



Archives & Records  
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# Digital Exploration

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**17** Pan-archival cataloguing: Project Omega at The National Archives

**20** Prince Albert: His life and legacy

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# Welcome...



## *Welcome to the October 2020 edition of ARC Magazine*

This month we're focussing on digital exploration, a fitting follow on to last month's Archives and Technology issue. Advocating for our services and finding new ways of doing things remotely have been a running theme for many archivists, records managers and conservators during the Covid-19 pandemic and much of this has had to be digital as the importance of our digital resources and outreach have come to the fore. This month's articles give lots of ideas and examples of things we can do in the digital realm and one gives us a glimpse into what the future of cataloguing might look like.

For some it may feel like we're coming out the other side of the most difficult times as working from home starts to be mixed with working onsite, for others the challenges are just beginning as we navigate return from furlough or not having a job to return to at all. However for all of us, new challenges continue to present themselves and I hope we, as individuals and as a profession, continue to question what should go

back to 'normal' and what we can rework and reinvent as services continue to reopen.

Thank you to all our contributors this month for writing such interesting articles. I hope these pages offer inspiration and encouragement to our readers but remember, if you weren't doing ground breaking work during lockdown, and you were just making it through each day as best you could, that's something to celebrate too.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annabel".

**Annabel Valentine**  
*ARC Editor*

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'The Prince': Prince Albert (1819-61) after Roger Fenton, 1889 copy after an original of May 1854 (RCIN 2906511). Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020

# Opening lines

**Lisa Snook** reflects on her first few months as Chair of ARA UK & Ireland, and what challenges and opportunities lie ahead for ARA and the recordkeeping profession in the coming year.



I am writing this part way through my first month as Chair of ARA UK & Ireland, and it has already been a busy month! In fact, it's been a busy year. I've spent the last twelve months as Vice-Chair of the Board, working with Karl Magee and supporting him in his role, and I've been so very impressed with the passion and commitment of the Board, the staff and everyone else in ARA roles as we've worked our way through the challenges of the year.

Regular meetings for ARA Officers have taken place throughout the summer, online for the first time. I have attended many of these, and they've provided an excellent forum for discussion as well as sharing information and activities. Similarly, I have also attended some of the online regional meetings and it has been great to start meeting more of the officers and members. During the officer and regional meetings members have used the occasion to feedback to the Board on issues important to them, and they are a great opportunity for the two-way communication that's so important to ARA.

Over the summer the Board has been looking to the future and working on our strategic objectives and we know it's important for us to have a vision in place for what we need to achieve as an organisation. Over the last few months we have been discussing and developing a longer-term plan for the next three to five years and from that our priorities for the coming year.

It's important for us as an organisation to be flexible, sustainable, effective and efficient with inclusivity, members and communication at its heart. Our objectives are being established to ensure that we achieve these aims, and below is a flavour of what we want to achieve.

Diversity and inclusivity in ARA, and in the sector, are key and are threads that run through all our activities. This work is ongoing (see summary at [www.archives.org.uk/news/808-statement-on-diversity-in-the-record-keeping-sector.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/news/808-statement-on-diversity-in-the-record-keeping-sector.html)) with the recruitment of Diversity Allies ([www.archives.org.uk/news/812-diversity-allies.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/news/812-diversity-allies.html)) and the publication of a diversity and inclusion issue of ARC Magazine in November 2020 the most recent activities. Looking to the future, the

“It's important for us as an organisation to be flexible, sustainable, effective and efficient with inclusivity, members and communication at its heart”

ARA will continue to build upon and expand our work in addressing issues of diversity and inclusion in the record-keeping sector.

Communication, with members and externally, is a priority. ARA's communication channels have increased recently, with the introduction of ARA Together's support hub and online community ([www.archives.org.uk/ara-together.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/ara-together.html)), which were specifically developed to support members during the COVID-19 pandemic and proved extremely popular. We will continue to use our various communication channels to support our members, for us all to share information about our activities and also to raise the profile of and advocate on behalf of archivists, records managers and conservators in the UK and Ireland.

In terms of organisational health and resilience, we have committed to an external governance review in 2020/21 to ensure that we are meeting current standards and adhering to best practice. Part of the review will include an examination of ARA's handling of diversity and inclusion issues. We will also continue to work in partnership with other organisations to help us deliver our aims, benefitting from the sharing of knowledge and resources, and perhaps allowing us to deliver more than we can when working independently.

I have no doubt that it will be another busy year, and one that I am really looking forward to. As always, the Board is keen to hear feedback and ideas from members, so do get in touch if you have any queries or suggestions!

# Professional development news

This month we catch up with **Rosemary Everritt** RMARA, archivist at the Berkshire Record Office, who recently qualified as a Registered Member of the ARA.

## **Please give a brief overview of your career so far.**

I have been working as an archivist for five years after having qualified with an MA in Archives and Records Management at University College London in 2015. My career so far has largely been in local authority and university archives and I am currently employed as an archivist at the Berkshire Record Office.

## **What attracted you to Registered Membership?**

There were several reasons why I applied for registered membership. I felt that the five-year mark was a good point in my career to reflect on what I had achieved so far and what I wanted to work towards in the next five years. The CPD Review process will offer the perfect opportunity to reflect upon this again when the time comes. I also needed to demonstrate that I had attained a certain level of competency to progress up the pay scale in my current employment and the Professional Development Programme allowed me to do this.

## **What do you think are the benefits of having qualified as a Registered Member?**

Becoming a registered member has given me confidence in my abilities and helped me to define my goals

Rosemary Everritt RMARA, archivist at the Berkshire Record Office. Image courtesy of the author



for the future. The application process enabled me to identify areas where I wanted to gain more experience. This led to conversations with senior managers about suitable projects that I could be involved in to develop these skills, so I feel confident that I am on track to achieve my career objectives. Becoming a registered member also demonstrates to my employer that I have met a national standard in my work.

#### What advice would you offer to those thinking of enrolling onto the programme?

I would suggest gathering evidence early on and keeping the professional development programme in the back of your mind long before you intend to enrol and submit the application. If you are changing employment, then remember to print and retain redacted emails which evidence your achievements before you leave as deleted mailboxes can cause headaches later on!

#### ARA National skills survey 2020

The ARA launches its 2020 national skills survey, open to all ARA members and non-members. Whether you are a professional, student or volunteer, we want to hear from you!

Sector skills surveys are essential in understanding the professional development needs of the record-keeping profession. They provide an effective evidence base showing current and emerging training and professional development trends. They inform discussions on how the record-keeping sector is evolving and how ARA can deliver professional development opportunities for all those in the sector.

The survey is open to all those working and volunteering in the archives and records profession across the UK and Ireland. Whatever your role, we'd love to hear about your training needs and ambitions. It will take 5-10 minutes to complete and, as a reward, we will give away 12 months free ARA membership to one randomly selected individual who completes the survey. The survey can be found on the ARA website homepage [www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk) and will close on Friday 30th October 2020.

## News



Congratulations to **Garth Stewart** RMARA and **Philippa Mole** RMARA who recently qualified as Registered Members of the ARA. We're also delighted to congratulate **Heather Forbes** FARA, who recently qualified as a Fellow of the ARA.

# ARA Skills Survey



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The survey link is [www.archives.org.uk/latest-news/830-take-part-in-ara-s-2020-uk-and-ireland-skills-survey.html](http://www.archives.org.uk/latest-news/830-take-part-in-ara-s-2020-uk-and-ireland-skills-survey.html) and will close on Friday 30th October 2020.

# Backchat...

The ARA's **Maria Castrillo** catches up with **Gregory Prince St Jean**, Archivist at the Government of the Island of Dominica, who shares his insights and experience as his country's first qualified record-keeper, and his vision for the future of recordkeeping in the Island.



