Mapping exercises to define the national collection will be the first step.

A couple of illustrations from the Stewardship Programme under E-H highlight the new elements for collection management. For example, under 'ensuring high standards of collections management' there is a project to analyse the relative costs of disposal, active preservation and passive storage of collections'. Another project is to research the costs and benefits associated with the disposal and de-accession of unwanted material and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication. Whilst reiterating that Resource's remit is across the three domains of archives, libraries and museums, this area is particularly pertinent to libraries in the light of the Nicolson Baker controversy about disposal of newspapers after microfilming.

The two major, political features of the increased importance of regionalism on the one hand, and the concomitant view of a national collection shared across the country on the other hand, are translated into preservation in the following way;

- By developing with national and regional partners a standard methodology to map the quality of collection management and care, and identify preservation needs in all three domains.
- And to support the completion of comprehensive surveys such as National Preservation Office's National Register of Preservation Needs.

This further translates into practicalities, such as looking into setting up a national collections management advice centre, providing advice and support across the domains. Another particularly useful example is the recent publication 'Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Libraries and Archives'.<sup>4</sup>

#### **'Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Libraries and Archives'**

This publication is essentially a self-help checklist. It describes the elements of caring for collections, such as buildings, security, storage, handling, exhibitions, environment, conservation, surrogacy, emergency preparedness. It then defines basic practice, good practice and best practice in a clear and realistic way for each of those elements. So, for example, for

##### Environmental Control and Monitoring

- Basic practice  
The bulk of the collection is to protect it from extreme environmental conditions
- Good practice  
A programme is in place to measure relative humidity, temperature and light levels
- Best practice  
Appropriate environmental conditions are established for all items according to their requirements

By self-assessment against the different levels of basic, good and best practice, it shows an institution's areas of strength and where improvements are needed, thereby helping to prioritise resources and providing a practical framework for measuring future progress. It is a very useable, practical, pragmatic self-help tool, available from Resource publications or in pdf format.

- **UKOLN, mda**

Within this section of government-funded agencies, UKOLN and mda should also be mentioned. UKOLN (UK Office for Library and Information Networking) is a national focus of expertise in digital information management. It provides policy, research and awareness services to the UK library, information and cultural heritage communities. mda (formerly the Museums Documentation Association) gives advice to people about documenting collections and the information that goes with them. They are both largely funded by Resource (for example, UKOLN is funded by Resource, JISC, EU project funding and the University of Bath.) The mda has just launched a portal, piloting a web front database driven structure as a 'first step in providing easily accessible and quality-assured information, advice and support for people working with collections'. This could become, or be part of a network providing, the "one stop shop" advisory centre (whether real or virtual) for Stewardship as highlighted by Resource.

#### **4 Developments in the library and Higher Education sector**

##### **4.1 Bodies with a preservation remit funded by the sector itself**

- **National Preservation Office**

The National Preservation Office is not directly funded by government. It was established by the British Library Board in 1984 in the light of a report which highlighted an urgent need for preservation policies in libraries, a need for preservation training and a need for a national advice and research centre. It is currently funded by contributions from the six copyright libraries of the UK and Ireland, the Public Record Office, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, the National Library of Ireland with additional support from CONUL (Consortium of National and University Libraries) and SCONUL (Society of College, National and University Libraries). The majority of the funding comes from the British Library including accommodation within its building at St Pancras in London.

The NPO has just entered a new three-year funding period with a revised remit to 'provide an independent focus for preservation of, and continuing accessibility to, cultural heritage materials held in libraries archives and museums in the United Kingdom and Ireland'.

The objectives for the NPO from 2002 to 2005 are;

- To engage proactively in forging relationships with other agencies in the active development and implementation of national strategies for collection care in a cross domain environment
- Provide information resources to support the management of preservation and conservation care
- Effect a standards based approach to managing preservation and collection care through training and education
- Engage proactively in the development and support of initiatives for collection care undertaken locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Use available opportunities for research and consultancy to effect improvements in the knowledge of, and resources for, preservation management and collection care

- Widen the funding base

Therefore its new three-year remit encourages cross-sectoral elements, contributes to national preservation strategy via Resource’s work programme, working increasingly in collaboration with other bodies, for example, Resource and the Digital Preservation Coalition. Along with other organisations in the public sector, the NPO is developing fee-based services to enable it to continue to provide free advisory services. An interesting point to debate is where on the spectrum between public good for the preservation of all and fee-based and/or cost-recovery does, and should, the NPO and similar organisations in other countries come.

