

Delivering our strategic priorities

Progress against 2005/06 commitments

IN LAST YEAR'S REPORT WE SET OUT OUR ACTION PLAN FOR 2005/06. HERE WE REPORT ON HOW WE'VE TAKEN FORWARD THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES WE SET OURSELVES.

01

Enrich the user's experience

We transformed our Business & IP Centre. The capital re-fit was completed on time and the Centre was opened on 8 March 2006. Workshops started as planned on 9 March, and we are working with partners on programmes of expert sessions and business information events.

In June 2005 we launched the British Library Direct portal. For the first time, internet users have free search access to the contents lists of our top 20,000 international research journals. They can order the full text of articles from the Library and pay by credit card, relying on us to pass the copyright fee to the publishers. In March 2006 the service was linked to Google Scholar to make access even easier.

The two major temporary exhibitions this year were: *Hans Christian Andersen*, (20 May to 2 October) and the Nobel Prizewinners display, *Beautiful Minds*, (7 December to 15 March). Smaller shows included an oral history of fashion and displays of manuscripts by Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Mozart.

We completed the project plan to reshape our Reading Room layouts and services in order to make best use of the space and suit the future needs of people researching in different ways. We are taking forward plans to standardise opening hours across all Reading Rooms. However, we were unable to implement our programme to enhance inter-availability of materials across the special collections Reading Rooms because of the lack of sufficient resource.

08/03/06
Our transformed Business & IP Centre was opened

Business & IP Centre
The London Development Agency awarded £1 million to transform the Business & IP Centre and open it up to new user groups. The Centre opened for business on schedule and on budget. Over 1,000 business advice sessions ran during the year and we have exceeded targets for participation in workshops.

June 2005
We launched the British Library Direct portal
Internet users now have free search access to the contents lists of our top 20,000 international research journals.

1,000,000
PAGES OF BRITISH 19TH CENTURY NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN MICROFILMED PRIOR TO DIGITISATION

2,200 hours
3,900 hours
Good progress is being made on the sound recordings with 2,200 hours from a total of 3,900 digitised to date.

The sound project is on schedule to launch in autumn 2006.

02

Build the digital research environment

The first development phase of the digital library established a secure storage system for electronic materials received as part of the UK publishers' voluntary deposit scheme. We began a full EU procurement for an Ingest Component – the part of the system that will automatically take in the UK e-journals that will arrive once electronic legal deposit is finalised. We commissioned a detailed investigation of Digital Policy Management and have now drafted an initial set of requirements.

The digitisation of newspapers and sound recordings is progressing and we have had nearly one million pages of British 19th century newspapers microfilmed prior to digitising them. We have digitised 2,200 hours of sound recordings from a total programme of 3,900. Copyright licensing for a number of items is taking more time than expected but the project is on schedule to launch in autumn 2006. The work is funded by higher education's Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC).

In May 2005 the Library launched the first phase of the searchable archive of websites, developed by the UK Web Archiving Consortium (UKWAC). There are almost 1,000 sites available via www.webarchive.org.uk. The Library has contributed over 500 sites, selected in line with our content development policy. UKWAC was shortlisted for the Digital Preservation Coalition's Digital Preservation Awards in November 2005, which raised the profile of the Library's web archiving programme. We went to tender for a smart crawler to harvest websites automatically, but it was not possible to reach agreement with any of the suppliers who applied. Alternative methods of developing the smart crawler are being pursued, in the first instance by exploring possibilities with the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Library of Congress.

1,000 sites
AVAILABLE VIA www.webarchive.org.uk

The British Library has contributed over 500 sites, selected in line with our content development policy.

£1m+
efficiency savings
over two years

03

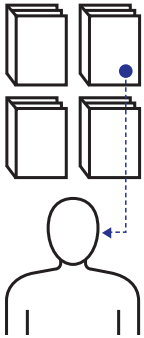
Transform search and navigation

Streamline the processing of incoming collection items. We have completed restructuring of the teams which deal with incoming items and their cataloguing. This will give us efficiency savings of more than £1 million over two years.