## 1. How and why did you decide to become a record keeper?

I made that decision a very long time ago after a successful visit by Bahamian historian, author and archivist; Dr. Gail Saunders to Dominica. She was instrumental in sensitizing the authorities here on the importance of securing the country's records and fostering a substantial harmony with all the government agencies, ministries, the churches, private citizens and other non-profit organizations with the archives. Her informative workshops left an indelible mark on me. My interest was further fuelled firstly, by our Prime Minister's and other officials' laments on the careless treatment of the island's records, poor records management skills and the lack of trained professionals. Additionally, the findings of several reports commissioned by UNESCO (1926-1994) and undertaken by archivists and other experts on the state of the records and management of our important and valuable collective memory and heritage, have been quite disheartening. My country has made some advancement with its records management status; particularly in relation to archives, but there is more to be done to make our island's collected heritage available for generations.

## 2. Why did you decide to study for your qualification at Aberystwyth University?

For me, that was quite an easy choice. I would become the first Dominican student to pursue archival studies and physically attend Aberystwyth University. Amazingly, I could connect with the quaint, green, picturesque and 'consistently damp' university town of Aberystwyth, which is similar to Dominica's topography. Also, the university is evidently the top for student satisfaction in England and Wales according to the results of the National Student Survey. The university was also awarded Gold in Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF). During my stint there, the university delivered consistent, outstanding teaching and learning outcomes of the highest quality for which it was so deservedly recognized. Truly, I can attest to such satisfaction.

## 3. What is the most valuable experience, skill or knowledge you gained as a student? And how have you applied that experience or knowledge to your day-to-day work?

Gregory P. St Jean.  
Image courtesy of  
the author



“ We also had to employ the tenets of project management such as patience, time management, budgeting, teamwork, responsibility, accountability, critical thinking, organising, human resource management, effective communication and problem solving. Today, these skills are extremely applicable to my day-to-day responsibilities ”



A taste of Dominica's rugged coast. Reproduced by kind permission of Chad Ambo

During my study at Aber, the Archive Collection Development and Description module also included a project that involved working on the Papers of Gwendolen Mary Anne Stuart (Fitzalan-Howard), 3rd Marchioness of Bute. For this project, our group had to follow archival principles/methods relative to conservation, preservation, cataloguing and maintenance. We also had to employ the tenets of project management such as patience, time management, budgeting, teamwork, responsibility, accountability, critical thinking, organising, human resource management, effective communication and problem solving. Today, these skills are extremely applicable to my day-to-day responsibilities, which include managing special collections, records of special interest and the overall execution of duties at the archives unit.

#### **4. What projects are you working on at present?**

I am currently in the process of drafting archival legislation that would formally establish the national archives in Dominica and guide its operations. Dominica, like many of the other Caribbean islands still manages its archives without archival legislation. Few of the other territories still use outdated archival legislation.

#### **5. What is the greatest challenge(s) that you have had to face as a record keeper so far?**

Thus far, one of the greatest challenges is the availability of trained staff. As the only recently trained archivist, advocating for re-establishing the position of Director of Archives and Records provided for in the Dominica-Public Service (Schedules) (Amendment) Order, and establishing

“*The findings of my research for the creation of this policy contained in my MA dissertation revealed that many Caribbean archives units operate without established archival policies/legislation as earlier mentioned. I felt the need to create such a policy*”

additional trained staff such as records manager, conservator, archivists, assistant archivists, etc. have been daunting. The skills these professionals provide will augur well for effective management of the island’s collective cultural memory.

**6. Where would you like Dominica’s archives and records to be in 5 years’ time?**

It would bring me immense joy and satisfaction if the national archive of Dominica would be formally established, has achieved accreditation status and provision has been made for further training for additional staff within 5 years. Training provides the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to equip those who are responsible for safeguarding Dominica’s collected memory and heritage. I also hope that the relevant authorities can assist and facilitate the process for the archives unit to achieve accreditation status.

**7. What advice would you give to anyone wanting to become a record-keeper?**

I would exhort those interested individuals to have a passion for archiving and records management, be patient, creative, enthusiastic and diligent about records, their security and maintaining their integrity. Have a knack for attention to detail, aggressively acquire knowledge and readily transfer that information to others, consider the exciting, relevant and meaningful roles and responsibilities entrusted to record keepers. Finally, make the following quotes your mantra:



*“A nation must be judged on how it conserves its archives. Our future depends on our past and we must make sure that it is always available.”*  
Lord Montagy of Beaulier

A section of the repository at the Archives Unit. Image courtesy of the author

*“If the job of preserving the written heritage is worth doing, it is worth doing well.”*  
Christopher John Kitching

**8. What has been your greatest achievement so far?**

I would say that my creation of a detailed archival policy for my island’s archives unit would be my greatest achievement thus far. The findings of my research for the creation of this policy contained in my MA Archive Administration dissertation: ‘The empty archives: policies for governance, development and establishing the national archives service in the Commonwealth of Dominica’, revealed that many Caribbean archives units operate without established archival policies/legislation as earlier mentioned. I felt the need to create such a policy.

# Survive and thrive: advocating to senior management

**Chloe Anderson**, Records Manager for the Falkland Islands Government, shares best practice for creating a business case in support of your work.

Over the past six months the whole world has experienced the devastating impact of Covid-19, from being 'locked down' in our houses, unable to see our family and friends, to having to work from home and facing the prospect of being furloughed. The heritage sector is being hit particularly hard and despite the fantastic financial support being made available, the economic impact will certainly have a knock on effect on the funding received by many archives and record management services. As the profession faces many challenges ahead, the role of advocating for records management with senior management has therefore never been so important.

Many professionals will feel daunted by the prospect of directly liaising with senior management however, there are multiple ways that a records manager and their team can make their voices heard. One of the methods through which this can be achieved is the development of business cases to justify to senior staff the importance of supporting information management services and ensuring that records are managed in an appropriate way. In my current role for the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) I have already written two business cases to request development to our electronic recordkeeping and storage of paper-based records, which were presented to senior management; including the Chief Executive. Though quite formal documents, the advantages of presenting a business case is that you, as a professional, are not forced to make your point in a 15 second chance encounter in the corridor (though it has been done!). You are able to put your points across in a logical manner that will provide structure to your argument. This document can be very useful if,

like me, you are requesting funding, or new equipment, outsourcing or staffing requirements.

A main lesson that I took away from the experience was to target the messaging to suit the intended audience, by focusing on the high level opportunities and benefits that records management can offer to the whole organisation. This can be achieved by linking your points to the organisation's mission or objectives, for example how records management ensures accountability and compliance with legal or regulatory obligations. As professionals we all know the importance of our work to our organisations and wider society, so it is imperative that this is demonstrated throughout the report.

The structure of the business case is important in creating a logical framework for your readers to follow. Creating a narrative - from providing contextual background and assessing the current situation, to outlining the options and business need - enables senior management to be presented with all the facts and for you to build a case to put forward. As this type of document can be quite text heavy, I found that using visuals like photographs, bar charts or SWOT analysis strengthens your argument. The latter is very valuable for presenting a wide variety of options for senior management to choose from, as they can make a clear and informed decision about which recommendation to support. A particularly useful element I included was a risk assessment, providing an opportunity to highlight the weaknesses FIG faced, the need to improve the situation, and stress the role of effective record-keeping to the organisation.

Each business case should include the option to 'do nothing' as it encompasses the risks of not addressing the situation or making the necessary changes.

An element I would do differently, if I had chance to do mine again, would be to strengthen and develop my executive summary. Realistically, though the brunt of the effort will be placed into writing the business case itself, some senior management may not get further than the first couple of pages - so make it count! Providing a clear outline of your argument/options, whilst advocating the benefit of records management to the whole organisation, will put forward all essential points. Again, keep your audience in mind.

