

## Archives Group Meeting – 22 February 2017

The Archives Group met at the Royal Aeronautical Society to share information, problems and advice.

### Benefits of CPD

Several members of the group have benefited from CPD courses, including the Dundee University Archives Diploma course, and Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan's day course on managing archives. As a result, members have implemented new procedures and policies. One member of the group is starting a new initiative to create an archive for their organisation, and shared progress made so far on establishing what existing records can be brought into the archive. They are also interested in setting up an oral history archive – the Oral History Association runs courses which might be relevant <http://www.ohs.org.uk/training/>

One member has attended the Harwell disaster management course and is trying to implement an emergency plan, for example, what happens if the collection manager is away or unavailable? This needs to feed into an organisation-wide strategy in order to be effective and it's not always possible to get management buy-in. In the absence of management support, actions can still be taken to safeguard collections:

- Purchase a disaster kit.
- Create a priority list then print and laminate colour coded cards with maps and moving instructions for key objects to hand out in an emergency.

Members shared advice on the best way of tackling major archive projects. Sometimes it's best not to let the perfect be the enemy of the good and get started on a project – early outputs (e.g. a full set of digitised council minutes) can be used as leverage to secure more project funding.

### Archives Hub

The Jisc [Archives Hub](#) has been relaunched with a new improved interface and stronger links with [Archives Portal Europe](#). Many group members have attended Archives Hub training and are moving towards making their records available on this platform. Even if it's not possible to get a detailed item-level description online, it's possible to put collection-level descriptions on the Hub in order to raise awareness of archive holdings at your institution. The new interface makes it much easier to input name authorities.

### Storage, Preservation, Conservation

Members have had to deal with storage problems, e.g. monitoring relative humidity after building leaks, or having to select material to move off site as a result of having to give up storage space for other purposes – the most frequently-accessed records need to remain onsite, which means having to send away archival material.

Much preservation and conservation work has been commissioned or is about to be carried out, partly thanks so successful funding bids. As well as repair of printed materials, audio materials are being digitised for preservation purposes. There was discussion of how conservators treat material differently to bookbinders. A paper conservator will be invited to talk to the group at a future meeting.

### Volunteers

Some brilliant progress has been made on projects thanks to volunteers. Sometimes it's necessary to switch volunteers between projects to find the right match for their skills. The results can be great when this happens e.g. when a volunteer whose hobby is video editing is able to edit interviews ready to put on the web.