The NPO has an increased emphasis on its practical, advisory and information role, and is reviewing its preservation information provision. Examples of its practical outputs are its annual conference (last year on Integrated Pest Management with English Heritage and the Science Museum; this year it will be on Managing Library and Archive Collections in Historic Houses). The NPO produces useful leaflets and publications, ranging from simple advice on Exhibiting Archive and Library Materials to a digestible synthesis of reports on digital preservation.<sup>5</sup>

### **Preservation Assessment Survey**

A valuable, practical product in the context of national preservation initiatives in the UK, is the NPO’s tool entitled Preservation Needs Assessment. This is a survey method for assessing the preservation needs of any library or archive collections. As part of the income-generation strategy for the NPO, this is available for purchase and consultancy and it a very practical, pragmatic, useful way of measuring what the condition of any collection is and what the highest priority preservation actions should be. As part of the national strategic and ‘public good’ element, these surveys are building up a picture of the preservation needs in libraries and archives across the country. Having been involved in its design and testing, the British Library is committed to using the survey to give an objective picture of the condition of all the collections.

In the next year, the NPO’s surveys will be more targeted to create a national picture of the UK’s preservation needs, linking in to Resource’s mapping work of national distributed collections and the conservation and preservation needs of those collections. This is strategically in order to lever funding for collection care, having quantified and proven the need.

The Preservation Assessment Survey (PAS) works by selecting and surveying a sample of 400 items, which provides a statistically reliable report. It factors in condition, use, value and environmental conditions. To use the method an institution selects a random sample, either from the whole of its holdings or from a selected part. Each item is assessed using a simple two-sided form that asks questions relating to the preservation of the item and examines the condition of the item and records any damage to it. The database structure developed by the NPO organises the data to provide pre-set reports. The database can also be interrogated to provide specific local information.

Preliminary analysis of the 20 surveys so far carried out using the NPO survey method, reveals that in terms of condition and usability of the collections assessed;

Good	57%
Fair	34%
Poor	7
Unusable	2

Combining the ‘good’ and fair’ categories to indicate stable collections and ‘poor’ and ‘unusable’ to denote unstable collections, then 9% can be considered unstable. Of all the aggregated data so far, 78% of collections record some elements of damage, and 22% are undamaged.

Preliminary findings from the 20 surveys to date also shows that on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the most severe, the majority of collections are in preservation priority band 2 (60%). 10% are in band 1, 23% in band 3, 5% in band 4 and 0 in band 5. The most pressing issues emerging are that environmental standards and a written disaster plan are the least satisfactory elements.

Of the 20 surveys, just under half were libraries, just under half were archives, and the others were museum collections. Statistically, in order to get a national picture of the preservation needs of all UK libraries and archives, it will take 111 surveys (with about 90% confidence). Therefore, as well as its consultancy service providing training for the preservation needs assessment to institutions which approach the NPO, it is seeking about £100,000 for a funded programme to complete 111 surveys by the end of 2005. That way, with this database, it will have a national picture of the preservation needs of UK libraries and archives, to feed into a national preservation strategy.

A practical example of the NPO's support for a potential national preservation programme, is its involvement in INFOSAVE a project looking at potential collaborative mass deacidification in the UK.

### **INFOSAVE**

INFOSAVE started as a joint initiative from the Public Record Office and the British Library in November 1999. The original steering Group, which included representatives from major UK libraries and archives, made a successful application for funding for a project consultant. The feasibility study was led by the National Library of Wales. The primary aims of the first phase was to explore the current attitudes and understanding of mass deacidification, to map out a collaborative approach to solving the problems caused by acidic paper and to look at the possibility of establishing a mass deacidification facility to serve the UK and Ireland. The first phase produced the report "The Enemy Within! Acid Deterioration of Our Written Heritage" in March 2001.<sup>6</sup>

Two further phases followed. Phase 2 recommended the extension of the survey format to a separate regional project to demonstrate the need for deacidification amongst archives and libraries. A pilot group in the South of England, representing library and archive collections at the Public Record Office, the London Metropolitan Archives, the Wellcome Trust, the Royal Botanical Gardens, Imperial College and the British Library, collectively analysed the amount of their collections which were acidic and would benefit from deacidification. This pilot finished in December 2001 and it also very usefully showed the practical issues of collating such information. Phase 3 has been significant in that funding was provided by Resource and so brought the project within the national stewardship strategy. A sample batch of library and archive material has been treated by seven commercial deacidification companies and is currently undergoing testing for process effectiveness at University of Manchester. A timetable and methodology for phase 4 are currently being planned.

