

## Archives Group Meeting – 27 June 2017

The Archives Group met at the British Academy to share information, problems and advice.

### Discussion

#### 1. Computerised catalogues

The comparative benefits of descriptive catalogues in Word versus data in Excel were discussed along with possible alternatives including Access or Filemaker and free database software such as [ICA Atom](#). In general it was agreed that even bought databases have issues, especially when IT support is lacking. The Principles of IT course, run at UCL, could be a useful way of finding out more about how databases work, thereby helping members to work better with, or around, IT departments.

#### 2. Data Protection

Data Protection was discussed with regard to current records held within organisations and records referring to still living people which had been transferred to archives. It was generally agreed that closure periods could and should be applied unless this specifically went against the byelaws of the organisation and the terms of deposit of the collection. If access was granted the simplest way to comply with the act would be to provide copies with personal data removed. However, it was noted that there will be changes to the Data Protection Act (DPA) which will tighten up the rules so that the data subject has complete control, for example this will mean that NHS consultants cannot pass on x-rays to colleagues without written permission.

#### 3. Records Management

Records Management is a current concern of several of the institutions. Members discussed whether documents should be kept in their original format, printed out or made into pdfs. In general the advice was to keep them in their original format whilst being mindful that digital records will need to be migrated in order to ensure their accessibility. Members also noted the problems of persuading colleagues to hand over their records to the archives, as well as the possibility that changes to the DPA may encourage people to delete files rather than to archive them.

### News

Royal Astronomical Society – Sian Prosser is giving a paper on Caroline Herschel for Discovering Collections, Discovering Communities conference in Salford in November in collaboration with other institutions.

Geological Society – Caroline Lam is preparing for the Courtyard Late event on Friday 11 August. The theme is 'colour', there will be displays with maps and gemstones and the event will hopefully include very recent research on the original colour of fossil creatures.

Army and Navy Club – Jane Branfield is taking over from Mary Duffy who is retiring.