



# United Kingdom

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The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester  
Whitworth Art Gallery's Designated collection of wallpapers stored  
in custom-designed wrappers and storage units  
funded by the MLA  
Designation Challenge Fund  
©The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester

Stoke on Trent Museums Service  
 An interview with a North Staffordshire pottery worker  
 to record the story of his life, a transcript of which  
 is available to view via the Ceramic Century website.  
 © Stoke on Trent Museums Service



## Policy scenario

### 1. General description of the political support for digitisation (and national ownership)

#### UK-WIDE

##### *Digital Inclusion Panel report*

The Government has published a report of the Digital Inclusion Panel, which has identified social groups at most risk of digital exclusion and actions to encourage them to take up Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) that can help improve their lives. Digital inclusion means the provision of access to ICT and interactive content and having opportunities to transact electronically on a range of devices including digital television, Internet-enabled PCs and mobile phones. The report identified groups needing support and incentives to take up ICT include unemployed people, people with literacy issues and older people who are not benefiting from or even using new technologies. For example, while 61 per cent of UK adults have accessed the Internet, only 17 per cent of those over the age of 65 have done so. The report highlighted the contribution of Public Libraries, community archive projects and MLA's vision of the Knowledge Web as powerful contributors to digital inclusion.

[www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/digital/index.asp](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/digital/index.asp)

##### *OFCOM Media Literacy*

Ofcom is the UK Government's Office of Communications, the regulator for the UK communications industries, with responsibilities across television, radio, telecommunications

and wireless communications services. It has published a report on the role it can play in promoting media literacy, ensuring that those who receive broadcast and internet media in the UK into informed decision makers as to the content, appropriateness, and subject of the material. It has identified three key areas: research, developing a common labelling system and building partnerships. MLA is represented on a working group looking at these issues.

[www.ofcom.org.uk/consumer\\_guides/Media\\_literacy/ml\\_statement/](http://www.ofcom.org.uk/consumer_guides/Media_literacy/ml_statement/)

#### ENGLAND

##### *eLearning Strategy*

The Department for Education and Skills has been consulting on an eLearning Strategy for all types of learners, including life-long learners. The consultation identified the role that can be played by the cultural sector, and a new policy agenda will be published in early 2005.

##### *2004 Spending Review*

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport announced the outcomes of the Spending Review, and allocated additional funding to the MLA Renaissance in the Regions programme for museums ([www.mla.gov.uk/action/regional/00renaiss.asp](http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/regional/00renaiss.asp)), and ensured the continuation of the Portable Antiquities Scheme ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)).

#### WALES

##### *CyMAL*

CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales was established as a new policy division of the Welsh





Museum of London  
The new glass and ceramics centre at Mortimer  
Wheeler House funded through DCF  
© Museum of London

Bristol Museums and Art Gallery  
 A reminiscence session funded through the DCF to build  
 relationships with the local community and enable the  
 museum to incorporate oral history material into the  
 Bristol history collections in the future  
 © Bristol Museums and Art Gallery



Assembly Government. CyMAL will deliver policies  
 which support the strategic agenda outlined in  
 "Wales: A Better Country."

[www.cymal.wales.gov.uk](http://www.cymal.wales.gov.uk)

## **2. Range of policy (geographical, institutional and ideological)**

### **UK-WIDE**

#### *Archives Task Force*

The Archives Task Force was set up in 2002 by MLA  
 at government's request to carry out a detailed  
 investigation of the state of the UK's archives,  
 and carried out an extensive consultation.

The Task Force's report *Listening to the Past,  
 Speaking to the Future* recommends investment  
 in infrastructure to increase access to collections  
 and to make them more relevant for learning  
 and personal development. It set out a strategy  
 for national knowledge management, for saving  
 archives for future generations and for exploiting  
 the capacity of archives.

The Task Force's main aim has been to open  
 up archives and to ensure that they are relevant  
 and accessible to everybody. It believes that with  
 appropriate investment archives will be able to  
 develop high levels of social benefit.