The sizeable experience of deacidification programmes and collaboration in Switzerland, US, Canada, the Netherlands etc is being applied to the INFOSAVE project. As an observation, the subject of deacidification is very much conducive to collaborative preservation, particularly on the national level when national libraries and national archives are involved.

- **The Digital Preservation Coalition**

The Digital Preservation Coalition was founded recently in the UK as a membership organisation to promote the urgency of the preservation of digital material. The key point is that it was founded and funded by concerned institutions and organisations, notably JISC (Joint Information Systems Council), the British Library, the University of London Computing Centre, CURL (Consortium of University Research Libraries), the National Archives of Scotland and OCLC (Online Computer Library Center Inc) and the

Public Record Office. The membership is growing, for example, with Resource and most recently the e-Science Core Programme. The Digital Preservation Coalition is not funded directly from government.

The Digital Preservation Coalition was launched earlier this year, with the aim of securing “the preservation of digital resources in the UK and to work with others internationally to secure our global digital memory and knowledge base”. In order to achieve this aim, the Coalition has a number of long-term goals, which range from producing and disseminating information on current research and practice and building expertise amongst its members to accelerate their learning and generally widen the pool of professionals skilled in digital preservation, to advocacy and lobbying for funding to secure the nation’s investment in digital resources and ensure an enduring global digital memory.

Particularly pertinent to the theme of national initiatives, are the goals to provide a common forum for the development and co-ordination of *digital preservation strategies in the UK* and to forge strategic alliances with relevant agencies nationally and internationally, and working collaboratively together with industry and research organisations, to address shared challenges in digital preservation

The programme of work of the Coalition operates on four levels

- Activities undertaken individually by member institutions
- A core set of activities of common interest and benefit to all its members supported by resources from its membership and sponsoring bodies
- A series of collaborative projects which would be taken forward with project funding drawn from a variety of sources
- Through the Coalition, its member and strategic alliances, promoting developing and implementing a national infrastructure of services and training for sustaining access to and preservation of digital resources

So what does it do? The launch at the Houses of Parliament generated a lot of publicity, as part of its advocacy and awareness-raising role. The DPC holds forums, most recently an industry forum with software, hardware, pharmaceutical businesses, out of which the work plan for the Coalition is emerging. For example, the need for a software repository was identified as an urgent need by memory institutions, by industry and by bodies such as the British Computer Society, as were the need for realistic cost models for the preservation of electronic material. The first, simple step towards the co-ordination of digital preservation strategies in the UK will be the posting by members on the web-site of their current individual strategies

It might seem anomalous or even counter-intuitive, that at a time of general convergence and cross-sectoral elision, that a new organisation be set up. The key point about digital preservation is the urgency and a specific, focussed coalition can concentrate attention and advocacy for a while. Ideally, and in time, there will be integrated preservation on all fronts. There are links to traditional preservation, for example with a Memorandum of Understanding with the NPO.

Digital preservation is a subject area that is particularly conducive to international working. This ranges from advocacy and lobbying such as the CDNL (Conference of Directors of National Libraries’) petition on digital preservation to UNESCO to collaborative research such as the CAMELEON project on emulation, based in the Universities of Leeds and Michigan. In the case of the DPC, indeed the remit is for ‘national ...in an international context’. There are multiple strands of international initiatives in digital preservation which the DPC is linking in with - from an Expression of Interest to the EU’s 6<sup>th</sup> Framework



for a European Web Archive, to the Library of Congress's DNIPP (the National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program).

A couple of very practical outputs of the Digital Preservation Coalition so far are the Digital preservation e-mail list and the publication of 'Preservation Management of Digital Materials. A Handbook'.<sup>7</sup> The Digital preservation e-mail list, is a filtered list of news and developments in this area and is one of the most useful and informative lists (<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/digital-preservation>). Again, there is international context, with its links to the information on the Australian PADI site.

#### **'Preservation Management of Digital Materials. A Handbook'**

The Handbook was written as a very practical guide for anyone embarking on, or already grappling with, the preservation management of digital materials. It covers the topics from high-level preservation strategy to practicalities of intellectual property rights, authenticity and preservation options. Different chapters are specifically recommended for different audiences, ranging from digital content creators and publishers, to operational staff and senior administrators. The Handbook was written in conjunction with practitioners, so has useful tools such as 'decision-trees' to help in the selection of digital materials for long-term retention. The references at the end of every section are helpful and are updated on the web version.