My tips to anyone who is thinking about writing a business case are as follows:

- Think about the key messages you want to get across
- Make sure you write clearly and concisely - keep your audience in mind
- Link your points with the business/organisation's 'need'
- Use visuals to increase engagement
- Include all relevant options including the approach to 'do nothing'
- Remember the importance of a good executive summary
- Don't be afraid to be bold!

Though my projects were approved for their next stages, if your business case does not provide the preferred outcome remember that this process will raise your services' profile internally and showcase the need for effective record-keeping services.



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# Herefordshire History: life under lockdown

**Paul Sugden** reports back on the Herefordshire History Covid-19 collecting project.

**H**erefordshire History have updated their website and are now live! We wanted to take the opportunity to highlight the lengths they are going to in marking and documenting this quite remarkable period we now find ourselves in; this unprecedented time in history.

There isn't a soul in the world that Covid-19 hasn't impacted in some way, shape or form and future generations will no doubt wish to learn all about this challenging time. They will be keen to see what living through a pandemic looked and felt like for those men, women and children whose lives were changed dramatically, almost overnight, demanding bravery, resilience and creativity to get through.

Months in, and while writing this article, the restrictions are still very much in place; what might once have been

a quick meeting and chat has to be conducted through email and the notes written up remotely, from home, so that others might connect with the content and take part in creating their own COVID-19 face of history. You can join Herefordshire's project here ([herefordshirehistory.org.uk/archive/life-under-lockdown](http://herefordshirehistory.org.uk/archive/life-under-lockdown)).

Many archives around the world are reacting to the ongoing crisis, so we were eager to share the news gathered by Herefordshire History and their unique approach to documenting the current events. We posed a number of questions to Steven Jones at Herefordshire History and here's what he had to say in response:

## **Can you please tell us a little bit about your Covid-19 project?**

In partnership with the Hereford Times, Herefordshire

“The aim was to record how the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown has impacted the lives of people around the county”



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Council have invited the public to send us their photographs of lockdown for inclusion in a new collection on [herefordshirehistory.org.uk](http://herefordshirehistory.org.uk). The aim was to record how the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown have impacted the lives of people around the county - from social distancing in supermarkets, to showing support to the NHS, new home working/schooling arrangements, how people have filled their time.

We deliberately left the brief quite open and have had a range of submissions. This will form Herefordshire Council's official photographic record of these times.

#### **Why is it important for you to undertake this project now?**

We wanted to capture the moment and document change as it happens. Also, I think it has given some members of the community a creative outlet when it is needed.

#### **How can the community take part?**

The community are invited to share their photos either using the contribute form provided by Townsweb available here ([herefordshirehistory.org.uk/archive/life-under-lockdown](http://herefordshirehistory.org.uk/archive/life-under-lockdown)), via the Hereford Times ([www.herefordtimes.com/news/18437732.pictures-ordinary-life-lockdown-herefordshire/](http://www.herefordtimes.com/news/18437732.pictures-ordinary-life-lockdown-herefordshire/)) or by using the hashtag #lifeunderlockdownHT on social media.

#### **Do you have any advice for other archives considering their own Covid-19 projects?**

Keep the brief quite open, and allow people to interpret it in their own way. Some people have shared images of deserted streets, empty car parks and closed parks, and others photographs of Zoom meetings, children's artwork and creative projects they have completed during lockdown. We've had about 250 submissions so far, with more coming in all the time. It's always a relief when the first submissions start coming through! Social media has been really important in keeping up interest during the campaign so far, as has our partnership with the main local newspaper.

Despite juggling working from home and childcare the day we took part in this exchange, Steven managed to get his responses back to us so that we could share them with the public and so other archive holders could consider how they might go about documenting the response to the pandemic in their own area. We are sure that this will prove to be a great resource and, please, feel free to share with others in order to spread the word.

With much thanks to Steven Jones and Herefordshire History.

# Digital explorations in times of a global crisis

**Maria Castrillo**, ARA Board Member, Publications and Promotion Portfolio, reflects on how the increasing need to operate in the digital sphere in response to the pandemic is fuelling the recordkeeping sector's approach to the challenges of our time.

2020 will be remembered as the year when the foundations of the world as we know it were shaken in an unexpected way. In September, The Bill and Melinda Gates' Foundation Goalkeepers Report 2020 ([www.gatesfoundation.org/goalkeepers/report/2020-report/#GlobalPerspective](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/goalkeepers/report/2020-report/#GlobalPerspective)) argued that the pandemic had set world development back about 25 years in 25 weeks, creating sharper and deeper social and economic inequalities. However, on a more positive and optimistic note the report noted that the most effective path to recovery could only be achieved through a combination of world collaboration, innovation with equity in mind, and embracing digital technologies.

Arguably, the path to recovery for the recordkeeping sector after this unprecedented crisis will rest on the same premises: collaborative approaches, sustainable business models and adopting innovative digital strategies to collecting, managing and enabling access to records to ensure good governance and accountability. Let's not forget that sound recordkeeping safeguards citizens' rights as record users, and contributes to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, as stated in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>

In the following pages, readers will encounter a wide range of inspiring experiences and reflections about how the sector has responded to the challenges thrown by this crisis, and what solutions have been found and implemented to enable business continuity, and the fulfilment of core services and functions such as cataloguing, engaging public audiences with records through digital exhibitions, managing workloads and teams from home, implementing sustainable digital preservation strategies on a budget, records management and contemporary collecting strategies and tools. Although each contribution provides a different perspective, they are all bound together by the exploration and adoption of digital approaches. While it is still difficult to gauge what the real effects of the pandemic will be and how long they will last, what is



Maria Castrillo, ARA Board Member for Publications and Promotion Portfolio.

“*Let's not forget that sound recordkeeping safeguards citizens' rights as record users, and contributes to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, as stated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*”

certain is that the shift to digital has accelerated out of necessity, it is here to stay and shows no signs of stopping. Rather it will be one of the vehicles for a more rapid and sustainable recovery across the recordkeeping sector.

# Steering digital preservation ambitions at University of the Arts London

**Erin Liu** and **Elisabeth Thurlow** show how benchmarking tools and communication with staff have helped them shape their digital preservation work at University of the Arts London.

Home to more than 140 archives and special collections, including the archive of film maker Stanley Kubrick, our collections at University of the Arts London (UAL) are decidedly hybrid. In addition to caring for analogue material (such as paper documents, photographs, objects, textiles, paintings and sculpture), collections staff also look after born-digital material (such as film and moving image, sound art and virtual reality installations). Since 2013, when UAL first began a conscious exploration into digital preservation practices, its efforts in the realm of digital preservation have focused on the digital material found in its varied archives and special collections.

In late 2019, the Digital Preservation Coalition launched its Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM), a benchmarking tool in Excel format that organisations can use to assess their own digital preservation capabilities. The DPC describes DPC RAM as a quick and easy to use self-assessment that measures across two broader capabilities: organisational capabilities and service capabilities. Within these broader capabilities are subcategories (for example, legal basis, IT capability, metadata management, etc.) that form lenses through which an organisation's particular conditions can be reflected upon. At UAL, we've made use of DPC RAM on two occasions and are sharing here what we've already learned.

## **DPC RAM 1: November 2019**

As members of the DPC, we were encouraged to try DPC RAM at our own institutions. Using DPC RAM presented an opportunity to map our own digital preservation journey in relation to other institutions - and potentially form a powerful advocacy tool for areas of improvement.