The primary recommendation of the Task Force's  
 report is the creation of a new Gateway to UK Archives  
 that will give everybody convenient access to archives,  
 whatever their need. MLA is now working with  
 its partners in the Task Force to develop an action plan  
 that will provide the direction and identify funding  
 that will be necessary to deliver the vision.

### **ENGLAND**

#### *Renaissance in the Regions*

Renaissance is MLA's ground-breaking programme to  
 transform regional museums. Investment from central  
 government is enabling regional museums across the  
 country to raise their standards and deliver real results  
 in support of education, learning, community  
 development and economic regeneration. Each 'Hub',  
 or centre of excellence, is implementing a 2 year plan,  
 which sets out the differences that the investment will  
 bring to the hub, museum users, museum collections  
 and the wider museums community. Each plan includes  
 an Education Programme Delivery Plan, which responds  
 to the challenge of creating a comprehensive service to  
 schools.

[www.mla.gov.uk/action/regional/00renaiss.asp](http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/regional/00renaiss.asp)

#### *Framework for the Future*

The Government's 10-year vision for public libraries  
 in England was set out in *Framework for the Future:  
 Libraries, Learning and Information in the Next Decade*,  
 published in February 2003. Framework identified  
 the unique contribution that libraries can make  
 to support reading and informal learning, access  
 to digital services and skills, and community cohesion  
 and civic values. A three-year action plan is now being  
 implemented as the first stage of enabling the  
 transformation of libraries as leading agents of  
 e-government, social and community development  
 and learning support for all ages. With the People's  
 Network, public libraries are already at the core of the  
 knowledge revolution, but Framework provides a  
 context for enabling sustainable development while  
 retaining the traditional community role so highly  
 valued by all citizens.



## NORTHERN IRELAND

In Northern Ireland, public library services will be developed within a strategic framework based on *Tomorrows Libraries*, published in 2003. This framework places support for lifelong learning, access to digital information and services, and the promotion of social inclusion at the heart of public libraries.

## SCOTLAND

"A National ICT Strategy for Scotland's Museums", highlights the major part that Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can play in helping to enhance and broaden the crucial educational and cultural roles that museums and galleries have in Scotland. By using ICT effectively, the document details that museums can reinforce their position as centres of knowledge, and deliver new and innovative services to more people.

## WALES

Welsh Assembly Government's strategic agenda, "Wales: A Better Country" sets out a vision of strengthening the cultural identity of Wales. "Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services to Wales" outlines the vision for the delivery of public services in Wales.

CyMAL have conducted a review of the current framework of Welsh Public Library Standards in collaboration with library services, and have drawn up a revised framework of the Welsh public library standards, to come into force on 1 April 2005. CyMAL have published an Action Plan, which highlights the major role of ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in enhancing the educational role

of museums, archives and libraries and in taking forward the social inclusion agenda.

CyMAL will be taking forward a 2 year strategic development programme for libraries which includes the establishment of regional partnerships to implement resource discovery systems, online information resources and information literacy programmes.

## 3. Available instruments and the use of those: guidelines, funds, target organisations

### ENGLAND

#### *Big Lottery Fund*

The Big Lottery Fund, one of the main distributors of National Lottery funding, has been consulting on its future priorities, and is currently developing a range of new programmes to replace those of its predecessor bodies - the New Opportunities Fund and the Community Fund. In its response to the consultation, MLA has highlighted the contribution of community archive projects, and also the continuing need to sustain and develop the achievements of the People's Network and its digitisation programme.

### SCOTLAND

#### *Survey of ICT in Scottish museums*

Based on a questionnaire designed by MLA, this was the largest ever survey of ICT infrastructure and skills in Scottish Museums, with more than 150 questionnaires returned. The summary report outlining the main results can be found on the SMC website here:

[www.scottishmuseums.org.uk/members\\_services/ICT/ICT\\_survey.asp](http://www.scottishmuseums.org.uk/members_services/ICT/ICT_survey.asp)



Colchester Museums

Young visitors entering the virtual world of Roman Colchester c.100AD by walking through the Balcerne Gate, visiting a town house and taking the opportunity to look closely at some of Colchester Museum's objects

© Colchester Museums



Harewood House Trust  
Costumes on display  
in the refurbished Servants Hall at Harewood House  
© Harewood House Trust

One of the most striking findings was the technological gap that exists between museums supported by parent bodies (LAs, Universities etc), and small independents. We have used this data to inform a programme of targeted investment in ICT equipment and training through the Small Museums Fund.

