

## THE BRITISH LIBRARY CENL ANNUAL REPORT 2006-07

### 1. Management of the library: performance indicators, planning, decision-making, evaluation, mission statement

The Library has had a very successful year across the full range of our activities. We have met or exceeded all our key targets.

Our three year strategy 'Redefining the Library' runs until 2008, and preparations are well under-way for the next three year plan.

### 2. Handling of electronic publications and formats, including new legislation

Enabling legislation for the extension of legal deposit to non-print in the UK was put in place through the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003. In 2005, further to the Act, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport set up the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel (LDAP). The role of this Panel is to advise the Secretary of State on the timing and content of regulations relating to legal deposit, and to oversee the implementation of the Act.

To date three strands of work are taking place under the auspices of LDAP. A voluntary scheme for offline material was launched in February 2007 and will run for one year, at which time there will be an evaluation to consider whether to proceed to Regulation. A voluntary e-journals scheme was launched in July 2007, and will test and gather evidence for a similar evaluation. The third strand covers free publicly available UK websites, i.e. all of the UK visible and harvestable web where there is no technical or commercial barrier erected to narrow access (such as security or authentication).

It has been agreed by LDAP that the process towards Regulation should be set in motion for this category of material. This will involve the development of an impact assessment, a public consultation and affirmation by government. The earliest date envisaged for Regulation is Spring 2009. In the meantime, the UK Web Archiving Consortium continues to harvest, collect and make available UK websites via [www.webarchive.org.uk](http://www.webarchive.org.uk) on a rights-cleared basis. The Legal Deposit Libraries Implementation Group has been set up by the legal deposit libraries to ensure a joined-up approach and progress towards implementation of the Act. There are also mechanisms in place to ensure collaboration and cooperation with publishers and publisher associations.

Within the British Library, the Digital Object Management programme (DOM) is building the infrastructure to support the UK digital research environment. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Library of Wales (NLW). This formalises our co-operation in developing a shared technical infrastructure to manage UK electronic Legal Deposit materials. This agreement with NLW will make the DOM Storage Service more resilient by creating additional redundancy in the overall DOM technical infrastructure. Development of this Storage Service has included the migration to DOM storage units of all e-publications received under the voluntary deposit programme. It also covers the ingest and use of Sound Archive master files.

A long-held ambition of the Library was realised this year, in making details of the richness and diversity of the Library's collections accessible in the single sweep of a search term on our website. A single word entered in the search box will take you to image files, from medieval manuscripts to Victorian lithographs; sound files and oral histories; and relevant books from holdings of some 13 million.

### 3. Funding

The British Library's received £102.6 million (64% of its income) as Grant in Aid from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. £90.5 million of this was revenue Grant in Aid, with the balance of £12.1 million for capital programmes. Income from provision of services was £22.8 million.

The UK Government is finalising a three-year spending review, which will allocate funding for 2008 to 2011. It is feared that the Library could see a decrease in its funding as a result of this review, but we have been buoyed by the huge public support shown for us. An article in *The Daily Telegraph* on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007 by the paper's Literary Editor, Sam Leith, strongly attacked any prospect of funding cuts, stating that: 'The British Library is an absolute paradise on earth.'

#### **4. Buildings**

We have completed the construction of our new Centre for Conservation, which provides a world-leading facility for book conservation and state of the art technical facilities for the preservation of our recorded sound collection.

The construction of our Additional Storage Programme (ASP) at the Library's Boston Spa site in West Yorkshire is nearing completion. It will deliver custom-built storage in a fully automated, high density store. The new building will provide space for collection growth from 2008, when existing storage is projected to be full, providing 260km of storage for some seven million items. The internal storage environment will enable the Library to increase the proportion of the collections held in a controlled environment from the current c. 40% to c. 70%, and has a Reduced Oxygen fire suppression system. It will ensure documents are stored in compliance with the rigorous national standard for archiving documents, BS5454:2000.

The low-oxygen, high-density unit will be the largest and most technologically advanced library facility in the world, providing about 260km of storage for some seven million items.

#### **5. Staffing matters**

The number of staff at the British Library has decreased over the last year. In 2005/06 2,140 staff were employed (full time equivalents), whilst in 2006/07 the total was 2,011. This has resulted in efficiency savings, but also a 'right sizing' of the Library's staffing, taking into account changing needs in areas such as the Document Supply service. At the same time, there have been increased investment to bring in experts in areas including social sciences, science, technology and medicine, digital preservation and information systems.

Two new Directors joined the British Library's Executive Team. Phil Spence took on the role of Director of Operations and Services, and Ronald Milne became Director of Scholarship and Collections.

#### **6. Information technology and networks**

There were nearly 5 million unique visitors to the Library's main website, consulting just under 61 million pages. The Library also launched a new Learning Website ([www.bl.uk/learning](http://www.bl.uk/learning)), which provides a single online destination for schools and colleges, teachers and lifelong learners. The aims of the new website are to widen access to our collections, encourage engagement with heritage material from many cultures, and support e-learning in schools. There were 340,000 visitors to the site over the year.

The English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC) was made free to all for the first time, via a new web-site (<http://estc.bl.uk>). The catalogue lists all books – some 500,000 – printed in the British Isles, and in English anywhere in the world, up to 1800. It also lists the locations of known copies in 2,000 libraries, archives and collections worldwide.