### **4.2 Strategic developments in the library and Higher Education sector**

#### **Research Support Libraries Group**

The Research Support Libraries Group comprises the four UK higher education funding bodies and the three national libraries. It is a new strategic advisory group, chaired by Sir Brian Follett, established to advise on the development of a national strategy to ensure that UK researchers in all disciplines have access to world class information resources. It is working on a national strategic framework and mechanisms for promoting collaboration in, and integration of the development and provision of library collections, their long-term management, and services to support research

Part of its remit is to develop a UK-wide strategy for preservation, including digital preservation to support research and scholarship alongside the preservation of printed materials, and the requirements for technical capacity.

The Group will publish its findings in the autumn. From a broadly preservation perspective, it already looks unlikely that collaborative storage is feasible.

### **4.3 Examples of collaborative preservation initiatives**

#### **SCOLD**

The Standing Committee on Legal Deposit of the six copyright libraries in the UK and Ireland established a preservation group, SCOLD-Pres chaired by the Bodleian Library Oxford, with an ambitious remit to facilitate and enable collaborative preservation among its members. This has looked at the feasibility, and practicalities of the six copyright libraries sharing primary preservation responsibility between them. SCOLD has commissioned a closer analysis of how this might work, such as the practicalities of sharing information through non-aligned documentation systems.

#### **SPIS**

Shared Preservation in Scotland aims for shared responsibility on a voluntary basis for preservation and retention of research level collections throughout Scotland. Stage one identified the elements of a shared preservation programme and stage 2 investigates how it would work.

#### **4.4 Examples of major collaborative UK preservation projects**

##### **Mellon Microfilming project**

The Mellon Microfilming Project was a major national co-operative programme of preservation microfilming in the UK, funded by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation of New York from 1988 to 1997. The programme was managed collaboratively by a Steering Committee, chaired by the NPO and including representatives of the BL, the National Libraries of Wales and Scotland, Cambridge University Library, the Bodleian Library and Trinity College Dublin. A programme of microfilming, which included manuscript collections, trade journals and monographs and 19th century fiction, was carried out in the partner institutions, while grants totalling over £1 million were awarded for preservation microfilming in 13 other UK institutions - categories of material here included monographs, periodicals, tracts and pamphlets, and directories. Over 12,500 reels of high quality preservation microfilm were produced, the profile of preservation microfilming was raised and standards for preparation and filming practices were developed and promoted. Preservation microfilming is now an accepted preservation medium in the UK and the manual of the Mellon Microfilming Project, recently revised by the NPO as the *Guide to Preservation Microfilming*, is the recognised standard. It is unlikely that progress on this scale would have been possible without a collaborative national approach or large-scale external project funding.<sup>8</sup>

##### **NEWSPLAN**

An example of a major, collaborative preservation project within the library sector is NEWSPLAN. NEWSPLAN began in 1986 as a national programme for the microfilming and preservation of local newspapers and making them accessible to users. It involves public libraries, record offices, national libraries and the newspaper industry. Initially led by the British Library, with local input in kind and a contribution to filming, NEWSPLAN has now achieved a local and regional momentum which resulted in a successful bid in 1999 to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The collaborative approach enabled the development of a more powerful voice for fundraising than could have been achieved by institutions and organisations acting alone.

The aims of the NEWSPLAN 2000 Project are

To preserve 1,700 rare or fragile local newspaper titles held in libraries, archives, universities and publisher's offices throughout the United Kingdom.

To create archival microfilm to preservation standards.

To provide one copy of each film to the appropriate local library, without cost.

To distribute microfilm readers and reader printers for users in libraries throughout the UK at minimal cost.

To store the master negative microfilm created by the Project to archival standards.

To catalogue each newspaper to national and international standards

The project will include 1,700 newspaper titles, 100,000 reels of microfilm, 3,000 volumes of newspapers and 65 million pages of newsprint.

In March 2000, the NEWSPLAN 2000 Project was formed under the control of NEWSPLAN 2000, a company registered as a charity. The company administers the Project under the control of a Board of Trustees formed from each of the ten NEWSPLAN regions of the United Kingdom and other interested parties. The NEWSPLAN 2000 Project operates from premises made available by the British Library at

the Newspaper Library in Colindale. In April 2000, the Heritage Lottery Fund made a conditional award of £5 million to support Stage 1 of the Project. The award granted the Project a twelve-month developmental stage, referred to as a foundation year, leading to the application for a full Stage 2 pass in 2001. At the request of the HLF, it was agreed that 75% of newspapers to be microfilmed would be supplied by the British Library Newspaper Library.

In September 2001 the HLF agreed £5 million funding for Stage 2 of the project, together with £1.3M from the UK regional newspaper industry and £1.5M from libraries in in-kind support for the servicing of newspaper files prior to microfilming. In October 2001 Microformat (UK) Ltd were awarded the microfilming contract for the Project to microfilm 1,700 newspaper titles from March 2002 to June 2004. The first title to be preserved by microfilming by the NEWSPLAN 2000 project is The Armagh Observer (1944-50).<sup>9</sup>

Since 2000, NEWSPLAN has also organized the Fourth National NEWSPLAN Conference: on preservation topics and the UK and Ireland NEWSPLAN Panel has met twice a year. The Panel has recently commissioned a survey of newspaper use in libraries throughout the UK and is currently engaged in drafting a set of guidelines on the retention and storage of local newspapers and microfilm by libraries.

## **5. Developments in UK funding**

Funding for the preservation, conservation and care of library collections in the UK is diverse and patchy, in that there are many sources ranging from private Trusts to publicly funded grants. Increasingly there is a bidding culture in the UK, which both encourages and enables shorter-term projects.

### **Heritage Lottery Fund**

A major feature within the UK over the past few years has been funding available from the national lottery. This is distributed via different agencies most notably for the cultural sector the one-off Millennium Fund and the continuing Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Since 1995 when it began, HLF has awarded 459 grants to the area of Documentary Heritage, which is 9% of all grants. These have been worth £137,512,201 that is 7% of the total expenditure. This is for all the UK and is for all aspects of the documentary heritage, from purchase to cataloguing to preservation. An interesting comparison, given the theme of cross-sectoral working, is that in the same period, Museums were awarded 1,021 grants which is 20% or a fifth of the total, amounting to £743,662,676 and 36% or just over a third of the total spend.

It is difficult to analysis the figures precisely for comparative influence of the preservation and conservation of the documentary heritage and other areas of the cultural heritage. Generally, archives and libraries applied for less and were awarded less than museums and galleries, and we can debate the reasons for that endlessly. The figures are difficult to analyse as well, since there are indirect preservation improvements, for example from building projects for libraries and archives, as well as direct preservation benefits from the awarding of grants to conserve library and archive collections.

Whatever the financial analysis, the impact of lottery funding has been huge and the influence of HLF funding up to today has taken several forms. The most fundament point is that there has been an additional source of funding for conservation of library collections. Other aspects of its impact range from increased contract work for conservators (carrying out condition assessments of collections and carrying out the conservation work itself) to a consequential increase, generally, in the museum sector, of private conservation.

The impact in the digital arena has been substantial, with schemes such as the 'New Opportunities Fund' award for collaborative digitisation projects. For example, the British Library is the recipient, has been

awarded £3.25 million to digitise some 100,000 images from its collections on the theme of 'In Place'. A website exploring life in the UK over the past millennium will be created with images from maps, photographs, illuminated manuscripts, newspapers and Victorian ephemera, together with recordings of UK wildlife, oral history and recordings from Africa and Asia. The partner organisations are the Royal Photographic Society and the Universities of Portsmouth and Strathclyde. The impact of this award in preservation terms is that even if the items do not require conservation, the resulting digital objects require managing. The implications for digital preservation, or digital asset management, are substantial.

This reflects the HLF's influence over the last seven years up to now. In the future, looking at HLF's Strategic Plan for the next 5 years to 2007<sup>10</sup> there seem to be two key developments in the direction of HLF funding which could have an impact on the care of collections, namely;

- 'supporting projects based on heritage that is intrinsically intangible or ephemeral'
- 'encouraging training, including giving grants for volunteer training and encouraging apprenticeship placements in order to retain and develop conservation and special heritage skills'

These are indicators of the direction that this major funding source is going – away from major capital projects towards more emphasis on the intangible elements of ephemeral heritage (which could have an impact on, perhaps, digital preservation) and an investment in training in conservation skills.