Our digital preservation specialist carried out our first assessment, considering digital preservation progress across all six colleges that comprise UAL. This early use of DPC RAM helped identify strengths and vulnerabilities across our digital preservation capacities and helped target where we'd like to be. While we found we scored soundly in areas like IT capability and engagement with the digital preservation community,

Ram-inspired logo for the Digital Preservation Coalition's Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM). Image courtesy of the Digital Preservation Coalition



it was evident that work was needed in other areas like digital acquisition workflows. Communicating these findings with senior management was helped by DPC RAM's built-in visualisation tab, which automatically expresses assessment results in colour coded graphs.

While there was no further discussion on how we might move forward with these early findings, we did plan to repeat the exercise as part of the training plan for our recently onboarded *Bridging the Digital Gap* trainee.

## **DPC RAM 2: April 2020**

Funded by Heritage Lottery, Bridging the Digital Gap trainees are seconded by The National Archives UK to host organisations such as UAL to develop skills in digital archiving in a hands-on environment. DPC RAM provided an opportunity to unpick the interrelated conditions that make digital preservation possible, in the form of a practical activity. To ensure the training exercise would be achievable, we also chose to focus

“ DPC RAM provided an opportunity to unpick the interrelated conditions that make digital preservation possible ”

“we also have the additional benefit of accessing anonymised DPC RAM results from other organisations, including other higher education institutions”

on the area of UAL most familiar to our trainee, UAL's Archives and Special Collections Centre (ASCC). As digital preservation specialist and trainee, together we undertook DPC RAM for a second time.

The narrower focus helped us interrogate our responses in greater detail and avoid making generalised comments that were often not universally applicable across the whole of UAL's operations. It meant we could point to more specific and concrete evidence of strengths and vulnerabilities that could immediately flag up opportunities for change.

Working collaboratively in itself allowed for more discussion throughout the assessment process, drawing out a more nuanced response than before. It also highlighted the need for better knowledge sharing on our part within the ASCC. While in the first instance of DPC RAM, we had communicated results to senior management, we hadn't shared these insights with those colleagues most immediate to us. This realisation led us to run an online training session for our archives colleagues, where we introduced DPC RAM, explained how it worked, shared our findings and began a discussion on how we could progress the areas identified for improvement.

#### DPC RAM futures

By familiarising the ASCC team with how DPC RAM might help steer our digital preservation work, we aim to carry out the assessment in a more participatory way in the future. Involving the expertise of our ASCC colleagues will mean we can have even greater confidence in self-reflexive benchmarking, using evidence based on concrete local experiences.

Across the wider UAL landscape, we've discussed how we might repeat DPC RAM for other areas of the university to facilitate internal comparisons. Whilst the model is freely available for anyone to use, as DPC members, we also have the additional benefit of accessing anonymised DPC RAM results from other organisations, including other higher education institutions. The combination of internal and external comparative analyses will support us not only to continuously improve, but also to more tangibly appreciate how far we've already come.

# Pan-archival cataloguing: Project Omega at The National Archives

**Jone Garmendia** (Head of Cataloguing), **Faith Lawrence** (Data Analyst), and **Adam Retter** (Consultant Developer) are embarking on an ambitious project to reconceptualise the archive catalogue.

The National Archives (TNA) has a large archival catalogue, online since 2000. Our catalogue is itself an archival record while also a crucial business asset. Our data, largely aligned to ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF), is stored in a relational database. Over the last 20 years, the infrastructure supporting our catalogue has expanded into an ecosystem of over 10 databases. Separate databases were built, for example, to store information about closed and retained records and to store and preserve born-digital archives.

As part of Project Omega, a pan-archival catalogue is now possible as long as we move beyond the standards and technologies used for paper and a first generation of digital archives. We want to reimagine archival practice by pioneering new approaches, rethinking our data model. Our aim is a sustainable data model that enables a master catalogue holding a canonical set of metadata for all records. This flexible data model must support a second generation of complex born-digital accumulations. Our proposition is to move towards a single pan-archival linked data catalogue, taking a holistic view of an archive's assets (including all media, digital surrogates and other record manifestations).

By consolidating the number of catalogue systems, we will introduce better workflows for accessions, data enhancement and enrichment, and for opening closed records. We imagine enhancing confidence in the integrity

Making connections.  
Photograph  
by Hu Chen |  
Unsplash.com



“ a pan-archival catalogue is now possible as long as we move beyond the standards and technologies used for paper and a first generation of digital archives ”

of the data, by introducing robust version management, provenance information and audit trails.

This approach provides firm foundations for delivering our 'Archives for Everyone' strategy, enabling The National Archives to free our data and to unleash the power of an archival catalogue in a way that can support new forms of user engagement, participation, data re-use and research. This is the intersection where Project Omega and Project Alpha meet.

Project Alpha is about The National Archives envisaging what we would create if we were to start completely anew with our website. With 34 million descriptions, our online catalogue is vast. It is easy for people to feel lost. Not everyone who might benefit from the archive has a well-formed research question or knows how to use our services. The experience can feel intimidating and confusing. Project Alpha has explored new possibilities and built some prototypes for a new website experience, challenging ourselves beyond our current technological and cultural limitations, to define what a modern, accessible archive should and could be for all our users.

### Project Omega findings

The project began in November 2019. After a research phase looking into TNA's catalogue structures and into the data modelling and ontology landscapes, Omega has delivered:

- a strengths and weaknesses analysis document exploring existing standards to underpin our conceptual data model
- a paper, Omega Catalogue Model Proposal, outlining findings and technology recommendations. The paper evaluates 35 test cases with catalogue data expressed using different ontologies
- a set of recommendations for the proof of concept:
  - o use of the Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM)
  - o use of a combination of existing, mature, vocabularies, inspired by the Matterhorn RDF ontology. This hybrid approach allows us not to reinvent the wheel while also enabling us to talk about concepts in a wider context, reaching beyond the world of archives. Unfortunately, the RiC Ontology (RiC-O) does not meet our needs to handle revisions, manifestations, associated provenance and access rights information
  - o use of a graph database (AWS Neptune)
- an approach for temporally aware description to model metadata variation over time, separating the enduring form of a record from its transient descriptions. Any changes to the description or arrangement of a record generate a new description and/or arrangement. Any fact established in the past is therefore immutable and fully transparent.

“With 34 million descriptions, our online catalogue is vast. It is easy for people to feel lost.”

Additional properties in the Omega Data Model will describe relationships between versions and their temporal extent, using the W3C (World Wide Web Consortium) provenance vocabulary (PROV) to describe how our records change. PROV gives us the ability to model and store information about revisions, agents (people/organisations), and activities (the process of changing something)

- an approach to model and encode catalogue data regarding the legal conditions governing access to public records in the UK, using the Open Digital Rights Language (ODRL) vocabulary
- a transformation pipeline plug-in that converts and serialises our data into RDF (Resource Description Framework)
- an application to encode identifiers
- user interface workshops, identifying the ways that staff managing the catalogue interact (and would like to interact) with the data
- the *Omega Catalogue Data Model* paper ([www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/omega-catalogue-data-model.pdf](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/omega-catalogue-data-model.pdf)).

### What next?

We are ready to develop a pilot platform, API and user interface to perform a selected set of tasks and workflows, acting as a demonstration of a replacement for our 20-year-old catalogue management system. We are sharing our findings through blogs at [medium.com/the-national-archives-digital](https://medium.com/the-national-archives-digital) and conference submissions. Your feedback will be appreciated.

# Prince Albert: His life and legacy

**Leah Johnston** and **Rosanna Ritchie** explore how a collaborative project brought opportunities and challenges for user experience at Royal Collection Trust.

Prince Albert: His life and legacy ([albert.rct.uk](http://albert.rct.uk)) is a joint project between the Royal Archives, Royal Collection Trust and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851, which will make available some 23,500 photographs, prints and archival items. By bringing together this wide-ranging material online for the first time, the website aims to transform understanding of Prince Albert's life and legacy. The three year project began in 2018 and is now approaching its final phase. The collaborative nature of the project has challenged us to think outside our usual archival 'square', while using different databases, systems and processes; as have the unexpected complications of working through the current Covid-19 pandemic! Now as we near the end of the project, we take a look back at some of the lessons learnt along the way.

