

## **CYNGOR ARCHIFAU A CHOFNODION CYMRU ARCHIVES AND RECORDS COUNCIL WALES**

Records and archives document actions and decisions: they can be used both for personal interest, formal and informal education, and to ensure open and accountable government.

Archives Council Wales was established in May 1995 as a representative body for institutions and organisations from all parts of Wales involved with the administration of archives. It changed its name in November 2004 to Archives and Records Council Wales.

Its aims are:

- 1. To influence policy on archives in Wales.**
- 2. To bring to the attention of the public, government or relevant institutions or organisations, matters of current concern in the field of archives in Wales.**
- 3. To provide a focus for collaborative projects in the field of archives in Wales.**
- 4. To bring together institutions and organisations involved with the administration of archives in Wales and to provide a forum for the regular exchange of views between them.**

Membership of ARCW currently stands at 22, consisting of representatives from each of the 13 local government archive services in Wales, each of the five universities in Wales which employ an archive professional and from the following national institutions and bodies:

- National Library of Wales
- National Museum Wales
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
- University of Aberystwyth Archive Course

In addition, the following bodies have observer status:

- The National Archives
- CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales
- Society of Archivists
- Welsh Assembly Government Information Management Division
- An appropriate all-Wales records management body (currently the Records Management Society)

**Our vision for archives in Wales is of one of co-operation and inclusivity, where we work together as a domain to benefit all the citizens of Wales by helping to make it a more prosperous and educated society.**

The aim of the ARCW strategy 2008-2010 is to maximise the contribution made by archive services, whether acting singly or in co-operation, to the creation in Wales of a fairer, more prosperous, healthier, better-educated and culturally rich society.

Firmly placed within the challenging environment that is modern twenty-first century Wales, we embrace a society which is culturally rich, but also diverse and ever-changing, where equality of opportunity for all has a new emphasis and meaning.

Archives and records can improve and enrich life in Wales by:

- **helping** to create a sense of identity and citizenship
- **encouraging** individual learning and development
- **promoting** social justice and equality
- **fostering** a sense of community awareness and social cohesion
- **acting** as agents for social change

Significant opportunities are available for improving and extending the already significant contribution made by the archive domain to improving and enriching life in Wales. However, in order to achieve this, the provision of access to and stewardship of records and archives in Wales must be consolidated and improved. The key to that improvement lies in developing in all aspects the capacity of our services and improving the capability of our workforce.

In pursuit of this vision, ARCW's strategic priorities over the next three years are:

- **Creating** a national framework for archives in Wales
- **Improving** online resources for archives in Wales
- **Building** a marketing plan for archives in Wales
- **Enlarging and enhancing** archive collections in Wales
- **Increasing** capacity for public use of our services
- **Developing** our workforce
- **Preserving, maintaining and providing access for** electronic records

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, NEW AND ONGOING ACTIVITY

## What we want to see happen

### Creating a national framework for archives in Wales

We want to create a framework of collaborative working within the domain which creates common standards across archives in Wales, attracts outside funding, and allows us to work cross-sector with our colleagues in museums and libraries, as well as further afield in the public and private sectors.

We will do this by:

- **Creating** an identity for archives in Wales
- **Pursuing** collaborative projects which reinforce the identity of archives in Wales
- **Seeking** new partnerships both within and outside our domain
- **Planning** for consistent levels of service within Wales

### Improving online resources for archives in Wales

We want to improve online resources for archives in Wales in order to increase access for those who are unable to visit us in person, encourage potential users to visit the archives of Wales, provide additional educational content for our collections, and promote our cultural heritage both within Wales and across the world.

We will do this by:

- **Improving and updating** our existing online resources
- **Creating** new online resources including making use of Web 2.0
- **Collaborating** to link our online resources to the Welsh National Curriculum and the needs of higher education
- **Promoting** ourselves virtually to Wales and the world

### Building a marketing plan for archives in Wales

We want to collaborate to market the archives of Wales as a distinct brand, while retaining our individual identities, which will encourage potential and existing users of our services to make better use of them.

We will do this by:

- **Collecting and analysing** data on users and non-users of archives in Wales
- **Creating** an audience development plan for the archives of Wales
- **Developing** a marketing plan for archives in Wales

## **Enlarging and enhancing archive collections in Wales**

We want to encourage the deposit of archival material in the archives of Wales in whatever format, re-interpret our existing collections to widen use and to promote the development of community archives in Wales

We will do this by:

- **Encouraging** the creation of collections of contemporary material
- **Working together** to agree appropriate places of deposit for all archive material in Wales
- **Supporting** initiatives to create community archives in Wales

## **Increasing capacity for public use of our services**

In order to deliver the improved services outlined above, we need to develop the capacity of our services, whether in accommodation, infrastructure, staffing or professional expertise. We are particularly concerned at the shortage of conservation facilities and conservator's skills in Wales.

We will do this by:

- **Lobbying** for investment in our services and in the domain in Wales
- **Collaborating** on projects designed to address lack of capacity, such as tackling the backlog of cataloguing
- **Exploring** shared service provision from joint posts to regional specialist facilities
- **Creating** partnerships across all sectors to maximise service potential in specialist areas such as lifelong learning, marketing and disaster planning
- **Seeking** to extend existing conservation facilities and encouraging recruitment and training of conservators

## **Developing our workforce**

We want to develop the skills of our practitioners and paraprofessional staff, by encouraging continuous professional development, looking at sharing skills between domains and by standardising professional and paraprofessional practice within the domain.

We will do this by:

- **Co-operating** with LLUK to identify key sector skills and identify means of creating appropriate qualifications
- **Working** with CyMAL to provide a co-ordinated programme of CPD training
- **Encouraging** post sharing and staff exchanges between offices

## **Preserving, maintaining and creating access for electronic records**

We are concerned that the widespread move to electronic records imperils the continuity of the historical record within Wales. Not only are few measures in place to preserve electronic records, there is a lack of resource for the capture and selection of records of historical and evidential value, and for making them publicly available. We will work together with all appropriate bodies to address this.

We will do this by:

- **Learning** from good practice elsewhere in the UK and further afield and by disseminating information
- **Working** with TNA on digital preservation
- **Investigating** collaborative partnerships within and outside Wales

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