Bill Gates visited the library to launch the Windows Vista software, and witnessed the virtual reunification of his Leonardo notebook, *Codex Leicester*, with our *Codex Arundel*, using the *Turning the Pages* application, running under the Vista software.

Through partnering with Google Scholar ([www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)) the British Library will enable users to identify and locate relevant articles more effectively than has previously been possible. Search results are matched against the Library's holdings and where a match is made, users have the option to obtain articles held via the British Library's online document ordering interface, British Library Direct.

## **7. The digital library**

The British Library is leading a consortium under the European Union's 6th Research Framework Programme (FP6) for the PLANETS digital preservation project. The consortium includes the national libraries of the Netherlands, Denmark, and Austria, and the national archives of the UK, Netherlands and Switzerland. Microsoft and IBM are commercial partners, with researchers from the Universities of Glasgow, Cologne, Freiburg, and Vienna, and specialised software companies Tessella and the Austrian Research Centre.

The Planets Project aims to address the challenges of digital preservation. It will design and develop a sustainable framework to enable long-term preservation of digital text and images, digital audio and dynamic data sets. It will advance the state-of-the-art and lead to substantial innovation that will increase Europe's ability to ensure long-term access to its cultural and scientific heritage. A very successful formal peer review by the EC of the last year of the project has been completed.

## **8. Acquisitions**

We have been fortunate to make a number of significant acquisitions for the Library's collection over the past year. Amongst these was the gift of the Fox Talbot Collection, an extensive archive of photographs, correspondence, manuscripts and research notes from the pioneer of photography, William Fox Talbot.

The Coleridge Family Archive consists of several thousand items of correspondence, diaries, literary manuscripts, legal notebooks and other records of the main line of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's family, dating from the mid-18th to the early 20th century.

The Library published a consultation paper, 'The British Library's Content Strategy - Meeting the Knowledge Needs of the Nation' ([www.bl.uk/contentstrategy](http://www.bl.uk/contentstrategy)). This set out our proposals for what information resources we should collect and connect with, in order to meet the needs of UK research, both today and in the future. It focuses on the materials that the Library purchases and licenses through its 'acquisitions' budget, rather than what it receives through legal deposit.

## **9. Preservation & Conservation**

The British Library's new Centre for Conservation provides purpose-built accommodation for all aspects of conservation work. As well as a greatly improved working environment for staff, the building offers the best possible conditions for the conservation of books and for audio engineering.

The Centre has been designed to exceptionally high standards, and includes a specially constructed roof to provide year-round north light for conservation work. The sound archive studios are designed to meet the exacting audio engineering standards required for high-quality sound recording, digitisation and remastering. The recording studio allows us to make high-quality microphone recordings of oral history interviews and other live performances for the Sound Archive collections, and also for radio broadcasts and web podcasts.

## **10. Services to readers**

The number of visits to our Reading Rooms has continued to grow. In 2005/06 462,207 visitors were recorded, increasing to 474,074 in 2006/07. In our Reading Room user satisfaction survey, 94% of Readers said that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'quite satisfied' with the services and facilities they used.

The British Library prohibits the use of digital cameras to photograph collection items. In March, under carefully controlled conditions, we piloted the use of cameras by a limited number of readers, and will consider the results of this with a view to rolling out the facility to a wider audience.

The Business & IP Centre (BIPC) has supported 25,000 entrepreneurs and SMEs since its launch in 2006

## **11. Cultural events, exhibitions and publishing**

The British Library has held a number of successful events and exhibitions over the past year, with free public entry.

We held two major exhibitions. The first commemorated the centenary of the Newspaper Publishers Association, with memorable front pages displayed. Later, 'London: A life in Maps' traced 2,000 years of the city's development. In addition, smaller exhibitions were mounted, celebrating 50 years of the album charts, and the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of William Blake's birth.

Our Business and IP Centre has run a varied programme of seminars and workshops, with leading figures from the business community sharing their knowledge with new entrepreneurs.

## **12. Library co-operation**

When the Saddam regime was toppled in 2003, the Iraq National Library and Archive (INLA) in Baghdad was set alight and looted. Dr Saad Eskander, the Director of the Iraq National Library and Archive, a former British Library reader pass-holder, has visited the British Library on several occasions subsequently. Since 2006, we have published Dr Eskander's journal on our website.

With monetary assistance from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, we have been able to help the INLA by providing microfilm copies of rare books, and microfiche copies of India Office records relating to the administration of Iraq 1914-1921. A consignment of publications was sent to Baghdad as a further contribution to the rebuilding of the National Library and Archive.

The British Library has also continued to actively support the work of the National Library of South Africa.

The British Library has been an active partner in the rapidly expanding European Library (TEL), with Lynne Brindley chairing its Management Board. Lynne is also leading the High Level Expert Group's Sub-Committee on Public Private Partnerships, developing guidelines for private / public sector partnership arrangements across Europe, with a particular focus on digitisation initiatives.

## **13. Other notable information**

Alongside the traditional printed Annual Report, required to be laid before Parliament, the British Library has presented an innovative online version for 2006/07. This includes video presentations by our Chairman and Chief Executive, footage of Library users telling their stories, and opportunities for feedback. This can be viewed at: [www.bl.uk/mylibrary](http://www.bl.uk/mylibrary)

14. Organisation chart

*Chairman of the British Library Board is Sir Colin Lucas*