One of the biggest challenges of the project was the need to use existing protocols for the handling of images and metadata, including Royal Collection Trust's Collections Management System (CMS). We chose this system because it interacts with the Royal Collection Trust's website, where the project microsite was to be hosted. CMS is used for the Royal Collection material from the Photographs Collection and Print Collection. As we needed the catalogue to be compatible with archival material as well, we have also considered the project as a means of ascertaining whether CMS is flexible enough to manage the metadata of different types of collection. In comparison, the Georgian Papers Programme, which runs alongside the Prince Albert Project in the Royal Archives, solely works with archival material and therefore is able to use CALM's front end to create an online catalogue.

For the Prince Albert Project we catalogued the archival material into CALM initially, but transferring the metadata into CMS threw up a number of issues. Firstly, Royal Collection naming rules are different to those of the Royal Archives, so at first we had to check each name manually in CMS. While there is a hierarchy within CMS, the means to import and export data from CMS are not currently set up to accept a hierarchy. This meant that a hierarchy had to be recreated separately

using linked webpages to represent levels on the microsite. Furthermore, our digitised images had to be manually renamed from archival references to numbers recognised by our Digital Asset Management database on which they are held, so that in turn they could be linked to their relevant catalogue records in CMS.

Once the cataloguing process is complete both the digitised items and accompanying catalogue records are made available on the project's microsite. One of the main benefits of this approach is that users are able to search across archives, photographs and prints. This has also allowed us to build 'trails' to encourage users to explore the material through various themes across the collections, providing a fuller picture of Prince Albert's life. The project has also enabled us to display all digitised items using an International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) compliant viewer, providing the user with a consistent and much more dynamic experience when viewing digitised items.

The existing website format has also posed some challenges to both the Royal Archives team and our Royal Collection Trust colleagues. The subtle differences between displaying visual objects online, versus text-based archives, have created some extra work in bridging gaps in understanding on all sides. In particular, the default website display is based on a 'masonry' view, in which the size of the image impedes viewing the collection in a strict left-to-right fashion. Obviously for archivists this is a fundamental problem!

“ users are able to search across archives, photographs and prints ”



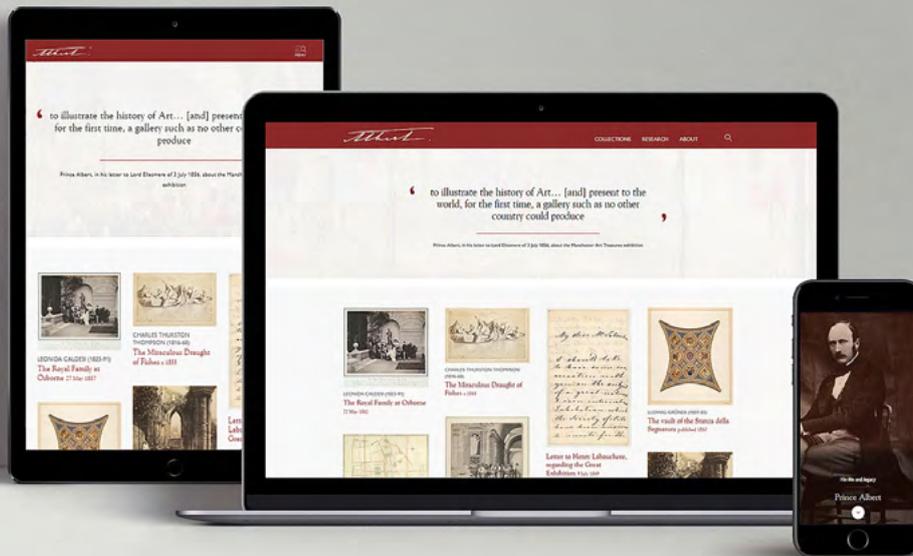
Reproduced & Printed in Carbon by

Mullins 1889.

The Prince - May  
Buckingham Palace - May - 1854. by D<sup>o</sup>.

The Prince; Prince Albert (1819-61) after Roger Fenton, 1889 copy after an original of May 1854 (RCIN 2906511)  
Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020

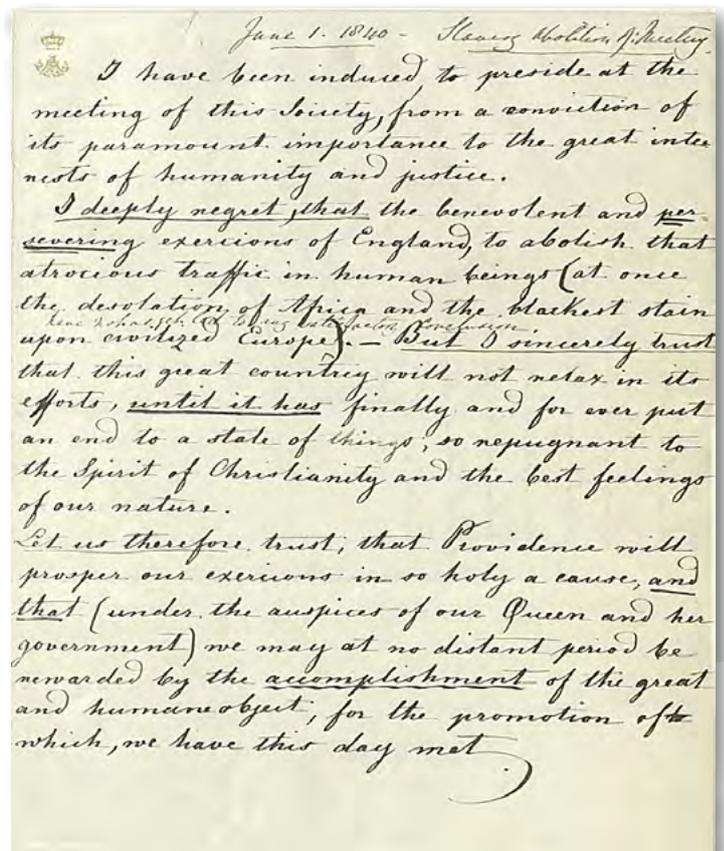
His life and legacy: Prince Albert website. Royal Collection Trust / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020



“very quickly we have adapted to a new way of working”

Although it was not possible to change the ‘masonry’ view format specifically for this project, other website improvements to navigation and user experience have been implemented in 2020.

Covid-19 has also brought unforeseen challenges to the project. Luckily our imaging technician had already digitised all of the project’s archival material and very quickly we have adapted to a new way of working, becoming familiar with cataloguing using digital images instead of the original material. Nevertheless, both digitisation and the ability to access cataloguing software remotely have enabled us to successfully continue cataloguing and undertake copyright clearance whilst working from home. The pandemic also affected a series of workshops on which Royal Collection Trust and the Royal Archives are currently collaborating with Oxford University. Originally conceived as an event at Windsor Castle, and now delivered as a course online, ‘A Prince’s Papers: Transcribing Prince Albert’s World’ was arranged over six thematic sessions in June 2020, and led by Dr Andrew Cusworth, post-doctoral research fellow on the project. As a result of Covid-19, meetings are being held remotely and participants are being introduced to the fundamentals of creating digital transcriptions and editions, as well as exploring the historical contexts of some of the extraordinary documents that have been digitised.



Manuscript copy of Prince Albert's speech at a meeting of the Society for the Abolition of Slavery, held at Exeter Hall on 1 June 1840 (RA VIC/MAIN/Z/271/1). Royal Archives / © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020

# A first foray into online collecting: surveys as collection tools

**Hannah Salisbury** evaluates the use of digital surveys at Suffolk Archives as an alternative collecting approach during the Covid-19 pandemic.

When lockdown began we were poised to run collecting events for our Pride in Suffolk's Past project. This project is both investigating LGBTQ+ history in Suffolk and collecting contemporary stories.

At the events we hoped to record oral histories and scan photos and documents people brought in. We were planning to use the material collected at a display at Suffolk Pride in June and in a future exhibition.

Our planned physical display for Suffolk Pride quickly morphed into plans for an online display. This would use historical content already researched, but we also wanted to include contemporary stories. With in-person collecting not an option, we investigated how we could collect stories remotely.

Our first thought was to ask people to email their material. However, the process would be labour intensive and involve PDF forms being printed, signed and scanned. We felt it was unlikely that many people would be prepared to engage with this process.

As an alternative we turned to Smart Survey, a GDPR compliant survey tool we have access to as part of Suffolk

I feel like LGBTQ+ people are much more accepted now, and much less the butt of jokes, than we were in the 90s. Of course, there are some circles and ideologies within which we are a topic of scorn and derision, but these are much less generally socially acceptable - at least in the UK.

We are represented much, much more in the media, and I feel if this representation was available when I were younger, I would have 'found' my identity much sooner - and high school might have been a much happier experience! Maybe. I also notice that younger generations are much more open about their sexualities, and seem much more comfortable to publicly and proudly present as LGBTQ+. And this fills me with pride and hope.

Two of the responses to the question 'How do you think things have changed for LGBTQ+ people in your lifetime? What do you think still needs to change?' that are included in our online display  
© Suffolk Archives

County Council. We knew we could use it to ask questions, but we also wanted to be able to collect digital files. Once we had confirmed the platform offers the option for respondents to upload files, we knew this tool could work for us. This meant that our plans to share contemporary stories as part of our online display could go ahead.

The survey starts with background information about Suffolk Archives and the project, why we are running the survey, and information about what will happen to responses. After asking about the respondent's connections with Suffolk and LGBTQ+ communities, the questions they can choose to answer are:

“*responses have been high quality, with some people spending a significant length of time on the survey*”

- If you are out, could you tell us about your experience of coming out? How did your family and friends react?
- If you feel comfortable talking about it, can you tell us about any prejudice, discrimination, abuse or violence you have experienced because you are LGBTQ+?
- How do you think things have changed for LGBTQ+ people in your lifetime? What do you think still needs to change?
- If you could say something to your own teenage self about being LGBTQ+, or your own LGBTQ+ journey, what would it be?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about?

These questions are followed by the option to upload digital files.

The survey ends with two consent questions (about using responses in displays etc. and adding them to the archive), so respondents know exactly what will happen to their responses, and we know exactly how we can use them.

Given the potentially sensitive nature of the information being collected we carefully considered how much identifying information we should ask for, and decided to ask only for a first name (even this was optional), an indication of age, and preferred pronouns. This provides us with enough contextual information to be able to present responses in a meaningful way while protecting anonymity.

We also considered the fact that we were asking potentially triggering questions and took steps to mitigate that as much as possible:

- we provided clear background information about who we are and the Pride in Suffolk's Past project, and details of how and where responses will be used
- we selected and adapted questions that we had planned to use in oral history interviews (developed with SCC's LGBTQ staff network) and kept everything optional

- the survey includes a link to a list of local and national LGBTQ+ support organisations
- the thank you page includes a link to join our newsletter to hear more about the future development of the project.

The survey has been publicised through links from relevant pages on our website and on our social media channels, and by sharing with project partners and other relevant organisations. While we have not been inundated, responses have been high quality, with some people spending a significant length of time on the survey.

The results have proved invaluable in the creation of an online exhibition to mark Pride month, which can be seen on our website [www.suffolkarchives.co.uk](http://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk) under Displays Online. Responses will also be used in a physical exhibition planned for 2021.

We have also seen responses from people of different age groups, which are really interesting to compare and contrast. Respondents' reflections on what has changed in their lifetime and what still needs to change are also especially poignant.

While we would still like to record oral history interviews when it is possible to do so, the survey has been a very useful way to bridge the gap left by the cancellation of the collecting events. Using an online survey platform has streamlined an otherwise messy process, doing everything in one place, and allowing respondents to contribute in a very flexible and convenient way. Even when we can go back to running in-person events, online surveys will be a useful tool we will continue to use in the future.

“*Our planned physical display for Suffolk Pride quickly morphed into plans for an online display.*”

# Processing born-digital archives on a budget: from accession to access

**Ruth Sheret** gives an insight into the creation of digital preservation workflows at Newcastle University Library Special Collections.

In January 2020, I completed a project at Newcastle University Library Special Collections to address our born-digital preservation and access needs. The result is a new workflow which is predominantly non-automated, and which has required minimal spend on infrastructure. Our rationale was a wish to develop a comprehensive workflow whilst our holdings were relatively modest - fulfilling our remit to provide access to our current holdings, and at the same time developing the skills we will need in the future as our born-digital holdings grow.

The technology is comparatively low spec, the type of thing you can use on an ordinary home computer; something I tested and verified during the coronavirus lockdown! Our quarantine computer is simply a computer that is capable of being unplugged from the network. DROID harvests metadata at various stages in the workflow and also provides the basis for our cataloguing data. Access and preservation version files are created using a range of free and low-cost format conversion tools. Excel provides overviews and tracks actions. Access is provided via a locked down laptop computer in the reading room.

We won't be here forever. For one thing we have recently purchased ATOM and we're hoping that this will be quite impactful on user experience and access to born-digital collections. For now though, our existing born-digital files are processed and available to our users, and we have a workflow which we have already started using on new accessions. However home-spun our methods, this feels like a success!

We've ended up using DROID a lot, in lots of different ways. Its obvious use is at accession to pick up unusual file formats, but we also use it simply to capture metadata in bulk at critical moments in the workflow, and we use it as the starting point for creating catalogue data.

One notable aspect of our workflow is the bulk processing of our files in order to create versions in specific (and very limited) access and preservation formats. Over the



Screenshot of a PowerPoint slide from a presentation given by Sir Liam Donaldson in October 2005, as Chief Medical Officer for England. From the Donaldson (Sir Liam) Archive (LD/3/6/1/6, Donaldson (Sir Liam) Archive, Newcastle University Special Collections, GB 186). Reproduced under the Open Government Licence UK.

last year I have bulk re-formatted thousands of files using IrfanView, Format Factory, Adobe Acrobat Pro... don't necessarily bother to write those down though! A complete list of free file conversion tools I have found useful would, I suspect, be out of date pretty quickly. Navigating the landscape of free tools is a tricky one because it's so changeable. Things that are great can suddenly have a charge associated, drop functionality, or disappear. However, sites like Tech Radar can be really useful in giving you up to date information about what

“Standardising our access formats has left us with a workflow where anyone in the office can process a request and prepare the files.”

“I could happily work at home and use DROID and all my usual format processing software and just carry on”

products are out there that might do what you want, which ones are free, how reliable they are, and how easy to use.

Mass file conversion won't be right for everyone, but I mention it because our decision to re-format has in some ways been the game-changer to enabling access to our born-digital collections. Everyone has different contexts, and for us this approach works. For our larger collections we often have both expertise and dedicated time from a project archivist, so it makes sense that the bulk of the workload surrounding born-digital files is concentrated as far as possible within the cataloguing stage. Meanwhile, once the collection is available, our requests are handled on a rota system by all staff within Special Collections, and the reading room is partially supervised by student employees. For us therefore, the idea of complex access policies on a case-by-case basis at request, or 'transformation at production', is the stuff of nightmares. Standardising our access formats has left us with a workflow where anyone in the office can process a request and prepare the files. Equally, any of our reading room staff can support the user to open the files when they arrive in the reading room.

During the coronavirus lockdown I processed over 3000 born-digital files from the Sir Liam Donaldson Archive, which I happened to have already transferred to University servers. The fact that I work at a big institution with systems for secure remote access to its servers is fairly specific to my situation. Nevertheless, it was a really interesting test, that I could happily work at home and use DROID and all my usual format processing software and just carry on. Liam Donaldson was the Chief Medical Officer for England 1998-2010, so slightly weirdly I kept seeing flashes of his PowerPoints from the early 2000s about pandemic flu! Weird yes, but if ever there was a lesson on how valuable it is to get to grips with everyday born-digital files and enable access to them, then I guess that was it.

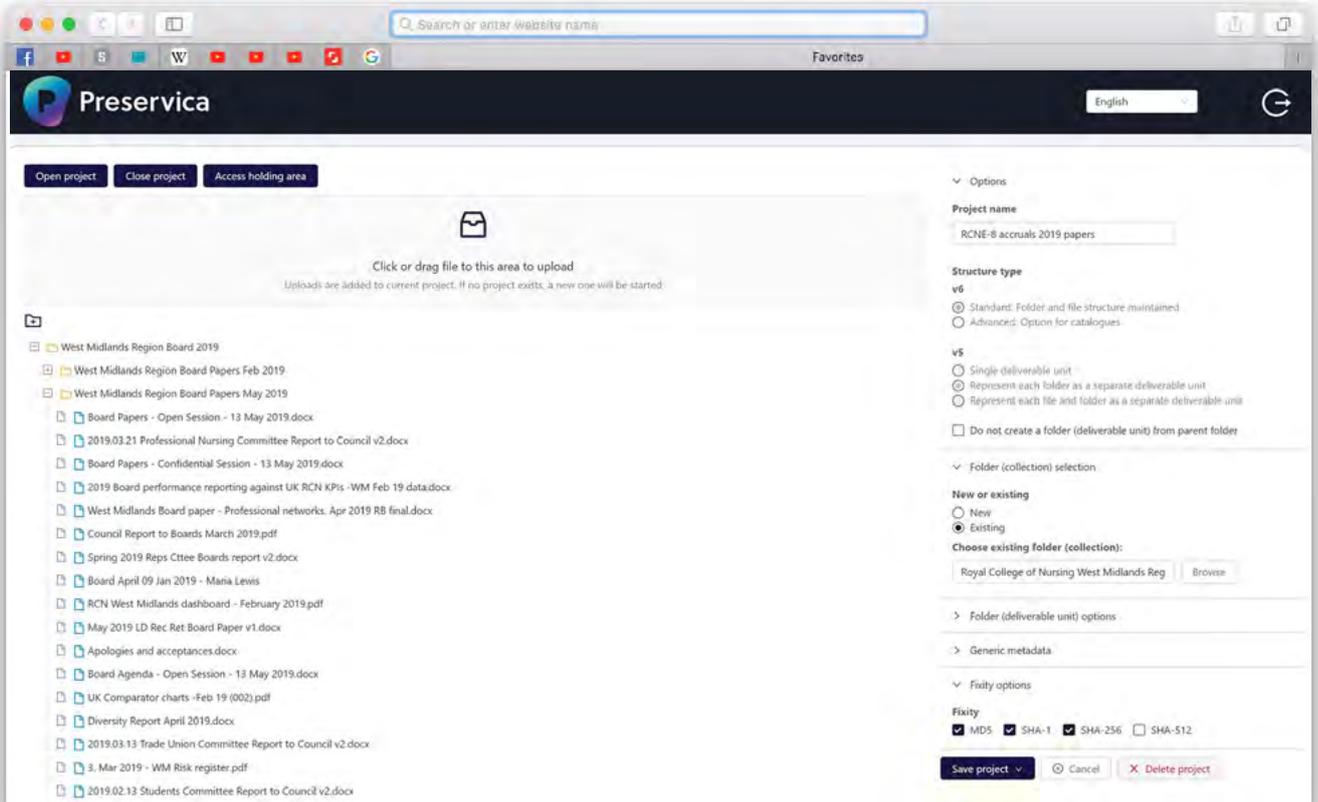
# Am I on mute?

**Fiona Bourne** reflects on homeworking and reopening at the Royal College of Nursing Archives.

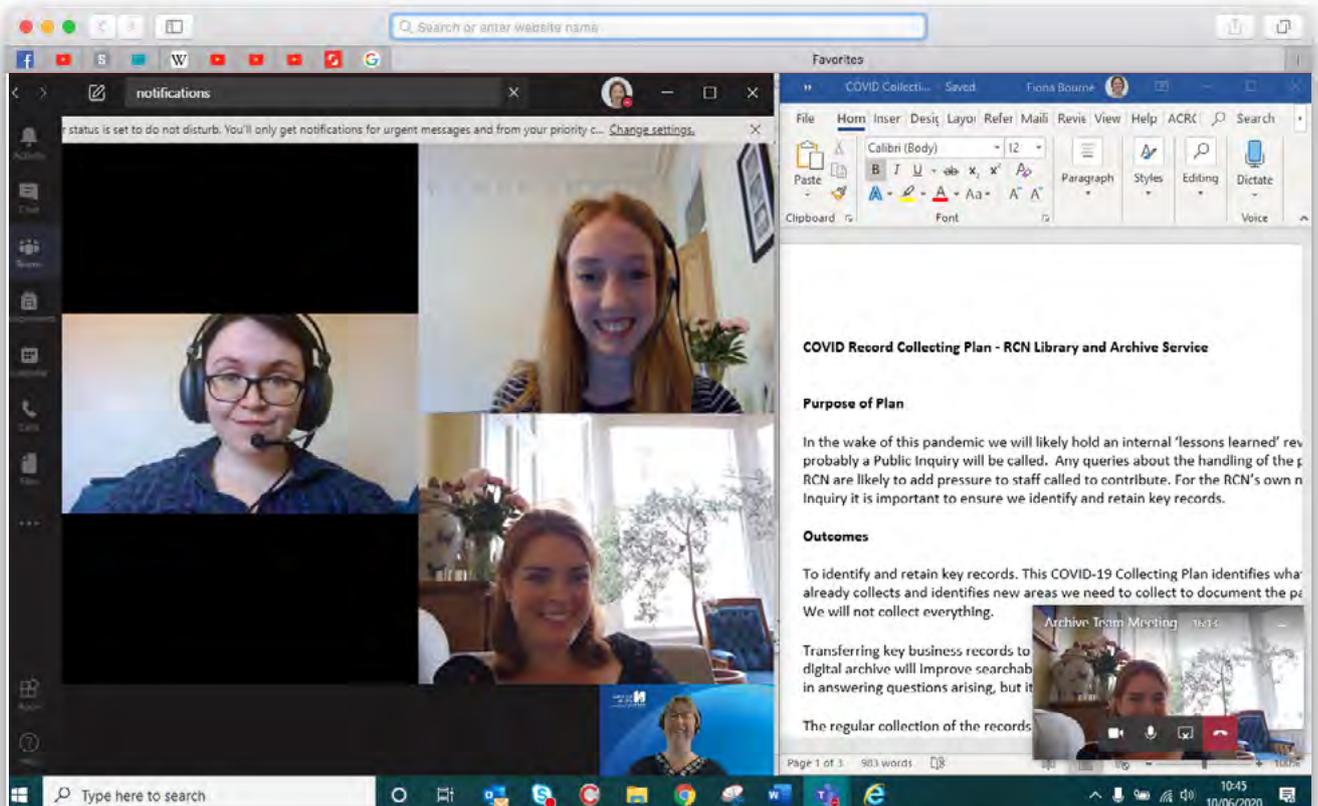
Homeworking? Ooo yes please. In the last few years our team have frequently contemplated achieving a better work life balance. Flexible working is the direction the working world is heading, and the Royal College of Nursing is no exception. Network and communications technologies can support home working but if you really enjoy challenging your IT team tell them the archivists are going home for lockdown, period unknown, and see how they react. Happily, we turned out to be more self-sufficient than we realised. Our IT team had been responding to flexible working arrangements across the organisation for years and when COVID-19 sent us home our organisation was immediately able to operate at 70% capacity, shortly to be increased by the roll-out of more laptops. We can't claim that the archive had any influence on this.