## **6. Conclusion**

Apart from these mainly UK-wide initiatives, there are European-wide preservation projects, ranging from the EU SEPIA (Safeguarding European Photographic Images for Access) project, to the BL hosting the Register of Preservation Microforms, to the current EU 6<sup>th</sup> Framework calls for expressions of interest. There is much potential for building on collaborations, such as the couple of US and Australian mentioned. There are huge possibilities particularly in the area of digital preservation, for example building on PADI and such as with DNIPP emanating from Library of Congress.

There follow some observations on features of current national preservation initiatives in the UK, around the questions that were posed at the beginning.

The concept of national distributed collections in both the traditional arena (Resource) and the digital arena (JISC and the DNER) and specifically higher education libraries (RSLG) is actively being examined, with an awareness of the practical problems of deep resource sharing. Concurrently, politically there has been devolution of the UK (with a concurrent rise in nationalism of Wales, Scotland and lately, England) and an increase in regionalism. The logical conclusion of distributed national collections is a distributed national preservation strategy to look after them.

There is more emphasis being placed on the 'intangible' whether it is the drive behind the establishment of, and focus afforded, to the Digital Preservation Coalition coming from concerned cultural memory bodies themselves, or the emphasis on the conservation of the 'intangible' in the Heritage Lottery Funds' future strategic plan.

The UK heritage arena is becoming more cross-sectoral, with the political mandate across libraries, archives and museums of Resource. There are local examples for examples in the West Midlands. There is the political and pragmatic will for more collaboration in caring for collections. There are some national preservation programmes, such as the deacidification project INFOSAVE the newspaper microfilming project NEWSPLAN.

As of today, though, there is not one overarching national preservation strategy for the UK, but there are initiatives leading in that direction, emanating from Resource and linking to DPC and NPO etc. So, there is both fragmentation and convergence.

In addressing the question ‘why do some preservation initiatives work?’ an observation is that some subject matter is more conducive to national initiatives than others; disaster preparedness is one. In the UK one example is the M25 Consortium of Higher Education Libraries (within the bounds of the orbital motorway, the M25, around London) Disaster Management Group. Or the Regional Emergency Disaster Squad (REDS) established in 1991 co-ordinated by the East Midlands Museums Service

Deacidification is another subject area that seems to be particularly conducive, for different practical, political, technical and funding reasons – especially, it seems, when a national library and national archive are involved as in Switzerland, Canada, the Netherlands.

In addressing the question ‘why do some initiatives not work?’ it seems as if over-ambition, over-complication, poor timing, lack of political willpower are all factors. Collaboration costs; collaboration takes longer; collaboration can lead to compromise and dilution of the primary aim. Sometimes the core commonality and practicality is missing, for example, in the SCOLD project to look at shared primary preservation responsibility between the six UK copyright libraries, there is no shared documentation as a starting point.

At this moment in the UK there is not a National Digital Preservation Academy – but one is being mooted. There is not one sole register of surrogates, whether microform or digitised images, but there is the RPO and ERROM. There is not one overarching national preservation strategy for libraries linked into comparable international strategies, but there are many initiatives and elements feeding into a potential national preservation strategy in the UK, starting with mapping exercises of collections and the preservation needs of those collections.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.resource.gov.uk>

<sup>2</sup> Re:source, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (2002) *Collections Management. Preserving the Past for the Future*, London, Resource Publications

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.jisc.ac.uk>

<sup>4</sup> Re:source, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (2002) *Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries. A Self-assessment Checklist*, London, Resource Publications, available in pdf format at <http://www.resource.gov.uk/action/stewardship/benchmarks.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> The National Preservation Office is at [www.bl.uk/npo](http://www.bl.uk/npo).

<sup>6</sup> Rhys-Lewis, J. (2001) *The enemy within! Acid deterioration of our written heritage*, BL Co-operation and Partnership Report 8, available at [www.bl.uk/concord/proj99report1.html](http://www.bl.uk/concord/proj99report1.html)

<sup>7</sup> Jones, M and Beagrie, N. (2001) *Preservation Management of Digital Materials. A Handbook*, For Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. London, The British Library.

<sup>8</sup> Pilling, S and Kenna, S (eds.) (2002) *Cooperation in action. Collaborative initiatives in the world of information*, chap 6. Kenna, S and Shenton, H. *Co-operation in Preservation*, London, Facet Publishing.

<sup>9</sup> There's more information on the NEWSPLAN 2000 Project at <http://www.newsplan2000.org/>

<sup>10</sup> Heritage Lottery Fund (2002) *Broadening the Horizons of Heritage*, the Heritage Lottery Fund Strategic Plan 2002-2007, London, the Heritage Lottery Fund.