Readers can now reserve books online before their visit to the Reading Rooms. The books are ordered using the Integrated Catalogue and are waiting to be collected when the Reader arrives.

We have completed the options appraisal and started a pilot project to make our archives and manuscripts catalogues available via the Integrated Catalogue. We are also working towards hosting the English Short Title Catalogue.

Reserving books online



We have had a very positive response from Readers to the new online reservation system.

'Being able to order books on the internet in advance of visiting is an excellent service and saves a lot of time.'

Quote from a Reader survey form

Occupation of the Centre for Conservation at St Pancras is planned for early 2007

04

Grow and manage the national collection

Construction of the British Library Centre for Conservation at St Pancras began in August 2005 and is well underway, with occupation planned for early 2007. The construction order was placed with Sir Robert McAlpine and the project remains on budget. Following a very successful fundraising campaign we have been able to reduce the grant in aid subvention. Negotiations with a partner from higher education on the establishment of a book conservation foundation degree continue to progress.

The business case for the low-oxygen automated collection storage to house 260 km of the collection at Boston Spa was approved by HM Treasury in December 2005. A preliminary contract for the automation component was signed and container design and development began in January 2006. Planning consent has been granted and site preparation started. The construction contract will be awarded in summer 2006/07.

We reviewed our purchased collection materials and formulated a content development strategy for Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences on which we are currently consulting our stakeholders. The strategy was guided by an advisory panel of experts from research environments. We have outlined plans for science, technology and medicine (STM), which will be further developed when our new Head of STM is appointed.



Low-oxygen automated storage

The new facility will be the world's largest fully-automated high-density book storage built to meet the archival standards of BS5454:2000. It will use state of the art reduced oxygen fire protection and innovative environmental controls to protect the national collection.

260 km

OF THE COLLECTION WILL BE HELD IN THE NEW STORAGE CENTRE AT BOSTON SPA. THE BUSINESS CASE FOR THIS WAS APPROVED BY HM TREASURY IN DECEMBER 2005

We are consulting on our content development strategy

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05

Develop our people

We are defining our future needs for skills, knowledge and expertise with an initial focus on social sciences and science, technology and medicine. Plans for our social science capability have been endorsed by the Board and we are recruiting a Head of Social Science, one of whose first tasks will be to define the job profiles of a number of content experts.

All our managers – some 400 staff – have completed the Excellence in Leadership training programme. The programme has enabled managers across the Library to improve their management styles and leadership skills. An online 360 degree feedback evaluation form has been prepared and will be used to measure the extent of learning and behavioural change from this programme. The course is likely to run twice a year to enable new recruits and staff who become managers during the year to benefit from it.

400 managers

ALL OUR MANAGERS COMPLETED THE EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME



“This programme has made our managers much more aware of the diverse personal styles of others and how they can adapt the way they manage and lead. It develops their ability to build positive working relationships with stakeholders and achieve better business results for the Library.”

Aileen Downing, Human Resources Manager



£12.1m

OF EFFICIENCIES TO FUND DEVELOPMENTS ACHIEVED OVER THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

Cash savings

- Improved productivity
- Consequent staff reductions

Non-cash savings

- Increased web offerings
- Increased numbers of web users
- Greater promotion of St Pancras activities
- Increased Reader and visitor numbers

06

Guarantee financial sustainability

We achieved £12.1 million of efficiencies to fund developments over the course of the year. Significant cash savings have come about through improved productivity and consequent staff reductions. Non-cash savings (where the Library does more with the same resource) include increased web offerings which attracted increased numbers of web users, and greater promotion of St Pancras activities which attracted increased Reader and visitor numbers.

The Library's Corporate Balanced Scorecard came into effect in April 2005. This enables senior management to obtain an improved overview of performance across different aspects of the Library's activities. The Executive Team receives monthly reports on progress and takes remedial action where necessary; the Board receives quarterly reports. In November, work began on identifying metrics and setting targets for 2006/07. These were signed off by the Board in March 2006.

April 05

The Library's
Corporate Balanced
Scorecard came
into effect