When lockdown started our small team headed home saying 'see you on the other side!', not knowing when we'd be allowed back in the building or when the closed sign on the door would officially say 'open for business'. Despite expectations it didn't ever stop. We sat at our improvised desks, complete with pets and small children and worked harder than we have for years. Our virtual desktops displayed all of our drives and software, albeit connected through some clunky home internet connections, so we could work away moving, sorting, arranging and ingesting files into our online digital archive Preservica.

We catalogued using Axiell Collections, a web browser version of our database management software CALM. The public enquiries and donation offers kept coming by email, requests for records advice and help never let up and non-archival staff with digital records awaiting collection shot through the roof. Family history enquiries increased as the bored and furloughed got around to research they'd been meaning to do. And then it was Christmas - almost. The IT team sent us brand new laptops which worked just like they did in the office - network access, specialist software, cloud storage access and all. This increased our speed and capacity so we could become even busier - whew! Fortunately, they simultaneously decided to stop us Zooming and start us



Ingesting sorted digital records using the Preservica upload tool. © Katherine Chorley



The weekly meeting now happens online using Microsoft Teams. © Fiona Bourne

“ we could work away moving, sorting, arranging and ingesting files into our online digital archive ”

“*The public enquiries and donation offers kept coming by email*”

Teaming: as with most unplanned projects that slowed us right down again.

Just as we prepared for lockdown part III and a quiet summer, we got stuck into Covid-19 collecting plans. Being a professional association and trade union supporting the much beleaguered and heroic nursing workforce, our senior management don't always think archive first. We could have been furloughed but no, they got right onto collecting Covid-19 activity records to provide clear evidence of what the organisation is doing. Web crawls of special Covid-19 webpages, targeted staff emails, member surveys on PPE, social media posts, General Secretary's video messages, special committee situation reports, newly created nursing resources, publications and so much more. Our digital archive supplier has donated extra storage for these records so we are doubling up on our 2020 collecting projects.

I still fret about our physical collections sitting quietly, unvisited in their lonely store. Our building is kept running by a single member of staff for now and it's hard to constantly ask her how things are. Each time she says patiently, it is all fine. Our off-site store is inaccessible for now but is staffed and monitored so I'm not concerned, just miffed that I didn't think more proactively about those Bluetooth data loggers we looked at. I could have sat outside in my car and downloaded readings! From the sector conferences I've Zoomed into, it does seem that archivists are not too worried about the stability and safety of their stores which is a fantastic indicator that we're getting things right.

We'll return once all of the essential staff are back and social distancing measures are in place - separating teams, extra cleaning, a plastic shield at reception. I was asked about what it would take for us to work with records in the space and I wondered if we could. So much has been published online since January it's overwhelming and new discoveries will continue to change what is understood. After ploughing through the umpteenth opinion about how long virus molecules survive on surfaces, I decided that what it would take for us to go back to normal was a vaccine. In the meantime, normal will be anything but. We've always been a tiny, appointment-only archive since the days of a lone archivist. We talked of returning in August: one person in for 1-2 days per week until 2021 - lonely but effective - but we don't want to encourage travel and visitors so, taking inspiration from Tesco, we're upping our game on the online delivery front. Scanning will hopefully fill the gap until we can all be truly safe at work again. For us, homeworking is here to stay.

# Digital Records Month

**Edward Ratcliffe**, Chair of ARA Section for Records Management and Information Governance, looks back at lessons learnt from Digital Records Month.

The coronavirus has hit all of us incredibly hard. Some of us may have been working from home, some of us may have been furloughed, and some of us may have lost our jobs for any number of reasons. The very real human tragedy is becoming more and more apparent.

What this global pandemic has encouraged us all to do is engage with digital technologies - be that applying extra layers of encryption to our working from home operations, or placing an online groceries order, we have all found ourselves using technology to do some of the tasks we would have normally done in physical environments - the office or the shop.

In June and July of this year, the ARA Section for Records Management and Information Governance ran a series of webinars as part of Digital Records Month - these were a series of lunchtime learning seminars with experts talking on a range of topics covering digital records. Conveniently, we had discovered just prior to the seminars that we could use Microsoft Teams to help facilitate presentations to a remote audience.

A very loose definition of month was used here - it ran from mid-June to mid-July - nobody said it had to be a calendar month...

To kick off the seminars we had Jason King from The Crown Estate aptly delivering a presentation on Microsoft Teams and Office 365 more generally. Jason talked about the key things we all need to know to get to grips with implementing Office 365, and the great benefits of using MS Teams. This was greatly received by the attendees and really helped to set the tone for the month.

The following seminar was an interesting presentation on Blockchain technologies and how Blockchain is

“using machine learning to better manage and preserve emails as records presents a number of options and challenges”



© Shutterstock

used with recordkeeping. This was delivered by Rob Begley and Jon Bushell who gave an incredibly clear and well-researched presentation on Blockchain. The case studies presented demonstrated how organisations had thought about implementing Blockchain, and the individual risks involved. Jon and Rob then talked about the implications this has for the information management world, especially the challenges of when and how to archive any such system. It certainly gave us food for thought!

The next seminar was a very interesting talk by James Lappin on the use of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning, and what this means for archivists and records managers. James' presentation focussed on how we as professionals need to be engaging and thinking about our methods in and around machine learning. The presentation looked at both theory and practice, using the very real and very tricky example of how to manage emails. Notoriously a slippery kipper, using machine learning to better manage and preserve emails as records presents a number of options and challenges that James skilfully talked us all through.

The final session in our Digital Records Month saw Kirsten Arnold from The National Archives UK delivering a presentation on the recent Transfer Digital Records project at TNA. This project has innovated the way that relevant bodies can transfer digital records to TNA. The presentation highlighted the challenges in the project as Kirsten talked us through the aims and the

work involved. Moreover, the talk highlighted how the project was being moved from a project to a business as usual service.

Digital Records Month may have had to be reduced in terms of its original (pre-lockdown) scope and output, but each talk highlighted various aspects. I hope that attendees took away something from each session they attended. I certainly found all of these talks to be engaging, informative and pertinent. As a Section, the Section for Records Management and Information Governance will be hosting similar events sometime soon - so do follow us on Twitter @ARARMIG or join our mailing list (rms@archives.org.uk) to get details as they're announced.

The four talks really helped to showcase why we as information managers must be always engaging with technology, especially emerging technology. Whether we are a user of a digital service or a recordkeeping professional trying to find the best way to manage the records, there has to be a strong level of working better to understand the technology behind it.

Now where are my online groceries?

EXPLORED  
DISCOVERED  
FOUND  
DETECTED  
CONNECTED  
ENGAGED  
UNEARTHED  
LEARNED

EXPLORED  
DISCOVERED  
FOUND  
DETECTED  
CONNECTED  
ENGAGED  
UNEARTHED  
LEARNED  
IMAGINED  
CREATED  
UNLOCKED  
OPENED  
REVEALED  
CELEBRATED  
EXPLORED  
DISCOVERED  
FOUND  
DETECTED  
CONNECTED  
ENGAGED  
UNEARTHED  
LEARNED

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