#### *ICT Small museums fund*

Through this scheme the Scottish Museums Council has been able to target 100% grants for ICT equipment and training where it is most needed. Grants have been offered to 30 small museum, amounting to around £ 90,000 of hardware, software and training in total.

#### **WALES**

CyMAL is planning a digitisation support programme for local museums, working with the Federation of Museums and Galleries in Wales.

## **Co-operation**

### **1. National networks**

#### *Joint Forum*

The Administrations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are working together in a Joint Forum for collaboration and cooperation on museums, archives and libraries issues. The Agreement, while recognising that culture remains a matter for each administration, means that museums, archives and libraries in each of the countries will benefit from the collective knowledge of all the UK's expert bodies. The Joint Forum is working together to build the sector's capacity and develop common

approaches to:

- placing learning at the heart of the mission of every museum, library and archive by using the approaches developed in Inspiring Learning for All
- supporting staff in the development of their own learning and skills through workforce development strategies
- delivering local services for local people that reflect diverse cultures and ensure that there is no exclusion through age, background or ability
- developing the network of knowledge and information held in collections across the country and the Common Information Environment.

In addition, the Forum for Network Co-ordination continues to meet to discuss common issues.

#### *Common Information Environment*

The Common Information Environment Group is developing a series of initiatives.

Two major pieces of work are a study by MORI, the polling organisation, is taking a wide-ranging look at the issues of reliability of information found on the Internet, and the extent to which users feel they can trust the information they find there.

The second is a demonstrator project being exploring the issues of bringing together data about geographical locations from many different sites, which is being led by the Archaeology Data Service.

[www.common-info.org.uk](http://www.common-info.org.uk)

#### *Digital Preservation Coalition*

The DPC raised the profile of Digital Preservation by awarding a prize at the prestigious Conservation Awards. The award went to The National Archives

in Kew, whose Digital Archive is described by its Head of Archiving Services, David Ryan, as being “like a giant fridge for digital records, keeping them ‘fresh’ by preventing digital decay.” The judging panel praised The National Archives in adapting from dealing with paper records to responding positively to the challenge of dealing with digital records.

[www.dpconline.org](http://www.dpconline.org)

## 2. International co-operation

### *Cultural Content Forum*

The Cultural Content Forum, was established to promote international co-operation between managers of funding programmes, and held its fourth meeting in Banff, Canada, and was attended by 30 delegates from 10 countries. At the meeting, an agreement was signed between MLA, Canadian Heritage Information Network, and the US Institute for Museum and Library Services to support this valuable international collaboration. The meeting reviewed developments at an international level, and focused on issues such as business models, workforce development and assessing impact. The fifth meeting is to be held in Oxford in early 2005.

[www.culturalcontentforum.org](http://www.culturalcontentforum.org)

## 3. NRG results, interpretation and impact

The role of the NRG has become significant as work has proceeded on the joint agenda of the Netherlands, Luxembourg and UK Presidencies. DCMS has established a Working Group to support the Presidency Agenda, and this include representatives of a number of organisations, including the Arts Council, British Library, British Film Institute, Culture Online, Science Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum.

## 4. MINERVA results, interpretation and impact

The results developed by MINERVA are beginning to have a significant impact on the approaches being taken to the development of digital resources. At a practical level, the MINERVA *Technical Guidelines* have been written into the Funding Agreements that are being used to award grant funding for all relevant MLA grants. This includes all funding awarded through the Designation Challenge Fund and the Renaissance in the Regions programme, with a total value approaching 8 million Euro in 2004.

