



# The British Library's Strategy 2008–2011

As a great national and research library we have responsibility both for our recorded past and access to present day content for researchers and for future generations. The environment in which we operate has arguably changed more in the past two decades than in the preceding two centuries, driven particularly by technological developments. Such change is gradually transforming traditional scholarly dependency on the physical library as a major source for meeting research needs into a complex network of options, with varying levels of accessibility, authoritativeness and depth.

Across disciplines there remain widely differing expectations of the role of the library but research increasingly functions in a world of e-resources, virtual tools and collaborative communities, and choice of where to work physically. The commercial sector and the web shape expectations for rapid service innovation, access and easy processes. But at its core the British Library aims to provide resources, tools, experts and services to inspire creativity and to support a vibrant and diverse research population.

The British Library's strategy for the next three years builds on the foundations we have already established through our strategy for 2005 – 2008. Our new strategy outlines how we will build on existing strengths and seize opportunities to enhance our proposition to researchers and business. We will develop strategic collaborations in those areas of activity likely to benefit most from partnership working.

In addition we intend to continue our distinctive public, educational and cultural programmes, delivered both on-site and virtually. We are also laying the groundwork in this period for a new digital research centre and services in support of UK biomedical research.

Over the coming year we will develop a long term strategy for the British Library looking out towards the end of the first quarter of the 21st century to ensure that our potential contribution to research and scholarly enterprise remains vibrant, innovative and relevant for new generations.

## Our Purpose

- Advancing the world's knowledge.

## Our Vision

- We are central to the world of research, providing a trusted source of content that opens minds, solves problems and creates opportunities.
- We provide services to anyone who wants to do research. We aim to provide both physical and digital access to world-class information where and when people need it.
- We inspire people around the world with our outstanding content and expertise and we complement this by engaging the knowledge and expertise of others where it adds to the quality of experience for our users.
- By providing these services effectively, the British Library plays a vital role in society and the economy, both today and for future generations.

# Delivering Our Strategy

We have an innovative and exciting programme to deliver. We present below some of the important activities we aim to have completed by 2011, set against our seven strategic priorities.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

### Capture extensively and store UK digital publications

- Arrangements will be in place for collecting public websites and handheld e-publications.
- Progress will be made through the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel to advise the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on how best to collect digital publications.
- Best practice will be established for e-collecting, tracked against developments in other countries.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

### Connect our users with content

- A new resource discovery system will be in place offering enhanced access to our major collections.
- Web 2.0 services will be integrated into our website and online discovery tools.
- Greater digital access will be provided to material held both within and beyond the Library.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

### Transform access and preservation for newspapers

- A growing volume of microfilm and digitised content will be available at St Pancras and where appropriate online.
- The first phase of newspapers will be stored at Boston Spa in archival conditions.
- The legal deposit operation will have been transferred from Colindale to Boston Spa.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

### Support UK research with innovative services and integrated processes

- A critical mass of our unrivalled content will be digitised and available for researchers.
- A central repository that underpins UK research will offer streamlined access to information resources.
- New services will exist for commercial users to enhance our future sustainability.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

### Build our digital infrastructure

- A more robust, fully functioning infrastructure will be in place for acquiring, storing, preserving and providing access to digital items.
- Metadata will incorporate rights information to authorise users and protect content.
- Planets (Preservation and Long-term Access through Networked Services) outputs will be promoted to the wider community and adopted within the Library.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

### Integrate storage and preservation of physical collections

- The Additional Storage Programme at Boston Spa, providing state of the art, low-oxygen storage for millions of collection items, will have been completed.
- Benefits of digital files as a preservation medium will be fully understood, paving the way for a future switch from microfilm copying.
- The Library's property strategy will have been updated, taking into account our growth and storage needs over the next 25 years.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

### Develop as an organisation

- The Library will be a high performing organisation with a focus on delivering innovation and continuous improvement.
- The Library will be recognised as an employer of choice, with diverse, highly motivated, creative and flexible staff.
- Strong employer branding and web-based recruitment will support delivery of services to UK research and innovation.