

PRESS RELEASE:

Safeguarding the nation's records: from Domesday to digital

Wednesday 24 June 2015, London – Today, as part of The National Archives' pioneering digital transfer project, the first born-digital records have been transferred from a government department to The National Archives and are available on our online catalogue, Discovery.

The records available today were transferred from the Welsh Government and consist of both digital and paper components, known as hybrid records, from the Welsh Language Board relating to the development of the Welsh language policy since 2006. The National Archives also followed the born-digital transfer process and transferred some of our own records which relate to document conservation images and operational processes relating to digital preservation.

Jeff James, Chief Executive and Keeper of the National Archives said:

“Digital preservation is a major international challenge. Digital technology is changing what it means to be an archive and we are responding to these changes. These records demonstrate how we are leading the archive sector in embracing the challenges of storing digital information for future generations. We are ensuring that we are ready to keep the nation's public records safe and accessible for the future, whatever their format.”

As the official archive for the UK government, and for England and Wales, this represents a key milestone for how we collect, preserve and present records in a digital format. These are records that have been created originally as digital records such as emails, documents, and spreadsheets.

The National Archives is adapting to meet the challenges of preserving digital information. Our digital records infrastructure is constantly evolving – it already handles and securely stores digitised and digital information. Our online catalogue already provides access to over 32 million records across the country. In the years ahead, the

majority of transfers will be hybrid records. We are working to ensure that we can store and present all types of digital material efficiently, effectively and, importantly, at scale.

Next year will see the first large scale transfers of born-digital records from government departments to The National Archives. In the coming months, we will further refine our born-digital transfer process, capturing the new opportunities offered by technology, looking for continuous improvements in terms of collection, preservation and presentation, to deliver on our ambition to become a 'digital archive by design'.

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Notes to editors:

About The National Archives:

The National Archives is a government department and an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). As the official archive of the UK government and England and Wales, we look after and make available to the public a collection of historical records dating back over 1,000 years, including records as diverse as Domesday Book and MI5 files.

Our 21st-century role is to collect and secure the future of the record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible as possible. We do this by devising technological solutions to ensure the long-term survival of public records and working to widen access to our collection. The National Archives also advises on information management across government, publishes all UK legislation, manages Crown copyright and leads the archive sector. We work to promote and improve access to public sector information and its re-use. www.nationalarchives.gov.uk www.legislation.gov.uk

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