UKOLN, who were a leading contributor to the development of the MINERVA *Technical Guidelines*, have agreed to maintain the guidelines within the core funding allocated to them by MLA.

The MINERVA *Good Practice Handbook* has been widely distributed in England through the Regional Agencies of MLA, and have assisted in the development by UKOLN of the Interoperability Focus support pages that have been developed to provide support to institutions developing digitisation projects.

MINERVA *Quality Principles* have been discussed at the Forum for Network Coordination, and also with OFCOM, in the context of the emerging developments in Media Literacy within the UK. Initial findings of the Common Information Environment research into the use of the internet has identified the importance of Trust, and the value that users place upon museums, libraries and archives. The *Quality Principles* may form the basis for future work on Trust by the group.

Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford  
Cataloguing at the Pitt Rivers Museum using wireless technology  
to link laptops to the live catalogue database  
© Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford





The National Motor Museum Trust  
Storage improvements funded through the DCF have enhanced the care and access of the Picture Library Collection of photographic prints at the National Motor Museum  
©The National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, England

## Main initiatives

### 1. National portals for culture / networked digital repositories

#### UK-WIDE

##### *24 Hour Museum*

The 24 Hour Museum continues as the national portal for museums, and increasingly also features news, events and exhibitions in libraries, archives and the wider heritage sector. In 2004, with the launch of an RSS news feed, visits have grown to over 250,000 a month. This success has been further boosted by the launch of [www.show.me.uk](http://www.show.me.uk) – developed for children. This has been used by over 500,000 children in its first year – particularly during school holidays.

#### WALES

##### *Archives Network Wales*

Archives Network Wales (ANW) is a project to create a web resource to allow easy searching of the collections of documents held by record offices, universities, museums and libraries in Wales. The project is managed by Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW), a body which represents organisations involved in administering the documentary heritage of Wales, including local government archive services, universities and national bodies. The project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Library of Wales, and the other bodies forming Archives and Records Council Wales. The ANW project started work in 2003 and will be completed at the end of 2005. It will use existing finding

aids to create a standardised electronic description of the nature, extent, type and scope of the records, which will then be searchable through the website.

### 2. Services for the users

#### UK-WIDE - ENGLAND

##### *People's Network Enquiry Service*

The People's Network Online Enquiry Service has been launched, to give the public an additional route to the kind of high-quality information and reference advice only available from the library profession. The service is free, enabling people to ask questions in 'real-time', dealing directly with a member of library staff online. The Enquiry Service software, OCLC's QuestionPoint, provides additional advantages to participating libraries, including online meetings, remote training and distance learning opportunities.

[www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk](http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk)

##### *Culture Online*

Culture Online has developed a range of projects to extend access to arts and culture and enable organisations to use technology creatively so they can effectively engage new and existing audiences. Amongst the projects launched are:-

##### *City Heritage Guides*

The guides, developed by the 24 Hour Museum, pull together accessible, inclusive and inspiring heritage content for a local, national and international audience. They present up-to-date information about museums, galleries and heritage brought to life using real experiences, opinions and creative content written by city communities, museum staff and journalists. More



in-depth content will explore three themes: By Kids for Kids, Local History and City Trails in 9 cities in England

#### *World War Two Remembered*

A joint project with the BBC and Age Concern, to encourage older people to take advantage of new technology, by providing access and support in using computers and the internet. The project complements the ongoing work of Age Concern, and has, as its focus, the major BBC initiative commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day - WW2, The People's War. Working with 4 Regional Museums, Libraries and Archives Councils, the BBC and Age Concern have run a number of internet sessions with linked events and support materials to introduce people to the internet and enable them to contribute their stories to the BBC People's War website.

For details of these and the other projects:

[www.cultureonline.gov.uk](http://www.cultureonline.gov.uk)

#### SCOTLAND

#### *What Clicks study on museums and eLearning*

The Hunterian Museum & Art Gallery, University of Glasgow has published a study outlining the potential of ICT to increase public access to museum collections and develop e-learning facilities. Research reported in the document show that 73% of schoolteachers used websites to help plan lessons, yet 74.5% of the Scottish Museums surveyed either didn't know or weren't sure what use was made of their websites by remote audiences. The report recommends that marketing strategies for museums need to be developed to ensure that resources are reaching those who require them, and in a format which is most relevant to them.

[www.hunterian.gla.ac.uk/what\\_clicks/](http://www.hunterian.gla.ac.uk/what_clicks/)

#### WALES

#### *Books From the Past*

Books from the Past is an on-line collection of books of Welsh national cultural interest which have long been out of print.

These have been digitised and made available on the world wide web through Culturenet Cymru.

[www.llyfrau.org/](http://www.llyfrau.org/)

### 3. Emerging initiatives

#### UK-WIDE

#### *CIE Demonstrator Phase 2*

The Common Information Environment (CIE) partners have commissioned the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and Adiuri Systems to enhance an earlier proof-of-concept demonstrator, with a view to building a rich and compelling illustration of what might be possible in a world where content and services from diverse sources are offered up in a meaningful and structured fashion to the user and delivering a compelling service. The project will be completed during 2005.

#### *Digital Curation Centre*

The Centre, funded by JISC and the eScience Programme, was launched in November 2004. It will be undertaking four programmes, Outreach and Community Support; Service Definition and Delivery; Research and Development. The Centre will support an online journal, network of associates, and an online help desk.

[www.dcc.ac.uk/](http://www.dcc.ac.uk/)



The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester  
Cataloguing the Whitworth Art Gallery's 20<sup>th</sup> century  
industrially-produced furnishing textiles  
© The Whitworth Art Gallery, University of Manchester



Ironbridge Gorge Museum  
 The first stage of a National Database of 301 historic tile designs created with DCF funding by Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust in partnership with Shrewsbury Museums Service  
 © Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust



Mary Rose Trust  
 A costume interpreter demonstrating how Tudor shipwrights made trenails - wooden pegs which fasten a ships planking and timbers together.  
 A project funded through DCF to enhance the understanding of the Designated collection  
 © Mary Rose Trust

*JISC Digital Preservation Programme*

JISC has made 9 grants totaling more than £1million to UK educational institutions and their partners to support digital preservation and asset management. The projects include work on developing institutional repository software, collaborative national preservation networks, assessment tools, training initiatives, and a range of exemplars such as the preservation of private papers in digital form.

[www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme\\_404](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=programme_404)

**ENGLAND***People's Network Service*

MLA has received funding from the Big Lottery Fund to develop the PN Service. The PN Service will continue the success of the People's Network infrastructure programme, promote the new ICT skills of public library staff and maximise the return on investment made in digital content creation. PN Services will be developed within the context of Framework for the Future, (the Government's 10 year strategy for Public Libraries), MLA's concept of the Knowledge Web and the vision for a Common Information Environment. PN Service areas will initially be developed for online Enquiry, Reading Development and Discovery. The latter will provide the public with integrated access to a range of diverse content including material from an initial set of 20 interoperating systems, building on the theme of a Sense of Place.

**SCOTLAND***Impact evaluation of digitisation projects*

The Scottish Museums Council ICT strategy had a focus on users, and SMC wants to promote best practice in ensuring demonstrable user impact in ICT projects. Little work has been carried out on attempting to measure the impact that digitisation projects have had on their intended audiences, and a new study has been commissioned to carry out a user impact evaluation of five museum digitisation projects in Scotland. The deliverables from this consultancy will include exemplar case studies, along with best practice guidelines which will be published in a report in 2006.

**WALES**

CyMAL will be conducting a baseline review of Museums, Archives and Libraries, and will attempt to measure the availability of digitisation skills, equipment and projects throughout Wales. This study will then feed into policy initiatives to target areas of need and support areas of good practice.



Norwich Castle Museum  
*Spong Man*, a unique pottery sculpture  
 now on display in the DCF funded Anglo-Saxon & Viking Gallery  
 at Norwich Castle Museum  
 © Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery