



Cabinet – supplement: museums and archives appendices

Monday 26 January 2015 at 2.00 pm
Main Hall - Pakistan Community Centre

Membership:

Lead Member Councillors:

Portfolio

Butt (Chair)
Pavey (Vice-Chair)
Crane
Denselow
Hirani
Mashari
McLennan
Moher

Leader of the Council
Deputy Leader of the Council
Lead Member for Environment
Lead Member for Stronger Communities
Lead Member for Adults, Health and Well-being
Lead Member for Employment and Skills
Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing
Lead Member for Children and Young People

For further information contact: Anne Reid, Principal Democratic Services Officer
020 8937 1359, anne.reid@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit:

democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence.

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This report asks members to consider Brent's Museum and Archives Strategy. The strategy was produced following a comprehensive consultation process and sets out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor Mashari
Contact Officer: Sue McKenzie, Libraries, Arts and Heritage
Tel: 020 8937 3144 sue.mckenzie@brent.gov.uk

Date of the next meeting: Monday 23 February 2015



- Please remember to set your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.
- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

Appendix 1- Legislation and Policies - Museum and Archives

Museums- Legislation

In the United Kingdom local authority museums are undergoing significant change in terms of organization, function and status, largely in response to a changing external environment. Although little in the way of government policy has been directed specifically at museums, social, economic and cultural policies have had a significant impact on the way in which museums operate and interact with their local communities. The primacy of the market ideology during the 1980s and 1990s brought a shift in focus in museums towards income generation, customer orientation and increased 'efficiency'. Museums were told to adopt 'business-like' management techniques, and strategic planning and performance management became tools of the museum director's trade. Financial constraints and the need to adapt to a system of plural funding required museums to develop new strategies and new forms of management.

The local authority sector is the most significant provider of museums in the UK. Of 1,811 Registered museums, 40% (716) are operated by local councils. These include county wide services, major urban museums and galleries and a variety of smaller, district authority museums. Unlike the National Museums, which are administered by trustees and have charitable status, these museums are owned and directly run by local authorities.

Many local authorities also provide grant aid and other forms of support to smaller, independent museums in their areas. Local authority museums have a long history. Many have their origins in collections given to local communities by societies or individuals in the nineteenth century and housed in municipal museums built as an expression of civic pride under powers established by **Act of Parliament in 1845**. Subsequent legislation, particularly the **1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act** and the **1972 Local Government Act**, extended the powers of local authorities to provide museums. However, museums are not and never have been a statutory service.

Consequently, their provision is not reflected in the formula that determines the level of revenue support for local authorities from central government

Legislative framework for archives and records in local authority care

The rights and responsibilities of local authorities to look after and provide access to the records they hold are enshrined in a number of pieces of legislation.

Basically, they give local authorities responsibilities to provide access to their own records and the right to acquire and preserve archives created by other bodies.

The legislation falls into two categories:

- Legislation referring specifically to archives and records, including special categories of record such as Public Records
- Legislation relating to information management, where compliance relies on sound management of archives and records

The key pieces of legislation that refer specifically to archives are:

- [The Local Government Act, 1972](#). Section 224 requires local authorities to 'make proper' arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council of any of their officers. In 1999 the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now the Department for Communities and Local Government) issued [guidance on 'proper arrangements'](#) including records with historical value and which should be kept by an established archives service.
- [The Local Government \(Access to Information\) Act](#), 1985 provides for minutes, agendas, reports and background papers of meetings of principal councils that are open to the public to be available for public inspection

- [The Local Government \(Records\) Act, 1962](#) enables all local authorities to promote adequate use of their own records and empowers county and county borough councils ('principal councils') to acquire other records by purchase, gift or deposit.

The following legal implications have to be taken into consideration if a Local Authority ever considers a reduction in service delivery or alternative service delivery models:

Section 224 of the **Local Government Act 1972** states:

Without prejudice to the powers of the custos rotulorum to give directions as to the documents of any county, a principal council shall make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council or any of their officers.

Guidance on what constitutes 'proper arrangements' was issued by the then DETR in 1999. In summary this includes:

For virtually all authorities which run or have run an archives service, or which have succeeded to the powers of an authority which has run such a service, "records" will normally comprise three broad groups:

- Records created by the authority and its predecessors in the course of its business
- 'Public records' (for example records of courts, coroners, hospitals and prisons) held on behalf of central government
- Records given to or purchased by the authority, or deposited with the authority normally on indefinite loan.

The definition in section 224 applies to all records irrespective of the medium on or in which the information is carried, including but not restricted to manuscript, typescript and printed records, photographs, sound recordings, film, videotape, computer disks and records held in electronic form.

Proper arrangements should encompass the preservation of the records, including storage and conservation; and the provision of access, including preparing finding aids and the means for enabling members of the public to consult the records (subject to any restrictions) under supervision.

Proper arrangements for the historical records of an authority can be made either directly or by arrangement with another authority - for the provision of a joint service or for provision of the service by one authority on behalf of another.

Proper arrangements should include provision for access by the public in a designated study area sufficient to satisfy normal demand, providing for the health and safety of the public and the special needs of disabled readers. The area should be under the constant supervision of a suitably trained member of staff. All records open to inspection by the public should be clearly described in publicly available finding aids; copies of finding aids should be supplied to the National Register of Archives. Finding aids may also be made remotely accessible by electronic means.

Authorities will need to consider what staffing is required in terms of number, qualifications and experience in order to keep the records safe and make them available for public inspection; to ensure that proper advice is made available to the authority and to other owners of records on their care; to prepare adequate finding aids; and to take necessary practical steps for the preservation and conservation of the records. Staffing should include suitably trained people which may include professionally qualified archivists and records managers, professionally qualified conservators (unless this work is carried out externally and non-professional archives or records assistants).

Local Government Act 1972

[The Local Government Act 1972](#), s 224 requires that 'a principal council shall make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council or any of their officers'.

Guidance on what constitutes 'proper arrangements' was issued by the then DETR in 1999 and was issued

to all councils running an archives service. The guidance was available on the CLG website and is now archived by The National Archives (TNA):

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.communities.gov.uk/localgovernment/360902/constitutionsandethics/constitutionalarrangements/guidanceproper/>

The guidance is essentially based on the provisions of [BS5454 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents](#), [Beyond the PRO: Public records in places of deposit](#), and the [HMC standard for record repositories](#) (since updated as PD 5454). Since the guidance was issued the latter two documents have been superseded by The National Archives' [Standard for Record Repositories](#) and the accompanying [Framework of Standards](#). Would a reduction in service create a situation in which an authority was operating below the standard required by the guidance? Section 228 has also been used by many researchers and interest groups as a means by which they can secure access to documents in local record offices and make copies.

Public Records Act 1958 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/6-7/51>

An authority may have made a commitment to undertake the role of a place of deposit and acquire, preserve and make available public records for which the service is appointed. Appointment is based on the achievement and maintenance of a standard of care which broadly meets the requirements of TNA's Standard when the particular circumstances of each institution are taken into consideration. A place of deposit should provide suitable facilities for safe keeping, preservation and access and the requirements of the Standard are applied and interpreted proportionately and to some extent flexibly.

Nevertheless, should the standard of care and access fall below a level considered acceptable the public records can be removed and transferred to a neighbouring place of deposit or TNA in the last resort. TNA is reluctant to do this and TNA seeks to cooperate with the place of deposit to find ways in which records of local relevance can remain accessible in that locality and preserved alongside complimentary collections.

TNA's flexibility extends to recognition that there may be a need for a temporary reduction in standards of preservation and access as a result of preparation for removal to a new building. There might be other legitimate reasons; however, removal of public records from a local authority archives service has occurred when the standard of service declined significantly and the authority agreed that it could not meet TNA's requirements.

In the present circumstances it is recognised that financial pressures on local authorities may make reductions in expenditure inevitable. For example, the TNA would be willing to accept a reduction in opening hours to ensure that there are sufficient resources to maintain the whole range of a record office's core functions. This comes with a couple of caveats. The expectation is that any reduction in opening hours would be temporary with a resumption of normal hours once public finances had recovered, and the level of access remains reasonable. The definition of 'reasonable' will depend on the scale, nature and importance of the collections held. Complete cessation of public access would result in a review of place of deposit status.

Manorial and Tithe Documents/Diocesan records

Legislation relating to manorial and tithe records stemming from the [Law of Property Act 1922](#) s.144A and the [Tithe Act 1936](#) has implications for the care of manorial and tithe documents in the custody of local authority record offices. For example, there are powers to remove manorial documents and direct them to an appropriate repository should they be at risk of loss or damage. M&T approval no longer operates since this was rolled up with TNA approval of repositories against the Standard.

The Diocese may be a significant depositor under the [Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978](#) (as amended) and changes in the service provided may lead to this being reviewed.

Information Management

As well as the s46 Code of Practice reference should be made to the guidance coming from the Local Government Association and the Audit Commission concerning information management and data security.

This may support a Record Office's role in records management and a link to a recent document is given below:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelId=1587534>

A lower standard of management of an authority's own records may lead to poorer decision making, loss of vital information and increasing amounts of staff time spent locating information. These risks are highlighted in two documents based on central government experience which have relevance for the local authority sector: *Information Matters* and *Managing Information Risk*. These can be found on TNA's website at:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/services/publications/default.htm>

The key pieces of legislation that relate to information management are:

[Freedom of Information Act \(FOI\)](#) and [Environmental Information Regulations \(EIR\)](#)

The provisions of the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) apply to any records held by the council, including all those given or bequeathed to the archive service or purchased by it, and deposited by those bodies subject to the Act. The status of records in private ownership which are deposited with the Record Office needs to be assessed on a case by case basis and there is guidance on the National Archives website about how to conduct such an assessment

[.\(http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/guidance_private_archives.pdf\)](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/guidance_private_archives.pdf).

A record office which was not open to the public on a regular basis would not be able to claim the exemption from answering enquiries under s.21 of the FOIA, and given the level of public demand for access to archives it must be likely that maintenance of reasonable access arrangements would be a cheaper option than dealing with FOI requests which would be received from members of the public and others wanting access to the records. It is also necessary to check whether there would be a breach of the publication scheme. As for uncatalogued collections the s. 22 exemption could not be claimed.

It is worth noting that the provisions of EIR are wide ranging, requests can be made verbally and for both EIR and FOI there is a duty to assist and advise enquirers. This could put severe pressure on a remote enquiry service. There is a considerable amount of information on EIR on the ICO and DEFRA websites:

http://www.ico.gov.uk/tools_and_resources/document_library/environmental_information_regulation.aspx

<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/corporate/policy/opengov/eir/>

As far as records management is concerned, the Code of Practice issued by the Lord Chancellor under s.46 of the FOIA should be considered. Although it is not mandatory for public bodies to follow the Code, if the Information Commissioner finds that poor records management practice has led to a breach of the Act he can take action. The recently revised Code has strengthened references to historical records and one might argue that a reduction in the level of service provided by a Record Office would prevent it from supporting the authority in complying with the Code. Of particular relevance are sections 8.1, 10.4, 10.5, 10.15, 12.3 and 12.4:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/information-access-rights/foi-guidance-for-practitioners/code-of-practice>

The National Archives' evaluation workbook to assist authorities in assessing compliance with the Code is published on their website:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/code/assessing.htm>

Data Protection Act

The [Data Protection Act 1998](#) was passed on 16 July 1998. Guidance on the general application of the act can be found on the [Information Commissioner's website](#).

A code of practice for archivists and records managers was produced jointly by The National Archives, the Society of Archivists, the Records Management Society and the National Association for Information Management. The Information Commissioner is satisfied that it provides clear authoritative advice that should promote good practice, and it was published on that basis in October 2007.

[Code of practice for archivists and records managers under Section 51\(4\) of the Data Protection Act](#)

Policies- National

Arts Council England (ACE) published '**Great art and culture for everyone**', a revised ten year strategic plan, in 2013. It brings together ACE's remits and plans for the arts, museums and libraries sectors in one cohesive document for the first time. It replaces two key strategic documents published in 2011, 'Achieving great art for everyone' and 'Culture, knowledge and understanding.'

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/browse-advice-and-guidance/great-art-and-culture-everyone>

The Museum Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for museums in the UK. There are currently just under 1,800 museums participating in the scheme, demonstrating their commitment to managing collections effectively for the enjoyment and benefit of users.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/>

International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics for Museums was adopted in 1986 and revised in 2004. It establishes the values and principles shared by ICOM and the international museum community. It is a reference tool translated into 36 languages and it sets minimum standards of professional practice and performance for museums and their staff.

<http://icom.museum/the-vision/code-of-ethics/>

Effective Collections Achievements and Legacy (April 2012)- Effective Collections launched in late 2006, emerging from the findings of the MA's 2005 report, Collections for the Future. The scheme was supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation with a grant of just over £1m and one clear aim: to help museums make better use of stored collections. This report will examine change over the last five years, drawing on the original aims of Effective Collections, the plans and projects set in place by the MA and the work undertaken across the museum sector.

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=710820>

Diversify: reflections and recommendations – 2013- The Museums Association's (MA) Diversify scheme ran from 1998 to 2011. It set out to make museum careers more accessible to people from Black, Asian and Minority-Ethnic(BAME) backgrounds through targeted 'positive-action' training to prepare them to apply successfully for jobs in museums. The scheme was subsequently expanded to include disabled people and people from low income households. In all, 130 individuals and around 50 museums and galleries participated.

This report looks back on the scheme and what it achieved. It draws on the experiences of those involved, earlier research and a consultation exercise with MA members, and reflects on the impact of Diversify on the individuals involved, the museum workforce as a whole and on organisational culture.

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=955792>

The **Museums 2020** discussion paper sets out the possibilities for museums and seeks museum managers' views about how museums could change to better fulfil their potential to play a part in improving people's lives, building communities, strengthening society and protecting the environment.

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=806530>

Other relevant policies are available at <http://www.museumsassociation.org/policy/reports>

The Archives Service Accreditation scheme is a National Archives standard which defines good practice and supports development. It enables authorities to review their services by providing a framework to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The scheme is specific to the archive sector but aims to support the move towards integrated ways of working in the management of cultural collections.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm>

Cultural value of archives

The government policy on archives ([Archives for the 21st Century](#)) emphasises the value and relevance of archives service to the wider local priorities of councils:

Government policy on archives – Archives for the 21st Century

The government policy promotes the active development of archives services. The government wishes to see local services provided effectively and consistently throughout the local authority sector and the scaling back of established and recognised services would be contrary to the spirit of the policy. A link to the policy is given below:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/policy/aft21c/>

Brent Council Strategy and Policies

The Borough Plan 2013-14 outlines the Council's vision for Brent. This plan provides a vision for a better future for the borough, to be achieved by all who live and work in Brent working together, to create opportunities, to use them well and to improve lives.

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/8440076/Brent-borough-plan-2014.pdf>

Regeneration Strategy-The Regeneration Strategy sets out a vision for Brent from 2010 to 2030 and centred on the three strategic priorities described in the [Corporate Strategy](#). The regeneration vision for 2030 blends this corporate ambition with our spatial plans as set out in the borough's Local Development Framework. "The vision is of a Brent fully integrated into the city – a single urban borough which makes a full and positive contribution to the London economy. "

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/regeneration-strategy/>

Health and Well-Being Strategy 2008-2018- This strategy has been produced by the [Local Strategic Partnership for Brent](#) and it outlines our partnership priorities and ambitions for improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and their families over the next ten years. It establishes the Council's shared vision for reducing local inequalities in health and well-being and ensuring that everyone, irrespective of where they live, has the best possible chance to live a long, fulfilling and healthy life and will achieve this through the use of services like Museums:

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/health-and-wellbeing-strategy/>

Cultural Strategy 2010-2015-The benefits of museums in promoting health, well-being and community cohesion are recognised and promoted in Brent's Cultural Strategy

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/cultural-strategy-for-brent/>

Arts Development Strategy 2011-2015-The Arts Development strategy for 2011 to 2015 outlines our four year commitment to arts provision in the borough and centres around four key points:

- promoting the cultural and creative economy Page 6

- supporting the regeneration and infrastructure investments underway
- the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- commissioning and promoting art.

It includes strong links with delivering arts projects with our Museum Service.

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/your-council/about-brent-council/council-structure-and-how-we-work/strategies-and-plans/arts-development-strategy/>

Cemeteries Strategy- There is opportunity for the Museum and Archives Service to work with the Cemeteries Service on heritage related projects.

<http://www.brent.gov.uk/media/2162472/Cemeteries%20Strategy%20April%202013.pdf>

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Appendix 2- Consultation Reports and Summary Notes

This appendix contains the following summary notes and reports from the preliminary, formal and focus group consultation:

- **Archives Visitor Survey, Summary Report- 18 February - 6 April 2013**
- **Wembley History and Willesden Local History Societies – Summary notes from 16 October 2013 meeting**
- **Museum users, Partner Organisations and Schools- Summary notes from 7 November 2013 meeting**
- **Consultation with Pupils at Mount Stewart Junior School and St Mary’s Catholic Primary School – 11 December 2013**
- **Wembley History and Willesden Local History Societies- Summary notes from 7 April 2014 meeting**
- **Museum Stakeholders- Summary notes from 15 April 2014**
- **Draft Museum and Archives Strategy Public Consultation Report**
- **Targeted Focus Group Report**

Brent Archives Visitor Survey 2013 – Summary Report

Background

The survey was carried out for seven weeks from 18th February to 6th April 2013. Visitors were asked to complete a paper copy questionnaire on their first visit to Brent Archives during the survey period. The mandate of the survey was explained as below.

‘We would like to find out more about the people who visit Brent Archives and how they use the service. We will use what you tell us to inform the development of a Museum and Archives Strategy for Brent Council’

The scope of the survey was in person visitors and did not include phone and email enquiries. Thirty three questionnaires were completed, providing a snapshot of visitor profiles and usage patterns over a seven week period.

Visitor Profiles

Place of residence (88% response rate)

Almost two thirds of visitors were Brent residents from either the immediate postcode area of the Archives or from the southern part of the borough. Approximately a third of visitors came from other London boroughs, elsewhere in the UK and abroad.

The NW10 postcode area represented 34% of all respondents while NW2 represented 20% and NW6 represented 7%. Therefore 61% of all respondents were from the southern part of Brent and borough residents represented 65% of all individual visitors.

Of the 35% of non resident respondents: 14% were from the wider London area (Harrow, Wimbledon, Carshalton, and Dagenham); 14% from elsewhere in the UK (Aylesbury, Brighton, and Jarrow); and 7% from abroad (USA).

Age (97% response rate)

57% of respondents were aged 44 and under with 25% from the 16 - 24 age group.

The remaining respondents were aged 25-34 (13%); 35-44 (19%); 45-54 (9%); 55-64 (19%); 65 and over (15%)

Gender (97% response rate)

There were more female respondents (56%) than male (44%).

Ethnicity (91% response rate)

77% of respondents who stated their ethnicity belonged to the White group, 10% to the Asian group and 7% to the Black Group. Mixed and Eastern European ethnicity accounted for the remaining 6% of respondents.

Religion (82% response rate)

41% of respondents who stated their religion were Christian; 15% Jewish; 15% No Religious Belief; 7% Hindu; 7% Agnostic.

Humanist and Other faiths.

Disability (91% response rate)

7% of respondents to this question considered themselves to be disabled.

Physical impairment, vision impairment, long-term illness and learning impairment were the disabilities named.

Sexual orientation (70% response rate)

All respondents who provided details indicated that they were heterosexual.

Access to Brent Archives

80% of respondents normally visited in person while 10% normally made contact by phone and 9% by letter or email.

58% of visitors used public transport (train 38% and bus 20%). A third of visitors walked to the Archives while 3% used cycled and 5% drove by car.

42% of visitors had visited the Brent Archives website during the last year.

Purpose of visit

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of material they were most interested in on the day of their visit. 46% named local history; 18% house history and 15% family history.

21% of respondents indicated the other category and named school incidents, Ordnance Survey maps, local public art, pub history, Jewish History, the Metropolitan Line and greyhound racing.

42% of visits were made for the purpose of personal or leisure interests; 18% for work or business; 15% related to university studies and 6% for school projects. The other category represented 18% of responses.

Frequency and length of visit

70% of respondents were visiting Brent Archives for the first time while 9% had been visiting for under a year, 3% for between 1-4 years, 12% for between 5-10 years and 6% for more than ten years.

The high proportion of first time visitors is reflected in the 82% of respondents who said that they visit less than once a month. 6% of respondents visited once a month; 9% more than once a month and 3% more than once a week.

56% of respondents said their visit lasted less than an hour, 22% one-two hours, 7% two-three hours, 7% three-five hours, and 7% more than five hours.

Market Segmentation

Brent residents were heavily represented among the younger (16-34 years) and older (65 plus) age groups, whereas half of visitors from beyond Brent were in either the 35-

44 or 55-64 groups. Residents had higher levels of disability compared with non resident visitors.

The mix of female and male respondents was similar between Brent residents and non-residents; as was the case with indications of sexual orientation.

While sample sizes are too small for detailed analysis, the following trends were identified from the responses received:

- Residents mainly visit to access local history information (55%) rather than for family history (5%). In comparison, 38% of non residents visited for family history purposes and a further 38% for local history
- House history and other interests were significant reasons for visiting for all respondents
- School projects were more prevalent amongst residents while university studies were more prevalent amongst non residents
- Respondents who had been visiting the Archives for more than ten years and respondents who were repeat users were more likely to be Brent residents. This was most marked amongst respondents who visit more than once a month
- Visitors who are Brent residents tend to make visits of shorter duration
- Those travelling from further afield visit less frequently but are more likely to stay longer, for example, for half a day or a full day
- Non resident visitors are more likely to have used the Archives website or to have made contact by phone or email than are Brent residents

While respondents share some characteristics and requirements, the two markets can be broadly summarised as follows:

Brent residents

Live locally and often near to the Archives search room; likely to walk to or use the bus to visit the Archives; tend to be of either younger (16 to 34) or older (65 or older) age groups; make short duration but repeat visits to the Archives; have a particular interest in Local History.

Visitors from beyond Brent

Live elsewhere in London, the UK provinces or abroad; likely to travel by train or bus to reaching the Archives; often aged 35-64; tend to make one-off visits to but that visit may be for half a day or a full day; probably more likely to also use the Archives website or to phone; likely to have an interest in family history as much as local history.

Conclusions

With the caveat that the survey results were based on a small sample gathered over a seven week period, it is reasonable to draw the following conclusions from the evidence gathered:

1. The ratio of resident visitors to non resident visitors is approximately 2:1. The vast majority of resident visitors live in the south of the borough, often in close proximity to the Archives search room. Only one visitor during the survey period lived in the north of the borough.
2. The demographic profile of resident visitors provided by the survey differs markedly from the borough profile as recorded in the 2011 census returns. There is clear evidence that residents of BAME background (64% of the population at the time of the census) are heavily underrepresented in terms of visitors to the Archives.

3. There are distinct patterns of usage and areas of interest for residents and non residents.
4. Webpage resources are underused by visitors who are Brent residents.

Brent Council Museum and Archives Strategy – Preliminary Consultation

Wembley History and Willesden Local History Societies –

16th October 2013, 3-4.30pm

Final version of Summary notes

Present: Cllr Jim Moher, Philip Grant, Robin Midwinter, Dilwyn Chambers (all members of Wembley History Society), Margaret Pratt, Dave Unwin (both Willesden Local History Society), Sue McKenzie, Neil Davies, Antonia Grant (all Brent Council officers)

Context

Brent Council is developing a Museum and Archives Strategy which will set out a vision and set of objectives for the future delivery of the service. The scope of the strategy will include the collections policy, information technology, partnership working, learning activities, and event programming and dealing with customer enquiries.

One of the inputs will be a recently completed self assessment against a framework of organisational characteristics undertaken by Council officers including members of the Museum and Archives team. The “Survive and Thrive” framework is administered by the Museum of London to support local museums with organisational health in the challenging economic climate.

Council officers are undertaking a number of preliminary consultation meetings with key internal and external stakeholders to inform the development of a draft strategy.

Representatives from the Wembley History Society and Willesden Local History Society were invited to a stakeholder meeting held at Brent Civic Centre in Wembley on Wednesday 16th October. The scope of the strategy and the purpose of the meeting were outlined in the letter of invite.

Feedback received both on the day and in any resulting correspondence will inform the draft strategy which is due to go out to full public consultation in the early part of 2014.

Sue McKenzie (Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage) also provided a brief update on the redevelopment of the Willesden Green Centre. She introduced Antonia Grant, Brent Museum Project Development Freelancer, who will design the new museum displays, and asked for views on the design and layout of the new Museum space within the building. It was clarified that a public Archives search room and environmentally controlled storage space will be provided within the Centre. Additional storage space will be provided at Grange Road.

A number of stakeholders raised concerns regarding the proposed restructure of the Museum and Archives staffing establishment being carried out prior to the development of a new strategy for the service. Sue McKenzie said that the proposed restructure was an internal process which was being undertaken in accordance with Council policy and procedures. It was therefore not appropriate to discuss the proposed restructure with external stakeholders.

Philip Grant reiterated his view that it made no sense to restructure the staff prior to the production of the Museum and Archives Strategy and asked for this to be recorded in

the notes of the meeting. Margaret Pratt and Dave Unwin also strongly expressed the same view. Discussion then moved on to a number of key issues identified by stakeholders and officers for consideration in the development of a draft strategy.

Summary of key issues

- 1) There was a general consensus amongst stakeholders that the lack of a staff presence in the public display areas at Brent Museum had a negative impact on the visitor experience. It was stressed that visitors should have the option of speaking to a member of staff on arrival at the museum, particularly in the case of first time visitors. This arrangement has been in place at the Grange Museum but had been discontinued at the time of the relocation to Willesden Green Library Centre. Visitor reception arrangements will be reviewed as part of the preparations for the new Centre.
- 2) Concerns were expressed about the level of consultation undertaken at the time of the relocation from the Grange to Willesden Green, and that this led to “gaps” in what the Museum covered. A comprehensive consultation process will be undertaken as part of the production of the Museum and Archives Strategy. Specific consultation will also be undertaken on the design and layout of the new museum space.
- 3) The lack of a comprehensive Acquisitions Policy for Brent Museum and Archives is a concern and needs to be addressed in the strategy.
- 4) All stakeholders felt strongly that display objects should be rotated more frequently and on a regular basis. Local historians should be consulted and could work with officers on developing a methodology and display schedule.
- 5) Stakeholders and officers were in agreement that greater use should be made of the Museum and Archives collections. A more innovative approach is needed in order to provide residents and visitors with the opportunity to view the collections in more depth. For example, temporary displays could be hosted at libraries and other Brent Council buildings across the borough. Dilwyn Chambers stated his belief that the Council was committed to searching for museum sites in Wembley. He went on to say that he has contacted the Council to clarify the current position on this matter.
- 6) The indexing protocol for the Museum and Archives collections needs to be reviewed in order to maximise potential usage. This should be considered as part of the strategy action plan.
- 7) A large amount of outreach work is already undertaken but a review of the service currently provided would enable the Council to provide a more comprehensive outreach programme. Venues at which outreach events, including temporary exhibitions, can be delivered should form part of that review.

- 8) Stakeholders recommended that the council should adopt a more proactive approach to the sourcing and acquisition of objects from industries, businesses, schools and churches in the local area. This approach could be adopted in preparation for the planned British Empire Exhibition. Dilwyn Chambers mentioned that several requests which he had made for the return of some Goss and crested china BEE items which he had loaned to the Museum had not been dealt with. This and Brent's failure to insure its historic collections material might deter potential donors.
- 9) Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way.
- 10) Future exhibitions could include a greater emphasis on national issues in a local context. For example, Brent Archives has a good collection of First World War documents and newspapers relating to the role of aircraft and munitions factories as part of the national war effort.
- 11) Capacity to deliver the suggested improvements to the service could be achieved by strengthening collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. One example of where things could be improved was given by Dilwyn Chambers, who said that in the past Brent had opposed suggestions by several organisations that conducted local history walks could be provided as part of its heritage programme. There was general consensus amongst the stakeholders that they would welcome a more interactive working relationship with council officers. Boreham Wood and Bexley were cited as examples of best practice with regard to officers working with volunteers.
- 12) Consideration should be given to renaming and rebranding Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility as Brent Museum and Local History Centre might generate more interest amongst non users of the service.
- 13) All stakeholders were in agreement that the forthcoming anniversary of the British Empire Exhibition presents an excellent opportunity to showcase the diversity of the borough while raising the profile of the Museum and Archives service and strengthening social cohesion in local communities. Dilwyn Chambers noted that the idea of guided walks around the Exhibition site had previously been rejected by the Council.

Brent Council Museum and Archives Strategy – Preliminary Consultation

Museum users, Partner Organisations and Schools

7 November 2013, 4:30-6:00pm

Present: Kajal Meghani (Museum user) Lisa Ehlers (Elders Voice), Sue McKenzie, Neil Davies, Antonia Grant, Aine Ryan (all Brent Council officers)

Context

Brent Council is developing a Museum and Archives Strategy which will set out a vision and set of objectives for the future delivery of the service. The scope of the strategy will include the collections policy, information technology, partnership working, learning activities, and event programming and dealing with customer enquiries.

Council officers are undertaking a number of preliminary consultation meetings with key internal and external stakeholders to inform the development of a draft strategy. Museum users, partner organisations and schools were invited to a stakeholder meeting held at Brent Civic Centre in Wembley on Thursday, 7 November. 12 individuals had confirmed attendance by 1 November; unfortunately only 2 were able to attend on the day. It was agreed that draft notes would be sent to the 10 interested individuals to widen the discussion and include their feedback.

Feedback received both on the day and in any resulting correspondence will inform the draft strategy which is due to go out to full public consultation in the early part of 2014. Sue McKenzie (Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage) also provided a brief update on the redevelopment of the Willesden Green Centre and asked for views on priorities for future service provision and development.

Summary of key issues

- 1) The stakeholders felt that Museums should be seen as “hip” places which can host performance events. It should be seen as dynamic service, not just a static building. It was suggested that one way of achieving this could be by adopting a more creative approach to linking with the Arts. The Moving Museum <http://www.themovingmuseum.com/index.php/about> concept was listed as an example that could be used as a link between the Museum and contemporary art. As a follow on to this topic it was suggested that there should be greater collaboration with the smaller museums and galleries
- 2) Stakeholders and officers were in agreement that greater use should be made of the Museum and Archives collections. A more innovative approach is needed in order to provide residents and visitors with the opportunity to view the collections in more depth. For example, temporary displays could be hosted at libraries and other Brent Council buildings to attract more people in the North of the borough. The Moving Museum was again cited as an example of how this works successfully.
- 3) A large amount of outreach work is already undertaken but a review of the service currently provided would enable the Council to provide a more comprehensive outreach programme particularly for secondary schools. One stakeholder felt from her own experience that the Service should try and engage more with secondary schools as she had an interest in museums and volunteering but was never aware of what was available locally.

- 4) Both stakeholders felt that word of mouth and social media were the most effective forms of promotion and that the IT on offer should be similar to the Civic Centre but accessible to all abilities.
- 5) One of the stakeholders felt that interpretation panels needed to be informative, written in accessible language but in no way patronising. They felt that it was important to provide the correct level of information.
- 6) It was suggested by one stakeholder that we could improved offer to academics and this could tie in with the London wide Archives project and include high profile events.

The following points were also raised in the first stakeholder meeting with the Wembley History and the Willesden Local History Societies.

- 7) Stakeholders recommended that the council should adopt a more proactive approach to the sourcing and acquisition of objects from industries, businesses, schools and community organisations in the local area. There is scope for the service to work with a variety of institutions in and around Brent to develop the collection and the overall customer offer.
- 8) Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way.
- 9) Future exhibitions could include a greater emphasis on national issues in a local context. One stakeholder felt that the Council needed to engage with representative local organisations as often communities won't approach the service themselves.
- 10) Capacity to deliver the suggested improvements to the service could be achieved by strengthening collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. There was general consensus amongst the two stakeholders that they would welcome a more interactive working relationship with council officers. Boreham Wood and Bexley were cited as examples of best practice with regard to officers working with volunteers. Again it was felt that if the service was promoted more extensively to secondary schools and College for Further Education they may get more young volunteers. It was suggested that Volunteers could also be involved in the meeting and greeting of visitors to the Museum
- 11) Consideration should be given to renaming and rebranding Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility a Local History Centre might generate more interest amongst non users of the service particularly younger people. It was also perceived that a combination of some or all of the proposals suggested would boost the external image and reputation of the service.

**Consultation with Pupils at
Mount Stewart Junior School and
St Mary's Catholic Primary School
on
the Brent Museum and Archives Strategy
For London Borough of Brent- 11 December 2013**

**Undertaken by Sharon Cohen, Outcome Focussed Solutions
Limited**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The children were excited about the development and thought it was a really good idea.

They had a large number of ideas with some core things being important.

- It should be free or low cost
- Exhibits should be interactive
- Information should be in 'bite-size' chunks
- There should be things to do and make
- They liked creative ways of finding out information, exploring, touching things, interactive games, films, touch screens, listening to information, feely boxes, staff in costume and role, 3D pictures, arts and crafts activities, competitions, simulators and rides

The most favoured ideas were:-

- There should be a leaflet telling you what to look for with a plan of the museum and stamper machines to collect stamps as you go round or a passport and stickers to collect
- The museum should have a timeline so that they clearly feel they are going back in time. They suggested that there should be an exhibition for every 100 years which changes colour (from bright for current getting darker as they go back in time), so they can see the differentiation. One group suggested the last room should be pitch black with the exhibits made from glow in the dark material

They wanted the same things covered in each period so they could contrast them and understand the changes, and felt this should include:-

- Transport
- Clothing (with the option of dressing up)
- Education
- Artefacts
- Houses and buildings (miniature models like Beaconsfield and Legoland) and rooms they can go into and see/touch and the things they had in them – for example cutlery, crockery, washing boards, mangles etc
- Living conditions
- Religion

BACKGROUND

Brent Council is developing a Museum and Archives Strategy which will set out a vision and set of objectives for the future delivery of the service. There are plans to build a new museum and library at Willesden. The museum will show the story of Brent from 3000 years ago until today. This consultation was to find out the views of children on the museum and enable them to contribute their ideas to the planning.

METHODOLOGY

Year 5 and 6 children from Mount Stewart Junior and St Mary's Catholic Primary Schools were seen in small groups of 6 children for about half an hour per group. These two schools were chosen because of an established relationship with the London Borough of Brent through the outreach programme. The children seen in both schools were reflective of the borough's diversity. In total 54 children contributed to the sessions, of which 20 were boys and 34 girls.

They were asked:-

- What the word museum meant to them
- If they had to describe a museum in one word, what it would be
- If they visited museums, and if so which ones they had been to
- What they like in museums
- How they prefer learning
- If they had a history project to complete where they would go to find their information
- If they visit museums with their family, school or both
- What they think makes museums boring and what makes them exciting

The development of the new museum was then explained to them and they were asked:-

- If they would be interested in finding out more about Brent, their home and their family
- If they would like the museum to be colourful and exciting or would prefer it to be relaxing and dark
- Their ideas for what should be in the new museum (subsequent groups were then told the earlier ideas to see if they were supported by other children)

INFORMATION COLLECTED FROM CHILDREN

What the word museum meant to them

The responses were:-

- A place with artefacts
- Old stuff
- Interesting information and pictures
- See how it was in the past so can compare to now
- Place of history
- Place to learn about different times/cultures/people
- Place with exhibitions
- How things used to be in the olden days
- How streets were set out and how houses used to look
- Interactive things
- Place to see sculptures
- Prehistoric times/dinosaurs
- Valuable possessions kept on display for people to see
- A place to learn and find out things
- Things you haven't seen before
- Objects from the past

- Things that look old but actually are not
- Places of learning about things from caves
- Neolithic, Bronze Age, Roman, Tudor, Viking, Saxon and Victorian things
- Help others who don't know about the past
- Information stored from the past/history
- Place where information from the past is kept (not necessarily recent past)
- Things that happen in the world
- Historical facts and information
- Place to keep old things for others to see and learn
- Artefacts from different nations – history and learning
- Place for kids to learn something
- Preserving what's left behind so we can learn how they did things
- Archaeological artefacts
- History of past times
- Dinosaurs
- Old things from old times
- Interesting artefacts
- Keep old stuff to teach you morals and history
- Ancient artefacts
- Statues from the past
- Place to find out information ready for my future career (this child wants to be a vet and goes to museums to look at animals and their biology)
- Somewhere to go when you're bored

If they had to describe a museum in one word, what it would be

The responses were (in alphabetical order):-

- Amazing
- Artefacts
- Big
- Boring*
- Cool
- Creative
- Dramatic
- Educational
- Exciting
- Experiential
- Fantastic
- Fossils
- Fun
- Geography
- History/historic
- Holiday (things to do in)
- Informational
- Interesting
- Knowledge
- Learning
- Mummies
- New
- Old
- Quiet
- Science

* One child out of 54 said boring; all the others disagreed. Exciting, fun, artefacts and educational were the most repeated words. The child who said museums were boring said she had to go with her parents and older siblings for their schoolwork.

If they visited museums, and if so which ones they had been to

All but one child had visited a museum, and she said she really would like to. All the other children had been to museums with both their school and their parents, and they all said it was exciting and they enjoyed visiting museums, except the one child who didn't like museums.

Museums they had visited (in alphabetical order):-

- Art Museums
- Brent Museum
- British Museum
- British Transport Museum
- Computer Museum
- Culture Museum
- Damien Hurst
- Dinosaur Museum (they said this was just dinosaurs, not the National History)
- Duxford RAF Museum
- Geffrye Museum
- Leicester Jewellery Museum
- Le Louvre
- London Transport Museum
- Museum of London
- Music Museum
- Natural History Museum
- People in the past
- RAF Museum
- Roman Museum
- Science Museum
- Tate Modern
- Toy Museum
- Tudor Museum
- Verulamium
- Victoria and Albert Museum
- Victorian School Life Museum – Mile End (only open to school parties)

The most frequent responses were the Natural History, Science, London Transport, RAF and Dinosaurs museums. Some children had been to museums abroad.

What they like in museums

Every child (except the one who found museums boring) said they particularly liked interactive displays, and they wanted to learn more than they already know, see things they have never seen before and see things they wouldn't find elsewhere.

Equally popular were collecting stamps (like in the London Transport Museum) or stickers for passports that showed they had been all round the museum, and the idea of a quiz/treasure hunt with small prizes for completing it.

They liked finding out facts, looking at artefacts and reading pieces of information. The majority of children thought it important that these were short and several described what they liked as 'bite-sized'.

They liked creative ways of finding out information, exploring, touching things, interactive games, films, touch screens, listening to information, feely boxes, staff in costume and role, 3D pictures, arts and crafts activities, competitions, simulators and rides.

Most thought a café was important which should be themed to match the museum.

If they had a history project to complete where they would go to find their information

All the children said to a museum and a library, and several gave examples of museums their family had taken them to, to support school projects.

If they visit museums with their family, school or both

With the exception of the one child who would never want to go, the children wanted to go with their family and their school. Many went with extended family to visit museums either with, or instead of, their parents.

What they think makes museums boring and what makes them exciting

Boring

- Just looking at glass cabinets and writing
- Just looking, need to **feel** what it was like
- Large pages of small print
- No activity
- No learning
- No pictures
- Not being able to touch anything
- Nothing to do – only look
- One thing only
- “Walking and walking and walking and walking with lots and lots and lots of reading only”
- When you can’t touch

Interesting

- 3D pictures
- Artefacts
- Books
- Buttons – press and give information or press and see something move
- Clothes you can try on
- Computers
- Costumed re-enactment
- Earphones
- Exhibits with small facts, not lots of boring pages
- Facts (kept short)
- Games related to the museum
- Glass floor
- Going inside things
- Having a go (like driving the buses and trains at the Transport Museum)
- Interactive
- Leaflets telling you what you can see/where to go
- Listening to someone speaking
- Making some of the things they have on display
- Models (particularly working ones and ones they can move)
- My dad likes the café!
- Old exhibits (bones/mummies/dinosaurs)
- Passports
- Pictures (in colour whenever possible)
- Pressing buttons, especially soft rubbery ones
- Quizzes and competitions
- Rides
- Role play
- Simulators

- Sculptures
- Stamps/stickers to collect
- Statues
- Step into a hologram
- Touchable items
- Tour guides
- Trying it out yourself
- Videos
- Viewing screens and films
- Writing with old pens and using old tools

If they would be interested in finding out more about Brent, their home and their family

With the exception of the one child who would never want to go, they were all very interested in this.

If they would like the museum to be colourful and exciting or would prefer it to be relaxing and dark

They wanted a variety of both, and a well-supported idea was that the present should be bright and colourful and it should get darker and more relaxing as they went back in time.

Their ideas for what should be in the new museum (subsequent groups were then told the earlier ideas to see if they were supported by other children)

The children were really excited about the development and had a wide range of creative ideas. The notion of 3000 years really excited them and they wanted to find out more about the whole of Brent's history.

Their ideas (similar ideas have been grouped):-

Most supported ideas:

- There should be a leaflet telling you what to look for with a plan of the museum and stamper machines to collect stamps as you go round or a passport and stickers to collect
- The museum should have a timeline so that they clearly feel they are going back in time. They suggested that there should be an exhibition for every 100 years which changes colour (from bright for current getting darker as they go back in time), so they can see the differentiation. One group suggested the last room should be pitch black with the exhibits made from glow in the dark material

They wanted the same things covered in each period so they could contrast them and understand the changes, and felt this should include:-

- Artefacts
- Clothing (with the option of dressing up)
- Education
- Houses and buildings (miniature models like Beaconsfield and Legoland) and rooms they can go into and see/touch and the things they had in them – for example cutlery, crockery, washing boards, mangles etc
- Living conditions
- Religion
- Transport

They thought it **very important** that the time periods were not mixed up

- The River Brent was thought to be very important and they wanted to know about its use throughout history. The most ambitious suggestions centred

around creating a 'real' river through the museum that they could take boats along and a river ride like in larger museums/theme parks. Accepting that this was unlikely to be possible the children suggested that there should be a wooden 'boat' with seats that they could sit in and be surrounded on three sides by screens upon which could be projected the river so that they felt they were floating down the river, and that the pictures should go back in time showing how the river was used in different historical periods. Some groups suggested the floor could be mirrored so it felt like water reflecting back at them

- All the children thought it was really important to have information on immigration into Brent so they could get a feel of when their family might have come, and that older people in Brent should be filmed/recorded so they could hear it directly from them
- How Brent was affected by World Wars I and II, and how the people of Brent managed
- Older people in Brent recording their memories of Brent so that they are not lost
- A miniature Brent model. (One group suggested that they should have a model of the street that contains Mount Stewart School through the ages)
- A display under the floor covered in glass that they walked on, so they could see earlier times below them
- 'Bite-sized' written information – preferably creatively displayed. For example, a model house where you can pull out bricks and written on them will be short facts, or a shelf of mock books and as you pull out each book it has one fact on the cover
- A themed café, either with food from the different periods/ethnic groups in Brent or cakes in the shapes of artefacts in the museum. One group suggested it could be called 'Brentilicious', with things like Brent Salad, Kilburn Station Ice Cream etc. Another suggested a café with costumed staff, and the food made to be part of the learning. Another suggestion was cakes with facts iced onto them.
- Staff organising quizzes, dressed in costumes and acting in role Computers with multiple choice questions
- Exhibits with buttons to press to make things happen, or give you information
- A detailed 3D map of Brent
- An arts and crafts room where they can make things they've seen and where their creations can be displayed
- Headphones with spoken guide

Popular ideas:-

- How Brent developed. Why it is called Brent. What did the Romans call it? What was Brent like when their grandparents were children? What were the first buildings in Brent? What are the famous landmarks? Where do the names come from – for example why is Kilburn called Kilburn?
- Jobs in Brent through the ages, preferably with the ability for them to 'have a go'
- What Brent was like in the BC era
- An archaeological 'dig' where they could have a go and 'discover' things
- Weapons and tools used through the ages in Brent
- A ride through the ages of Brent
- A simulator to experience the history of Brent
- Viewings of films about Brent's history
- A transport through the ages ride
- Model cars showing the different cars used in Brent, and older forms of transport – should be able to play with them
- When things are too old to be touched replicas should be made so you can see the original and touch the replica
- Step into a hologram exhibit
- An outside area with a ride, and a picnic area
- A lift with glass walls that goes up through the ages

- A large section in the library of books about Brent – or a library section within the museum
- Maze of facts – have to find the answer to one question to be able to discover the next clue
- Gift shop – but not with boring things (pencils, pens), but with things that other places don't have, at pocket money prices of up to £5 with most items £2-£3. Have love heart sweets but with facts about Brent on them.
- Competitions
- Treasure/scavenger hunt
- 4D films about Brent
- A machine that stretches pennies and prints pictures of Brent onto them

Ideas from one or two groups of children (if the children who suggested these ideas were in the groups that were interviewed later in the day the earlier children would not have had a chance to hear their ideas and comment on them)

- Not to have two really interesting things next to each other as this builds up queues
- The children should have lessons so they know the information, then they should record it for the spoken guides
- Did the great fire of London affect Brent? If so, how? Were there other tragedies that affected Brent?
- Frames that look empty but when you get close you can see faces in them
- Statues/wax models of the Mayors of Brent through the ages showing their clothes
- Poor and rich Brent
- Needs to be the right temperature – not too hot or too cold
- Tokens that you use to 'pay' to get into each room with limited numbers allowed at a time to stop over-crowding
- Space for school trips – for eating, lunch box storage, coats etc
- Models of wildlife in Brent through the ages
- China models of the birds of Brent
- Hall of fame – famous Brent people
- Coins used in Brent through the ages – be able to hold them
- Sculptures of famous landmarks in Brent
- Make sure it is affordable – too expensive and people won't come. An alternative idea was for it to be free so that poor people in Brent could afford it, but with a donation box
- Have a charity box for donations for disabled people in Brent
- Phones through the ages
- Writing with old pens and using old tools
- An outside lake and picnic area
- Really old activities in Brent – for example was there chariot racing? If so could they have a go or could there be a simulator
- Sounds and smells of Brent through the ages
- Football in Brent
- A special day for disabled people to visit so they know they are special too
- Big piece floor jigsaw puzzle picture of Brent for small children
- Sell books about Brent, including pop-up books
- Timeline game – put things into the right order
- Beliefs and religions in Brent through the ages, including the development of the Hindu temple

Notes from the Draft Brent Museum and Archive Strategy History Society Meeting 7 April 2014

Present: Philip Grant, Chris Coates, Dilwyn Chambers, Margaret Pratt, Dave Unwin, Malcolm Barres-Baker, Robin Midwinter (Members of Wembley History or Willesden Local History Societies and or both)

Sue McKenzie, Neil Davies, Aine Ryan, Stephanie Alder (all Brent Council officers)

Consultation to date and the Gunning Principles

Neil Davies explained that “the development of the draft strategy was informed by a preliminary programme of consultation and a self assessment which included:

- Internal stakeholders - Regeneration and Major Projects, Children and Families, ITU, BACES and Legal and Democratic Services
- Wembley History Society and Willesden Local History Society
- External stakeholder focus group
- Museum of London
- National Archives
- Mount Stewart Junior School and St Mary’s Catholic Primary School
- Archives Visitor survey
- Best practice visits to other London boroughs

At the request of Philip Grant Neil went through the fundamental principles of a ‘proper’ consultation.

In a landmark case in 1985 (R v London Borough of Brent ex parte Gunning) Mr Stephen Sedley QC propounded a set of fundamental consultation principles that were adopted by the presiding judge. These Gunning (or Sedley) principles were confirmed as applicable to all consultations by the Court of Appeal in 2001 (Coughlan case).

The *Gunning* principles are that:

- (i) consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage;
- (ii) sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response;
- (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and
- (iv) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account.

The Civil Service Reform Plan published in 2012 outlined that the departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before. Brent has followed the best practice of 12 weeks. Findings from the consultation will be incorporated into the final version of the strategy. A consultation log will be produced and published on the council’s website logging all comments and queries.

Comment: Philip Grant said, with several other local history society members agreeing, that some decisions had already been taken, such as Sue McKenzie’s restructuring of museum and archives staff, which undermined proper consultation because that side of the proposals was no longer at a formative stage. In addition, the *Gunning* principles require that sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposals, to allow for intelligent consideration and response. It was felt that because of the lack of detail in the Draft Strategy this was not the case in this consultation.

Draft Museum and Archive Strategy

Sue Mckenzie set out the background and need for the strategy. "Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve, and provide access to the borough's history, providing enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all.

Heritage services face unprecedented challenges in today's economic climate. Maximising the accessibility of collections to demonstrate the value of museums and archives, challenging traditional ways of delivering services, and finding sustainable funding sources are unavoidable priorities.

However, these challenges also present opportunities to re-evaluate and re-model services for the better. This strategy sets out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience.

We have an amazing opportunity with the building of new museum and archive spaces in the new WG centre; we want to make the most of an opportunity that is unprecedented in today's economic climate and create an excellent service."

How we have consulted to date

Sue reiterated that "the development of the draft strategy was informed by a preliminary programme of consultation and a self assessment.

Sue then outlined the main findings from the consultation:

- A more proactive approach can be adopted for the acquisition and display of materials and objects from industries, businesses, schools and community organisations
- Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way
- Capacity to deliver service improvements can be achieved by strengthening collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. For example, volunteers could undertake a floor walking role in the museum
- Consideration should be given to renaming Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility Brent Museum and Local History Centre may generate more interest amongst non users of the service particularly younger people
- Workforce development is a priority for the Heritage sector as a whole in order for authorities to deliver seamless services to a diverse audience
- Young people like creative and interactive ways of finding out information e.g. touch screens, arts and craft activities and competitions

Consultation Plan

Sue went on to say that "A full consultation plan is an appendix to the draft strategy and incorporates the following elements

- Questionnaire and supporting documents to be available on the Consultation portal and key stakeholders notified of the consultation process as part of a communication campaign which will include the use of social media
- Hard copies of the consultation documentation available on request and from all Brent Libraries and Sports Centres
- Focus group meetings with Wembley History and Willesden Local History Societies and stakeholders- by invitation only.
- Attendance at three Brent Connects Forums (formerly Area Consultative Forums)
- BME and Multi-Faith Diversity groups notified of the consultation process at their February/March meetings and sent the strategy and supporting documents for

distribution via their electronic mailing lists. Documents will also be sent to the Voluntary Sector mailing list.

- Attendance at a Brent Youth Parliament meeting
- Two informal drop-in sessions at Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre, Stonebridge and BAR, Walm Lane, Willesden”

Vision and Objectives

Sue outlined the vision of the strategy:

To offer everyone a gateway to the people and places of the borough’s past and the chance to learn about, enjoy and celebrate Brent’s unique identity and heritage.

She went on to talk about the key objectives that were identified in order to achieve the vision:

Objectives

1. Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.
2. Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.
3. Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

Key Recommendations

Sue went on to outline the key recommendations to deliver the objectives:

- Open the new museum space and archives search room at The Library at Willesden Green
- Develop a joint collections policy to cover the acquisition, loan and disposal of museum and archives materials: an audit of the Archives collection; an action plan to complete the indexing and cataloguing of existing collections
- Develop a protocol for the indexing and cataloguing of new materials
- Devise a schedule of fixed term off site displays e.g. Brent Civic Centre and libraries.
- Produce a volunteer policy and recruit and train five volunteers to improve the customer offer and develop links with community groups
- Establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group to help inform the future development of services and act in an advocacy role
- Explore options for alternative governance arrangements
- Develop a schedule of collaborative projects with other authorities
- Implement recommendations of the London Archives project

Sue then posed the following questions and opened up to the room for further questions:

Questions:

1. We want to build the museum and archive collections so that they tell the story of all Brent's people, places and activities through the centuries, including modern day. Do you have any views on how we should do this?
2. Do you think we should change the name of the museum and archives service? What do you think we should call it?
3. What kind of subjects would you like to see covered in the exhibition space?

The following questions were posed by individual members of the History Societies:

Question: Was there something wrong with the way things were catalogued?

Answer: We are still awaiting the findings of the audit and acknowledge that there have been issues with Adlib. This is not a criticism of past work.

Question: Some of the comments in Sue McKenzie's introduction on funding and the current economic situation could be deemed negative. It would be useful to have some further detail on the funding issue?

Answer: We are trying to find a positive response to a negative situation. We don't know what our funding situation will be in 3-4 years time like all other council services therefore it is an appropriate time to investigate the alternatives. We are currently in the middle of a pan-London Archives project where Chief Librarians, Heads of Services are looking at a wider digitisation project with the aim of creating a London wide portal. It is cost effective to pool resources and expertise and this approach may also attract funders.

Question/ Statement: It is concerning that a review of a charging policy for the archives service is in the action plan. You don't have an acquisition's policy it is therefore a cheek to charge.

Answer: A review of the charging policy is appropriate as it is not sustainable to continue not charging in particular professional researchers.

Supplementary points on this question/statement: One history society member said that this answer suggested that there was no charging policy in the past, whereas the reason why there is little **income**, rather than no **charging policy**, is that very few inquiries require large periods of research by staff. Ms McKenzie responded to these concerns by admitting that there was already a charging policy and that there would be little real change. Several of the local history society members present made the point that a review of the charging policy was therefore likely to really mean a reduction in levels of free service.

Question/Statement: The statement 'Produce an Acquisition and Disposal Policy' the word disposal is worrying. Another point is that books are becoming less used, libraries are dying out. Money could be used to improve other services including Museums and Archives.

Answer: This is a standard part of the work of the museums and archives. There maybe occasions where need to dispose due to a finite amount of space. Artefacts are appraised based on their historical value. Donors would always be notified and artefacts can be offered to other museums and organisations.

Question: Do you have an idea of the size of the floor space?

Answer: Floor areas are the same as Willesden as per the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) condition.

Question/Statement: The Archives Visitor Survey projection in Appendix 2 of the strategy document is deeply flawed and needs to be removed. Local history society members were particularly concerned that the Survey had been used for the draft Strategy to **estimate** a figure of only 245 visitors per year to the Archives, when **actual** figures showing around 2,000 visitors were known to exist. The survey had a sample size of only 33 completed forms, which led one member to comment that he represented the 3% of Archives visitors from the NW9 postcode area, but if he had completed one of the forms on each of his visits during the survey period (instead of just a single form), then the results would have shown nearly 9% of Archives visitors from NW9.

Answer: We will check the report again and amend accordingly and resubmit on the Council's consultation portal. The amended document will be distributed at future consultation meetings and events.

Question/ Statement: The Draft Strategy includes a number of case studies, some based on fact finding visits, some of these are not relevant e.g. Manchester. There were many good things already being done at Brent Museum and Archives which could and should be reflected in the Strategy, as case studies of existing "strengths" which Brent's Heritage Service can build on.

Answer: The points have been noted and will be incorporated into the final version of the strategy. The case studies have been selected as we want to look outwards to showcase the potential.

Question: Does it make sense to look at future governance at this stage? One local history society member queried the order in which things were being done, suggesting that governance surely came first and strategy should then developed afterwards, rather than possible changes in governance being included in a strategy.

Answer: It is necessary to look at different governance arrangements e.g. trust, tri-borough at this stage due to the current economic situation. An options paper will be presented to Councillors who would ultimately make the decision about any future arrangements.

Comment/Questions: Philip Grant said that comments submitted as part of the exercise with local history societies in autumn 2013 were supposed to help the Brent team develop the Draft Museum and Archives Strategy; it was very disappointing that this Draft Strategy did not reflect some of the clear pointers given in detailed comments which he had provided in November 2013. Why was this comments document not included as part of the Preliminary Consultation notes at Appendix 2 of the Draft Strategy documents?

It had already been commented that the Draft Strategy gives no indication of what it proposes that the future Archives service will be, even though the January 2014 preliminary version of the Draft Strategy contained a note saying: 'SM to add a paragraph on Archives provision in the new building'. It also included a sentence about a comprehensive enquiry service- why was this deleted?

Archives / Local History Centre, which is meant to be the first port of call for anyone interested in the local history of any part of Brent. A good public service here will be an essential part of the “offer” at the new Centre in Willesden Green, which will raise the profile of Brent’s Heritage when it opens in Spring 2015.

There were a number of further specific comments under this section of his November 2013 document about opening hours and the number, knowledge and personal skills of staff available to deal with customer enquiries, and the need to provide at least some general public service before the new facilities at Willesden Green open in 2015, which should have been reflected in the Draft Strategy going out for consultation and should certainly be part of the Final Strategy.

Answer: We continue to be committed to an excellent public service and we must also recognise the need to improve it by increasing access through better catalogues, indexes and online resources. The comments document supplied in November 2013 will be posted on the council’s consultation portal and more detail on the archives service will be incorporated into a final version of the strategy.

Question: Please provide a copy of the Survive and Thrive report:

Answer: A copy will be sent as requested.

Note: At the end of the meeting Sue Mckenzie said that a number of personal comments about her had been made during the meeting. She reiterated her commitment to providing the best museum and archives service possible for Brent. She also pointed out to those present that personal attacks were unprofessional and inappropriate.

Draft Museum and Archive Strategy Consultation Stakeholder meeting Notes- 15 April 2015

Attendees: Rhoda Ibrahim (RI) – Somali Advice and Forum For Information.
Nekane Cherrie (NC) – Brent Resident, Geoffrey Hewlett (GH)- Local Historian and
Tina Morton (TM)-National Archives
Stephanie Alder, Neil Davies (ND) and Sue McKenzie(SM) (All Brent Council Officers)

Consultation to date

Neil Davies explained that “the development of the draft strategy was informed by a preliminary programme of consultation and a self assessment which included:

- Internal stakeholders - Regeneration and Major Projects, Children and Families, ITU, BACES and Legal and Democratic Services
- Wembley History Society and Willesden Local History Society
- External stakeholder focus group
- Museum of London
- National Archives
- Mount Stewart Junior School and St Mary’s Catholic Primary School
- Archives Visitor survey
- Best practice visits to other London boroughs

Draft Museum and Archive Strategy

Sue Mckenzie set out the background and need for the strategy. “Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve, and provide access to the borough’s history, providing enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all.

Heritage services face unprecedented challenges in today’s economic climate. Maximising the accessibility of collections to demonstrate the value of museums and archives, challenging traditional ways of delivering services, and finding sustainable funding sources are unavoidable priorities.

However, these challenges also present opportunities to re-evaluate and re-model services for the better. This strategy sets out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience.

We have an amazing opportunity with the building of new museum and archive spaces in the new WG centre; we want to make the most of an opportunity that is unprecedented in today’s economic climate and create an excellent service.”

How we have consulted to date

Sue reiterated that “the development of the draft strategy was informed by a preliminary programme of consultation and a self assessment.

Sue then outlined the main findings from the consultation:

- A more proactive approach can be adopted for the acquisition and display of materials and objects from industries, businesses, schools and community organisations
- Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way

- Capacity to deliver service improvements can be achieved by strengthening collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. For example, volunteers could undertake a floor walking role in the museum
- Consideration should be given to renaming Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility Brent Museum and Local History Centre may generate more interest amongst non users of the service particularly younger people
- Workforce development is a priority for the Heritage sector as a whole in order for authorities to deliver seamless services to a diverse audience
- Young people like creative and interactive ways of finding out information e.g. touch screens, arts and craft activities and competitions

Consultation Plan

Sue went on to say that “A full consultation plan is an appendix to the draft strategy and incorporates the following elements

- Questionnaire and supporting documents to be available on the Consultation portal and key stakeholders notified of the consultation process as part of a communication campaign which will include the use of social media
- Hard copies of the consultation documentation available on request and from all Brent Libraries and Sports Centres
- Focus group meetings with Wembley History and Willesden Local History Societies and stakeholders- by invitation only.
- Attendance at three Brent Connects Forums (formerly Area Consultative Forums)
- BME and Multi-Faith Diversity groups notified of the consultation process at their February/March meetings and sent the strategy and supporting documents for distribution via their electronic mailing lists. Documents will also be sent to the Voluntary Sector mailing list.
- Attendance at a Brent Youth Parliament meeting
- Two informal drop-in sessions at Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre, Stonebridge and BAR, Walm Lane, Willesden”

Vision and Objectives

Sue outlined the vision of the strategy:

To offer everyone a gateway to the people and places of the borough’s past and the chance to learn about, enjoy and celebrate Brent’s unique identity and heritage.

She went on to talk about the key objectives that were identified in order to achieve the vision:

Objectives

4. Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.
5. Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.
6. Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

Key Recommendations

Sue went on to outline the key recommendations to deliver the objectives:

- Open the new museum space and archives search room at The Library at Willesden Green
- Develop a joint collections policy to cover the acquisition, loan and disposal of museum and archives materials: an audit of the Archives collection; an action plan to complete the indexing and cataloguing of existing collections
- Develop a protocol for the indexing and cataloguing of new materials
- Devise a schedule of fixed term off site displays e.g. Brent Civic Centre and libraries.
- Produce a volunteer policy and recruit and train five volunteers to improve the customer offer and develop links with community groups
- Establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group to help inform the future development of services and act in an advocacy role
- Explore options for alternative governance arrangements
- Develop a schedule of collaborative projects with other authorities
- Implement recommendations of the London Archives project

Questions/Comments and Answers

NC Comment/Observations: People are interested in sports e.g. how Wembley Stadium was built. You should interact with other venues- RAF Museum in Barnet and Wembley Stadium. Community would love to see/learn about buildings. Volunteer Lady is a tour guide and she knows that people would be interested. She thinks that the community should be engaged. Wembley Stadium didn't know about the BEE exhibition.

SM Answer: Yes, it definitely should be about interacting.

GH Comments/ Question: Books on local history still sell very well- it is a sign that people are still interested. He has a series of interviews (oral histories 1972-1987) about life in Edwardian Kingsbury e.g. Queen Victoria's funeral. In terms of information there is a lot that can be done- there is a lot of information out there such as the elephant being walked down the road. Gives slide show presentations to schools such as the Welsh Harp and was interested to know what schools we were working with. Exciting as a volunteer- the recovery of the Brondesbury Road Book 1789- found all the paperwork in Washington DC- hopes it is still in the museum. Architect Humphrey Repton for Fryent Country Park. Would be prepared to loan out the book for anyone who is interested. Will we make genealogy websites available?

SM Answer: We already do- Ancestry online is available in every library.

GH Comment: I have 25,000 slides of the local area- made a list, wants them to be used- if there is anything he can do to help he will. I am currently working on a book about landscaping and parks- he's looking at issues in Harrow as well as Brent. Will help to sell for profit. I have been looking at Queens Park and at how green spaces have come about. Walking with the Civic Trust (Open House) advocates Historic Walks.

There is a lot out there that people don't know but would like.

TM Comment: There are lots of example templates we can use such as that at Tower Hamlets. Look for themes- always a good place to start to engage communities' interest. Exhibitions can highlight particular collections specifically. Wouldn't change the name. Talk to people who have interacted with the service in the past- they will remember good things to use. Collections audit will highlight. The strategy is outward looking. You don't want the BMA to be isolated. After the action plan is time to be specific. The context of the action plan makes sense. Action plan is ambitious for such a new team. As part of my work at the National Archives, I am preparing a guidance paper on governance.

GH Comment/Question: Did anyone see the BBC programme about the Wembley tower that was on earlier in the year? I have a wide range of information about the Buxton landscape:

SM Answer: We can add this very useful information to our guide.

Question by Neil Davies: Do you think we should change the name of the service?

Answers: GH- Thinks a quirky name wouldn't make sense in 10 years.

SM- It is not what it is called really, it is what you do with it.

RI- Concept is always difficult to understand. Libraries, yes but nobody in my Somalian community really knows about Museums and Archives. It is more about letting people know about what we do. It is more about advertisement and about learning history.

NC- Don't get rid of the word museum.

Question by Neil Davies- How about Museum and History Centre?

NC- We may never agree.

GH- We have to put the time and effort in for the public, which is what is important.

SM- Yes, We need to build up the service.

TM Comment- Widening access. You need to build up the resources- balance between digitisation and cataloguing- opens up collections more than you think.

SM Answer- This is why we are joining forces with Aim25 and the other London Boroughs to give a much wider appeal.

GH Question: Will we still need to book appointments to see material?

SM Answer: We are still working on this and need to strike a balance between access and what can be made available on the day with no appointments.

Neil mentioned key documents such as Archives in the 21st century. The best services, the most forward looking are very much linked to the communities. He went on to ask what people thought about how ambitious we should be. A lot of people never forgave the move from the Grange Museum and how there were no welcoming members of staff. It is difficult for new staff to do this in the current economic situation- we could use volunteers.

NC Answer: Human interaction is vital. People expect a little bit more- they want and need this type of interaction. I don't know how this work on a practical level. Perhaps it could be offered at the weekend rather than the weekdays.

SM Answer: I have been to the National Trust where there was a volunteer in each room.

TM Answer: Look carefully at what you offer volunteers- they need training and

managing. There are models out there to follow. Some people volunteer just to be an ambassador.

GH Answer: RAF Museum is mainly staffed by volunteers. Perhaps, you should contact them.

NC Comment: Another way to make it sustainable is to have a gift shop. Local people bring families who have travelled from abroad. Would like mementos example could be Wembley Stadium.

SM- We are looking at selling books online.

NC- Using museums as multi-use facilities for hiring.

TM- Suggests Museum later- could offer something more bespoke.

ND comment- It would be good to establish link with the Higher Education sector:

TM- I will send some documents. Brent have some collections that be of great interest to student and those in Higher Education.

ND- One of our local Councillors mentioned that there is not much on 3rd or 4th generation Brent.

TM- We should build up collections with all the different communities if at all possible.

Draft Museum and Archive Strategy Consultation Survey Findings Report

Introduction

Public consultation on Brent Council's draft Museum and Archives Strategy took place between 31 March to 20th June 2014. The consultation offers users the chance to help shape future service provision.

The draft strategy unites museum and archives provision in Brent under a single vision, set of objectives and action plan. It is considered that the success of the strategy depends on the support from those with an interest in Brent Museum and Archives Service.

Thirty-four (34) people or representatives of organisations responded to the consultation.

Note that sample sizes were small over much of the survey. In the results below, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

A summary and analysis of the responses is provided here. Where the 'Response rate' is indicated, this is the percentage of total respondents who answered the question.

Respondents were provided with opportunities to provide further comments. A subjective analysis is included in this report. Be aware that as respondents may have commented on more than one issue, that the number of comments may exceed the number of respondents. Note also that some of the comments covered a number of aspects, for example commenting within a single comments on both the wording of the draft Strategy and on one or more substantive issues. Interpreting the focus and priority of the comments is subjective.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESULTS

Results

The large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with:

- **Section A: Vision and Objectives:** The overarching vision of this strategy is 'To offer everyone a gateway to the people and places of the borough's past and the chance to learn about, enjoy and celebrate Brent's unique identity and heritage'.
- **Objective 1: Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.**
- **Objective 2: Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.**
- **Objective 3: Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.**
- **To what extent do you agree that the action plan in Appendix 3 has covered the key issues?**

- **Does the strategy cover all the key aspects of museum and archives provision?**

Comments: Comments were received from all 34 respondents and these are summarised in the main section of this report.

Have you visited Brent Museum and Brent Archives service in the last two years?

Most respondents had used Brent Museum services during the past year, though a large minority had not. A third (35%) of respondents had visited Brent Archive Services during the past two years. The large majority of respondents used the Museum services either several times a year or less than once a year. For the Archives, half of respondents used the service less than once a year. However, approximately a fifth of respondents were either weekly, or more frequent visitors to either the Museum or the Archives. Just over a third of respondents had visited the Brent Archives website in the last two years.

Would you be interested in being a Brent Museum / Archives volunteer or 'Friend'?

Over a third of respondents would be interested in volunteering. Over half of respondents would be interested in being a Friend of Brent Museum and Archives.

Organisations: 18% of respondents indicated that they were responding on behalf of an organisation.

Analysis of the postcodes indicates* that of the respondents, a third (33%) were resident in Willesden, and half (53%) were resident in the south of Brent. That compared with 40% who were resident in the north of the Borough. One respondent (7%) was resident outside of Brent – in Harrow.

*Assumes that those residing in NW2 and NW9 postal districts are within the Brent Borough boundaries.

What is your sex? Approximately half of respondents were female (53%) and half were male (47%).

What is your age group? Respondents were predominately in the older age ranges. Over forty per cent (41%) were aged 55-64 and over half (59%) were in the 55-74 age range. Ninety-six (97%) of respondents were aged 35 or over. No respondents were aged 24 or under.

Please state your ethnicity? Approximately three-quarters of respondents (75%) were of the White British or broad White groups (71%). Over a fifth (22%) of respondents were of the broad Asian group. The respondents differ markedly from the population of the Borough.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Six per cent (6%) of respondents indicated that they have a disability, while the large majority (94%) did not consider that they had a disability.

What is your religion / belief? Approximately half (48%) of respondents were Christian, slightly higher than their representation in the Brent population. Sample sizes were small, though on the basis of the responses received, nearly a third (30%) were of no religious belief, which was higher than for the Brent population; while Hindu and Muslim respondents were under-represented compared with the Brent population.

What is your sexual orientation? A high proportion of respondents either did not answer or preferred not to say. All (100%) of the other respondents indicated that they were Heterosexual/straight.

DETAIL

Questions 1; and 2 (comments)

Section A: Vision and Objectives

The overarching vision of this strategy is 'To offer everyone a gateway to the people and places of the borough's past and the chance to learn about, enjoy and celebrate Brent's unique identity and heritage'.

To what extent do you agree with the vision?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	65%
Agree	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	9%
Total	100%

The large majority of respondents strongly agreed with the vision.

Ten respondents provided further comments.

Eight of the comments concerned the wording and layout of the Strategy; one that there should be no political bias; one that the Strategy should be considered in relation to the Libraries; one that the service should be entirely free at the point of use; one that physical access to the archives should be maintained if part of the service was put online; and two comments concerned the priority that Brent was giving to heritage, museums and archives.

Questions 3; and 4 (comments)

Section B: Objectives

Objective 1: Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.

To what extent do you agree with Objective 1?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	65%
Agree	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	9%
Total	100%

The large majority of respondents strongly agreed with the objectives.

Eight respondents provided further comments including, four comments on the collections policy; three comments related to physical and other access to the collections; two to cataloguing; two to staff knowledge and training; one to access to Council Planning documents; one to lack of information regarding the design of the new Centre; one to charging policy; and one to the wording of the consultation / draft

Strategy.

Questions 5: and 6 (comments)

Objective 2: Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.

To what extent do you agree with Objective 2?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	53%
Agree	32%
Neither agree nor disagree	6%
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	9%
Total	100%

Over half of respondents strongly agreed with 'Objective 2' and in total the large majority of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed.

Eleven respondents provided further comments.

Three comments related to the wording of the consultation and draft Strategy; two comments concerned outreach practice and access; one comment suggested that local schools should be invited to workshops where they could handle exhibits; one comment that the Strategy should be politically neutral; one commented on concern about the possible risks of private sector contracts for managing museum and archive services; one comment concerned staff policy; and one on the need to provide education on local history to sectors of the Brent community.

Questions 7; and 8 (comments)

Objective 3: Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

To what extent do you agree with Objective 3?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	50%
Agree	35%
Neither agree nor disagree	3%
Disagree	3%
Strongly disagree	9%
Total	100%

Half of respondents strongly agreed with Objective 3 and the large majority either agreed or strongly agreed.

Thirteen respondents provided further comments that included two comments concerned the wording of the draft Strategy and one that the Objective was not clear; one comment concerned the Council's priority for heritage, museum and archives; three concerned finance (that the Strategy promoted financial sustainability, that it did not promote financial sustainability; and that finance should not be the main factor for the Strategy); one welcomed the possibility of a professional research service; one comment concerned the role of volunteers; and one comment that historical information

should be provided to elected Members.

Questions 9; and 10 (comments)

To what extent do you agree that the action plan in Appendix 3 has covered the key issues?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	21%
Agree	47%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	12%
Total	100%

While the majority either agreed or strongly agreed, this question had the lowest positive response of the questions within the Questionnaire.

Comments generated from questions 10, 11 and 12 are considered at question 12.

Questions 11 and 11a (comments)

Does the strategy cover all the key aspects of museum and archives provision?

Response rate: 88%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	73%
No	27%
Total	100%

The large majority of respondents agreed that the strategy covered all key aspects of museum and archive provision.

Comments generated from questions 10, 11 and 12 are considered at question 12.

Question 12

Do you have any other comments on the draft strategy? If yes, please comments below.

Response rate: 32%.

In total 34 people provided comments on the Action Plan (question 10), general comments (question 11) or any other comments (question 12). Some of the main issues are summarised below. For further information please on the detailed comments and responses please log onto [http://brent-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/ens/libraries_arts_and_heritage/draftmuseumarchive strategy](http://brent-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/ens/libraries_arts_and_heritage/draftmuseumarchive_strategy)

Twenty (20) comments were concerned about aspects of the wording of the draft Strategy; ten (10) comments concerned staffing policy; five on physical access to the museum and library including suggestions for part of the materials to be available elsewhere in the Borough; five on various aspects of the implementation of the

Strategy; four on governance issues; four comments concerned charging policy; four the role of volunteers; four on the relationship of the service to sectors of the community; three on the needs for on-going user consultation; three on the proposed naming of the Willesden Library e-address and the name of the Museum; one on the role of research; one comment concerned the historical periods that would be covered; while one commented that illustrating similarities between Brent and other areas was as important as highlighting the differences.

Question 13a

Have you visited Brent Museum in the last two years?

Response rate: 100%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	59%
No	41%
Total	100%

Most respondents to the questionnaire had used Brent Museum services during the past year, though a large minority had not.

Have you visited Brent Archives service in the last two years?

Response rate: 91%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	35%
No	65%
Total	100%

However, only a third (35%) of respondents had visited Brent Archive Services during the past two years and the majority had not used the service.

Question 13b

On average, how frequently have you visited during the past two years?

	Museum	Archives
Response rate	62%	41%
More than once a week	5%	14%
Weekly	14%	7%
Monthly	0%	7%
Several times a year	38%	29%
Less than once a year	43%	43%
Total	100%	100%

The large majority of respondents used the Museum or Archive services either several times a year or less than once a year. For the Archives, half of respondents used the service less than once a year. However, approximately a fifth of respondents were either weekly, or more frequent visitors to either the Museum or the Archives.

Question 14

Have you visited the Brent Archives website in the last two years?

Response rate: 97 %

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	42%
No	58%
Total	100%

Just over a third of respondents had visited the Brent Archives website in the last two years, while the majority two-thirds had not.

Question 15a

Would you be interested in being a Brent Museum / Archives volunteer ?

Response rate: 88%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	37%
No	63%
Total	100%

Over a third of respondents would be interested in volunteering.

Question 15b

Would you be interested in being a Friend of Brent Museum and Archives?

Response rate: 91%

Answer	Percentage of respondents
Yes	58%
No	42%
Total	100%

Over half of respondents would be interested in being a Friend of Brent Museum and Archives.

Question 16

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation please provide the following contact details:

For question 16, the percentage figures are presented as a total of all 34 respondents for each sub-question.

Response rate: 18%

	Percentage of respondents
Name	18%
Organisation	18%
Postcode	?
Email	18%
Telephone number	9%

If you are responding as an individual please provide the following details:

Response rate: 62%

	Percentage of respondents
Name	62%
Address	59%
Postcode	59%
Email	50%
Telephone number	38%

Analysis of the postcodes indicates* that of the respondents, a third (33%) were resident in Willesden, and half (53%) were resident in the south of Brent. That compared with 40% who were resident in the north of the Borough. One respondent (7%) was resident outside of Brent – in Harrow.

*Assumes that those residing in NW2 and NW9 postal districts are within the Brent Borough boundaries.

Question 17

What is your sex?

Response rate: 94%

Approximately half of respondents were female (53%) and half were male (47%). Most questionnaire surveys of cultural services undertaken by Brent Council during recent years, have typically elicited a higher return rate from female as compared with male users.

Question 18

What is your age group?

Response rate: 100%

Age group	Percentage
Under 16	0%
16-24	0%
25-34	3%
35-44	15%
45-54	15%
55-64	41%
65-74	18%
75+	9%
Total	100%

Respondents to the Draft Museum and Archives Strategy consultation were predominately in the older age ranges. Over forty per cent (41%) were aged 55-64 and over half (59%) were in the 55-74 age range. Ninety-six (97%) of respondents were aged 35 or over. No respondents were aged 24 or under.

Question 19

Please state your ethnicity?

Response rate: 97%

Ethnic group	Percentage of respondents	Percentage of the Brent population at the 2011

		Census
White: British	66%	18 %
White: Irish	3%	4 %
White: other	6%	14 %
Black: African		8 %
Black: Caribbean		8 %
Black: other		3 %
Asian: Bangladeshi	9%	< 1%
Asian: Pakistani	3%	5 %
Asian: Indian	9%	19 %
Asian: Chinese		1 %
Asian: Other		9 %
Mixed White / Black Caribbean		1 %
Mixed White / Black African		1 %
Mixed White / Asian		1 %
Mixed: other		2 %
Other	3%	6 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Comparisons for the broad ethnic groups are presented in the table below:

Ethnic group	Percentage of respondents	Percentage of the Brent population at the 2011 Census
White	75%	36 %
Black		19 %
Asian	22%	34 %
Mixed	3	5 %
Other	4%	6 %
Total	100%	100%

Approximately three-quarters of respondents (75%) were of the White British or broad White groups (71%). Over a fifth (22%) of respondents were of the broad Asian group, including 9% Asian Bangladeshi. For the broad groups the figures are similar to that for the Brent Archives Visitor Survey undertaken during February-April 2013, albeit the small sample sizes, particularly for the individual ethnic groups, means that detailed analysis is not valid. For example, the Brent Archives Visitor Survey recorded some use amongst the Black group, and none of the Asian Bangladeshi groups.

Nevertheless, the responses to the current consultation were predominately from the White group, and differ markedly from the population of the Borough.

Question 20a

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Response Rate: 94%

Six per cent (6%) of respondents indicated that they have a disability, while the large majority (94%) did not consider that they had a disability.

Question 20b

In order to help us improve our services and meet your needs please indicate which impairment reflects your disability?

Response rate: 9%.

This question elucidated more responses than that for disability itself (question 20a); and some respondents had more than one impairment. The responses were: Hearing (3%), Long-term illness (3%), Mental Health (3%), Physical impairment (3%), and Prefer not to say (3%).

Question 21

What is your religion / belief?

Response rate: 79%.

Religion	Percentage of respondents who stated a religion	Percentage of the Brent population at the 2011 Census
Christian	48%	44 %
Buddhist		1 %
Hindu	11%	19 %
Jewish	4%	2 %
Muslim	7%	20 %
Sikh		1 %
Other		1%
No religious belief	30%	11 %
Total	100 %	100 %

Approximately half (48%) of respondents were Christian, slightly higher than their representation in the Brent population. Sample sizes were small, though on the basis of the responses received, nearly a third (30%) were of no religious belief, which was higher than for the Brent population; while Hindu and Muslim respondents were under-represented compared with the Brent population.

Question 22

What is your sexual orientation?

Response rate: 52%.

A high proportion of respondents either did not answer or preferred not to say. All (100%) of the other respondents indicated that they were Heterosexual/straight.



Brent Museum and Archives Strategy

Consultation:

Group Interviews/Focus Groups

Report by Barry Creasy



Brent Museum and Archives Strategy Consultation

Group Interviews/Focus Groups

Report by Barry Creasy

Background and Introduction

Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve and provide free access to the borough's past, offering enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all. In the context of this, in 2014, the London Borough of Brent drafted a strategy for improving its museums and archives service that had the following vision:

“Brent's museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities.”

It is proposed that the vision would be realised through three objectives:

- Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by caring for the collections, telling their stories and making them available to all
- Increase the scope and use of the collections through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners
- Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

In 2014 Brent carried out a questionnaire-based consultation on the draft strategy with the general population. In addition to this, and in order to glean more detailed information (particularly from identified target groups of residents), in September 2014, the Libraries, Arts and Heritage service of Brent Council commissioned a series of focus groups/group interviews to glean data on what residents understood about museums and archives, and how they felt about them, with a view to informing what is to be delivered in the new building. The three areas for exploration in these groups were:

- 1) What will make their communities engage with the museum and archives?
- 2) What kind of subjects would they like to see covered in our exhibition programmes?
- 3) How we can make our collections more relevant and how we can gain the trust of communities so that they will donate material to the collections?

Four groups were set up with different target sample sectors of the population as follows:

Group	Demographic	Number in group
I	Retired Irish members of the Brent community living in a sheltered housing project (Innisfree)	14
S	Somali members of the Brent community	8
C	A sub-set of Brent's citizen's panel, containing a mix of demographics (but with a heavy bias to white European)	9
G	Indian (primarily Gujarati) members of the Brent community	17

Each of the sessions lasted around two hours, and consisted of a series of focused questions (based around the three areas outlined above), to which the groups were asked to provide answers; responses occurred either on an individual basis, or as a group consensus arising from discussion. The groups were chaired by an independent facilitator, who recorded, transcribed, coded and analysed the outcomes.

The questions asked were around people's experiences of museums and archives, in particular those in Brent; they were asked to consider what archives and museums in Brent might contain, and what services (in particular outreach services) they would like to see from such organisations. They were additionally asked whether they might consider donating materials to a museum or an archive. A copy of the detailed question schedule is attached at Annex A, and a copy of the list of proposed areas of work is attached at Annex B.

Findings

Caveat

Two of the groups (S and G) had limited facility with English, and, in both cases, the session was mediated through a translator. It was not, therefore, possible for the facilitator to capture the discussion, and it was necessary to rely on the translator's summary.

It should be noted that, as these were focus groups/group interviews, the data that they supplied cannot be seen as statistically representative of any of the population or sub-populations of Brent; it is simply indicative of the views of that particular group.

How would you describe a museum and archives?

All of the groups identified that a museum was somewhere that objects and artefacts of the past/historical objects were kept; two people indicated that current items might be kept there. Three groups (I, C, G) also indicated that a museum was a way of seeing how life was lived in the past.

"It's a place where they have all valuable antiques and things of the past" [I]

"It gives an idea of what was used in the ancient period – the olden days; before us" [G]

"A museum is where you keep history" [S]

Group C, in particular, also saw a museum as an active space, where learning took place:

“A living space – up-to-date and constantly changing” [C]

“A place of learning” [C]

“A space of discovery” [C]

Groups I and C indicated that archives were where documentary evidence was kept; in general, groups S and G saw the difference between an archive and a museum as one of age in terms of objects kept (seeing an archive as for more ancient materials). It is possible that this difference in perception is down to language, and the very specific meaning of the word ‘archive’ in English. One person in group G, however, indicated that an archive would be somewhere you would go to research family history.

“Written literature” [I]

“Microfiche” [I]

“Records – sources” [C]

“Photographs” [C]

Where they keep old things – things from long time ago [S]

Something prevalent during our great-grandfather’s time and older [G]

A couple of members of group C also saw an archive as where things not of immediate relevance, or things that were more difficult to find were kept.

Do you currently visit museums or archives?

Groups C and I were the most regular museums/archive visitors. Group I had a regular programme of visits that included sporting stadiums, the seaside, and museums, and they usually went as a group; this programme involved a museum visit about every 6 months. Some members of the group also visited museums individually, or as couples. Museum visits in group C varied; all indicated that they had been to a museum at least once in the last year, some much more frequently. Four people mentioned undertaking archive research at Kew/the National Maritime Museum/the Imperial War Museum/the Army Museum/the London Metropolitan Archives.

Of group G, eight people indicated having visited a museum once in the last year, and one person indicated having visited a museum around 15 years ago; the others had never visited. In group S, four people indicated they had been to a museum at some point (although not necessarily in the last year) – these included the Natural History Museum, the V&A, the British Museum and a museum in East London.

Which cultural organisations in Brent do you visit?

Brent Museum

A few of group I knew about this and had visited; one mentioned the cinema there, and another mentioned an exhibition of life in the 1950s. Two from group S had been in the long past. Around half of group C had been, and two from group G had been (one 40 years previously).

Tricycle Theatre

No-one in group G had been to the Tricycle; a few knew where it was, but the majority not. One member of group S had been. All of group C knew of the theatre, and the majority had been there. All of group I knew about the theatre, and around half indicated they'd seen a performance there.

Encee Academy

Only one person (group C) in the entire exercise knew of the Encee Academy.

Lexi cinema

Around half of group I knew of the Lexi, and a couple had been; two in group S knew where it was, most of group C had heard of it, but only a couple of people had been; no-one in group G had been, although a couple had heard of it.

East Lane Theatre

No-one in any of the groups had heard of the East Lane theatre.

Brent Temples/synagogues etc

Group I, as part of their regular programme of visits, had visited the synagogue in Sudbury, and planned to visit some other temples/religious buildings in the borough; several indicated they wished to visit the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir temple in Neasden. A couple of people in group S knew of religious buildings of various faiths, but no-one had been to them. One member of group C was not interested in religious buildings; others had visited the temple in Kingsbury, a mosque in Chichele road and St Sebastian's church (in the context of cultural, rather than religious visits). Group G regularly visited Hindu temples all over the borough to worship; a couple had also visited churches and Buddhist temples (as cultural visits), and one person mentioned visiting a Sikh gurdwara.

Exhibitions in libraries

Two people in group I mentioned this, but no others in any of the other groups.

Private galleries/exhibitions

One participant in group S mentioned visiting one in Harlesden; a visit to a private exhibition at The Tricycle was mentioned by a member of group C.

Reasons why/why not

Two groups (C and I) mentioned that they visited exhibitions because they were free; curiosity/the educational aspect was also mentioned by participants in groups C, I and G. Groups C and I also articulated that visiting museums was about making themselves aware of their own (or others') cultural identity in Brent.

“As far as Innisfree is concerned, it's about making people aware of their sense of identity as Irish people – it's an Irish identity, but it's also about recognising the contributions they have made” [I]

All groups mentioned that they went to cultural events/exhibitions to enjoy themselves (entertaining children was also mentioned in this context, by group S); group G primarily visited temples for worship and to socialise.

“They are the bread and butter of life – the jam as well” [C]

Members of group I at this point also mentioned the reduction in spending on cultural activities due to funding cuts, and, in particular, indicated their displeasure at Brent's cutting funding to the annual St Patrick's Day parade in the borough.

Do you visit Willesden Green library/Wembley Civic Centre?

Willesden Green

About half of group I had visited, two from group S, seven from group C (one had visited the old Wembley library) and two from group G (plus one who visited 40 years ago).

Wembley Civic Centre

All of group G had visited; of group C, four out of the nine hadn't visited before the evening of the focus group (the group was held at the Civic Centre); four of group S had visited and nine of group I had visited.

Reasons why/whynot

Reasons for not visiting either centre were primarily geographical – it was not local to them (this was particularly the case with Willesden Green). The Wembley Civic Centre is a hub for other activities and areas of life (e.g. housing benefit, registry office), and it is therefore more frequently visited. The four members of group S who had visited Willesden Green indicated that they liked the varying exhibitions of Brent communities. Group C participants mentioned the other facilities at Willesden Green as positive reasons for visiting (cinema, café etc.).

What was the last exhibition you visited?

Participants in group G were unable to answer this question. Members of group I had recently been on a group visit to view the facades of buildings around Euston (including The Wellcome Foundation Friends House, University College), and four members of group S had been to the exhibition of Somali artefacts at the Civic Centre. Individual responses to this question were many and varied:

The Geffrye Museum [I]

Willesden library [I]

Poole in Dorset – people and how they lived [I]

Portsmouth naval museum [I]

The V&A [I]

Imperial War Museum [I]

British Museum [I]

Family Records Centre [I]

Cathedral at St Alban's [I]

Emerald Stadium (Irish football) [I]

National Railway Museum [I]

National Trust houses [I]

Madame Tussauds [S]

British Library comic exhibition [C]

National Portrait Gallery [C]

Titanic exhibition in Belfast [C]

Livery Companies halls (Watermen, Mansion House, Apothecaries) [C]

Burlington House at Open House Day [C]

Maritime Museum [C]

Natural History Museum [C]

Kenwood House [C]

RA Summer Exhibition [C]

Tate Modern [C]

National Gallery [C]

The reasons given were mostly because of personal interest; one person went on a family outing, and another person (in group C) arranges regular trips for a group. One participant in group C nearly always drops into a museum or gallery when in town.

Have you visited the current exhibition at the Civic Centre?

(Northwest London Somali Project, an exhibition that captures the lives and the experience of the Somali community in Brent in the form of oral history and photography)

Apart from the four members of group S (see above) who had been as a group trip, only one person from all four groups (group C) had been to the exhibition – it was visited on the way to the focus group held at the Civic Centre. Two or three people who visited the Civic Centre regularly, but who had not visited the exhibition (groups C and G) commented that it was very badly signposted, and that they had seen no publicity.

What sorts of things do you think Brent Museum & Archives has?

All four groups suggested everyday objects of the past, and groups I, C and G related these to the way people lived on past times; groups I, C and G mentioned objects/materials relating to the history of Brent. Groups I and G mentioned architectural materials (designs of houses, plans etc.), and groups C and G mentioned natural history/archaeological/prehistoric specimens. Specific mentions are listed below under categories; most of them were made as individual suggestions.

The home

Domestic recreation [I]

Tin baths [G and I]

Cutlery/eating implements/bowls etc. [I and S]

Electrical kitchen equipment [I and G]

Materials/clothes [I]

Clothes/material [G, S and I]

Telephones [I and S]

Gas meters and electric meters (coin-operated) [G]

Documents and paper records

Births/marriages and deaths [I]
Council meetings – minutes of meetings [I]
Newspapers [I and C]
Records of the troubles/IRA bombings [I]
Town planning [I]
Photographs [I and S]
Maps/plans [I and C]

Wartime

Materials from local regiments (Kilburn Rifles) [C]
Wartime objects [G]

Local history

Domesday material [C]
Objects made in Brent (old Brent) – industrial processes [C]
Wembley Park House and grounds (designed by Harvey Repton) [C]
Artefacts from Dollis Hill House [C]
Trowbridge properties – items on the castles at Kingsbury [C]
Information on Wembley Stadium/Watkin's Tower [C]
Materials from the Empire Exhibition at Wembley [C]
Materials from the Post Office research facility – the first programmable computer [C]
Churchill's underground bunker at Dollis Hill [C]
History of the Empire State [C]
Stuff from the Willesden historical society [C]

Community history

Somali artefacts [C]
A Victorian/Irish house [I]
What people contributed that came from Ireland [I]

Transport

Cardboard bus tickets [I]
Buses in olden times [G]
Material pertaining to the Metropolitan line [C]
Pictures of railway cottages [C]

Brent Museum & Archives aims to put on exhibitions that focus in some way on local history or communities. Are there any particular stories, subjects, communities that are specific to Brent that you would like to see an exhibition on?

All of the groups engaged well with this question, and were able to suggest many different ideas for exhibitions and exhibition material.

Multiculturalism

All four groups mentioned the multicultural aspect of Brent, and how exhibitions relating to their own culture, or the culture of other groups would be interesting.

“A local museum has the capacity to put on an exhibition that will explain the surroundings you walk through, and what your ethnic group did to make that happen. This is the Irish one ... and this is the Somali one ... and the Jewish community and the Hindu community. You have the opportunity to show the similarities not the differences.” [I]

The Irish community in Brent is perhaps the oldest immigrant community, and group I mentioned several areas of interest where this community had had an effect in Brent: the history of the Catholic church in Brent, and the building of the canals and railways and associated artefacts/architecture.

“And then Irish people can walk out into a multi-ethnic community with their chin up feeling ‘I’m here’. And you don’t get this with some of the larger national museums.” [I]

Members of the Hindu community in group G were also interested in exhibitions that concentrated on immigration (and how different groups got here), and on their own culture, and the impact it had had on Brent:

“How the Hindu community came to Brent; how they settled; how they contributed to the economy, and the changes they brought about” [G]

The Somali culture is, perhaps, one of the newer cultures to influence life in Brent.

Although Somali people have lived in the UK since the 19th century (and group S suggested that newspaper articles about Somali contributions to the two world wars would be of interest), the biggest influx was after the insurgency and subsequent civil war in the 1980s/1990s. Somali history is predominantly oral (the written language has only been in existence since the 1970s), and members of group S were interested in museum records that allowed the capture of these oral traditions:

“Spoken poetry would be interesting. Spoken stories by older generations of people; some people came here in the 1940s, but the biggest influx to Brent was in 1984 after the war in Somalia, when many people arrived as refugees. There will be people around from those days, and their spoken testimony would be a good thing to have, so that future generations of Somalis living in Brent could hear this”

Group S were also interested in exhibitions of Somali artefacts from back home, which they felt would remind them of life back in Somalia – these included: spoons; drinking vessels; milk containers; preserving containers; cheese-making equipment; pictures of camels; traditional bibs; clothes.

Group G were interested in an exhibition that outlined Hindu culture, and what Hindu people enjoy.

Group I also mentioned the Polish community in Brent, and how immigration of this group had begun during the second world war (the Polish war memorial at Greenford was mentioned).

Local history/geography

Groups I, G and C spent some time discussing this, and several suggestions were made.

“History and Geography covers everything” [G]

They included how Brent got its name (from the river Brent), how the geography affected the way the area developed (so the Brent feeds the Welsh Harp reservoir, and thus the canals). In turn this led to suggestions about telling the history of industry in Brent – McVitie’s biscuits, Ilford photographic factory, Airco (aircraft manufacturer in World War I) de Havilland, GEC Hirst and various munitions manufacturers were all mentioned. The effects of strikes were mentioned, and, in particular, group C raised the Grunwick strike of the late 1970s.

Brent’s parks were mentioned by groups I and C, as was the changing face of shops, and the changing face of Brent in general over the years.

“What did Brent look like through the ages? What sort of people lived here?”

Groups I and G mentioned weather phenomena through the ages – including the smogs of the early 20th century, the cold winter of 1963 and the local tornado in 2006. Group C were also interested in the political changes in Brent – how the political entity of ‘Brent’ came into being; where it was heading in the future (and was it becoming more ‘gentrified’, for example?). Group I also suggested an exhibition on how healthcare in the borough had changed through the ages, and one member of group G was interested in looking at how provisions for people with disabilities of sight have changed.

Arts and culture

Groups C and I mentioned various aspects of cultural activities that might be good subjects for exhibitions; they included: Willesden Carnival; Brent shows; the history of pop music in Brent; the history of working men’s clubs; the history of theatres in Brent (including the one at Willesden Green library); famous Brent residents through the ages.

Miscellaneous suggestions

These came from individuals, and included: ‘old science’ (the history of evolution) (G); the history of Harlesden Road (I); birds (G); a history of fireplaces/central heating (G); a history of education (G)

Museums themselves

Groups I and C also spent a small amount of time commenting on the museums themselves – how they should look, and the sort of spaces they would like to see there. Group I liked the idea of an exhibition space at the new museum – which could be used for themed events or exhibitions of objects. Interactive displays were also popular with group I, and they also suggested remote access to the collection via an online ‘virtual’ exhibition. Group C mentioned the importance of maintaining the outside space at Willesden Green, so that the building remained inviting, and group I suggested a café and somewhere to relax.

Which of the areas of Brent Museum and archives work would you most likely be interested in engaging with/coming to?

(A sheet – attached at Annex B – was given to all group members to study)

Permanent museum

This was most popular with groups S and C – all members of both groups apart from one (in group C) were interested in a permanent museum. From their answer to the previous question, it was clear that many in group I would be interested in a permanent museum, but only one person overtly stated this in answer to this question. None of group G mentioned this as something they would engage with.

Temporary exhibitions

These proved generally popular with all four groups. The changing nature of such exhibitions (and the ability of them to be topical) were seen as positive points by groups I, C and G. Group C, in particular, felt that a touring exhibition – the same exhibition touring all of Brent's libraries, and spending a couple of months in each – would be a good idea. Group C were also keen to make sure that exhibition spaces were properly prepared, and were given priority, and were not simply:

“...dead spaces that no-one can find a use for.” [C]

Group I felt that an Irish-themed temporary exhibition March 2016 would be relevant to them, as it was the 30th anniversary of Innisfree, close to St Patrick's Day (and the 100th anniversary of the Easter Rising).

Archives search room

A couple of people each in groups I and G were interested in such a facility. Group S saw it as somewhere that would best be used by specialists. This was mostly seen to be of interest by group C, who discussed how it might work – possibly via a dedicated search facility (computer terminal) within the main library, and a quiet room in which to view materials; this would probably need to be supervised. There was concern about how easy access would be, as the access to the Willesden Green archives was reduced to one evening a week.

Schools programme

This was very popular with group S, and three members of group G were interested in such a programme. Group C had mixed views: one member was not keen on libraries becoming the centre of noisy children's activities whereas others saw a role for libraries as classrooms (with exhibitions fitting into the curriculum, and children being given a chance to handle objects from history). One member mentioned the glass children's area at Kentish Town, as being ideal – in that it allowed visibility, but cut out noise. Group I did not mention this at all.

Activities for families and adults

These were extremely popular with all four groups. Group G mentioned social activities and adult education (adult education was also popular with group C). Group I had had a visit from the museum service who had brought some artefacts for them to handle (and had explained the history of them) and they were very positive about this experience.

“Somebody with a good bit of knowledge to pull information together into a lively and interesting talk, and bring it round to places like Innisfree would be good.” [I]

Group C mentioned history walks, dance, artists' displays and activities for community groups. Groups I and C also commented on the need for public spaces – somewhere that community groups could book/hire. The need for a café/restaurant

was also emphasised (group I pointed out how good restaurants at places such as the Wellcome Foundation made museums and collections more popular).

Other

Groups C and I emphasised the need for good publicity for any exhibitions (including online and hard-copy materials, and using the local press); group C commented in particular on the poor publicity for the Somali exhibition at the Civic Centre. Group C also discussed a digital collection (i.e. a website where the collection could be toured 'virtually'). Some felt this was not always a good thing, but others felt it would encourage people to visit.

Would you consider donating an object, photograph etc. to Brent Museum and archives?

All four groups indicated that they would be happy to donate objects; group S pointed out that much of the current Somali exhibition came from objects that they and their friends had donated.

“... this is Somali culture; we are part of this Borough” [S]

Groups I, C and G suggested that they (and other people) would not always be sure what sort of object would count as something a museum might be interested in.

“The problem is realising and communicating what is valuable” [C]

Group C also suggested that objects could be lent as well as donated. A member of group C also pointed out that donation can be cheaper than storage!

Scanning of photographs was popular with all four groups, and seen by them as a way of being able to keep photographs, while still hanging onto the originals.

The idea of an event where people could bring objects or photographs along, and tell their history, was seen as a good idea by groups I and C:

“We could have a scan day where people’s photos were uploaded to a hard drive, then copied to the museum” [I]

“There needs to be an event like Antiques Roadshow, where people bring things – so you get the stories along with the objects” [C]

All of the groups were happy to donate objects whether they would be used or not, but there was a slight feeling that they would be more prepared to do so if they knew an object would be going into an exhibition:

“If it’s of sentimental value you’d want it on display – not so much photos, but if it’s an object, you’d want it to be used” [C]

Other comments

Group I made some additional comments.

They wondered whether the museum would charge for entry.

They also commented that this was a tremendous opportunity to do something exciting, but that the service needed to both go out into the community and to draw people in

Conclusions

The brief of the exercise was to find data that contributed to the three areas outlined in the introduction.

It should be re-stated that these four focus groups cannot be seen as statistically representative of the communities they were drawn from, so any 'conclusions' reached in this section cannot be seen as definite – only the conclusions reached from listening to 48 people. Some broad statements can be made, however, about the data supplied by these 48 people, and they are grouped below under the three area headings.

What will make their communities engage with the museum and archives?

- All of the groups were able to understand what a museum is, but the difference between a museum and an archive (and how an archive can help people to research history) needs perhaps more explanation, particularly for those whose first language is not English.
- On the whole, the white Europeans in the groups visited museums more than the people from other ethnic groups
- The minority ethnic groups in the exercise (Irish, Indian, Somali) tended to see museums as somewhere they could enjoy their own culture, or demonstrate it to others; the white Europeans (these included the Irish group) in the exercise were more likely to see museums as a chance to view the culture of others
- Location plays a large part in whether people visit museums; there were those who would visit a museum out of curiosity wherever it was, but, for example, casual visitors to the old Willesden Green museum largely visited because of its proximity. Many people visited the Civic Centre for reasons other than to view an exhibition.

What kind of subjects would they like to see covered in our exhibition programmes?

- Principally, the groups saw museums as a repository for everyday objects that tell stories of the past; a few saw them as places where documents are kept
- What most people in the exercise wanted out of a Brent museum was for it to be a place where cultures within Brent are shared (through the display of everyday objects, documents and stories that explain those cultures), as well as being a place where the history and geography of Brent is displayed and explained

How we can make our collections more relevant and how we can gain the trust of communities so that they will donate material to the collections?

- Although the idea of a permanent exhibition was popular with some of the participants, the most popular form of exhibition was a temporary one, which could be topical, and could travel.
- Outreach activities were very popular – particularly those for families, and if they involved adult education. 'Active' activities (that involve people doing things, rather than passively looking at things) were also popular.
- There is a need for better publicity and signposting.
- Museum spaces beyond simply the collections (e.g. cafés, activity areas etc.) were also popular

- No-one in any of the groups indicated that they *would not* be willing to donate an object to a museum; the largest barrier to this would seem to be to get people to understand what would be the sort of material a museum might want (i.e. to help people realise the value of what they simply see as everyday objects or materials). In this context, some sort of publicised 'donation event' might be popular.

Brent Museum and Archives Strategy Consultation

Focus Group Schedule

Opening

Tea/coffee etc. (10 mins)

Welcome and explanation (5 mins)

Introductions (5 mins)

Topic

Main question	Follow-ups/prompts/probes	Timing
How would you describe a museum & archives?	Tease out museum and archives separately	10
Do you currently visit museums or archives?	How often?	10

Core

Main question	Follow-ups/prompts/probes	Timing
Which cultural organisations in Brent do you visit?	Prompts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brent Museum (do you know there's a Brent Museum & archives?) • Tricycle Theatre • Encee Academy • Lexi Cinema • East Lane Theatre • Brent temples • Exhibitions in libraries • Private galleries/exhibitions Why do you visit them?	10
Do you visit: Willesden Green library? Wembley civic centre/library?	Why/why not?	5
What was the last exhibition you visited?	Why did you choose this one?	5
Have you visited the current exhibition at the Civic Centre?	Northwest London Somali Project, an exhibition that captures the lives and the experience of the Somali community in Brent in the form of oral history and photography	5

Main question	Follow-ups/prompts/probes	Timing
<p>What sorts of things do you think Brent Museum & Archives has?</p> <p>Can you think of any specific examples?</p>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collections reflect working and domestic life in Brent from about 1850 to the present day • Artefacts • Video/oral history recordings • Around 10K items • Records of Brent Council (minutes, building plans) • Historical maps/street directories • Electoral registers • School records • Photographs • Postcards • Reference library • Newspapers dating back to 1870 • Records of local groups/organisations/individuals 	10
<p>Brent Museum & Archives aims to put on exhibitions that focus in some way on local history or communities. Are there any particular stories, subjects, communities that are specific to Brent that you would like to see an exhibition on?</p>		15
<p>Please have a look at the sheet. Which of the areas of Brent Museum and archives work would you most likely be interested in engaging with/coming to?</p>	Use sheet	15
<p>Would you consider donating an object, photograph etc. to Brent Museum and archives?</p>	<p>Why or why not?</p> <p>Would the ability to keep your original photograph and donate a digital copy influence your decision to donate?</p> <p>Would it influence your decision to donate an object if you knew whether or not it was going to be included in an exhibition? (it isn't always possible to display everything donated)</p>	5

Thanks and explanation of next steps

List of Brent Museum & Archives proposed areas of work

Permanent museum	A display of artefacts and material related to Brent's social history that is always on display at Willesden Green
Temporary exhibitions	1–3 per year. Special exhibitions lasting a couple of months or so, with artefacts on a particular theme or topic at one of the main centres – Wembley or Willesden Green, or possibly smaller libraries
Archives search room	A room at Willesden Green where you can search on computer/in hard copy archives (so old newspapers, old records etc.)
Schools programme	A workshop programme at Willesden Green or in schools to use materials and stories from Brent's history to the attention of learners, so that they use them in their school work
Activities for families and adults	These would include craft sessions, history walks, talks and lectures in Brent libraries – linked to current exhibitions

Appendix 3- Draft Museum and Archives Strategy Action Plan

It should be noted that for the purposes of this document all actions have been kept concise. The action plan will be delivered within existing revenue budgets. Actions requiring investment will be progressed as and when funding is available.

The following work has been undertaken in preparation for the implementation of the strategy. These actions were identified through a self - assessment process and funding from the Museum of London.

	Action	Lead	Partner(s)	Date
	Carry out an audit of the archives collections and produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overall guide for customers • a digitisation plan • a cataloguing plan 	HOS	MOL	July 2014
	Develop a strong heritage team with a ownership of a clear vision for the service through a team building and workforce development programme	AHM	MOL	July 2014

Objective 1: Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
1.1	In order to meet the professional standards outlined by the National Archives and the Museums Association and to give the service a clear focus, redevelop and implement the museum and archives collections policy (covering the acquisition, loan and disposal of materials)	Liaison meetings with professional bodies to incorporate developments within the sector by 30 April 2015	HCM	TNA MA ACE	December 2015

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
1.2	Produce an exhibitions and outreach programme in accordance with the Interpretation Policy, to increase access to collections across the borough. The scope will include provision for using alternative venues in the borough for temporary exhibitions and public programming.	Establish network of possible venues by 30 June 2015 Liaison meetings with professional bodies to ensure best practise compliance by 31 August 2015	AHM	MA	September 2015
1.3	Re-design the heritage webpages to enhance the ease of locating information about what is held in the collections and encourage further learning. The layout and content of existing pages will be revised, and an online payments system will be put in place for publications and digital image requests. There will be a significant overhaul of the entry page to the museum and archive catalogue which will provide advice on searching, give a richer overview on the collections held and be easier to use.	Meetings with database provider to explore options Seek designer to create the new homepage by 31 March 2015 User testing to be completed by 31 July 2015	HCM	ITU Axiell	July 2015
1.4	Participate in the London Archives Project and ensure that Brent is part of the shared service approaches to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Images (Borough photos) • A shared London catalogue (AIM 25 is a major project to provide electronic access to collection level descriptions of the archives of over one hundred higher education institutions, learned societies, cultural organisations and boroughs within the greater London area). • Joint programming (e.g. London and the Great War: LMA/London Boroughs project) 	Quarterly meetings with LAPB Quarterly cataloguing progress meetings Preparation of digital images by 31 December 2015 Completed Great War project by 31 December 2017	HOS	LAPB KCL LMA	April 2018

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
1.5	Produce a Consultation and Evaluation action plan to ensure that users views are incorporated into our planning	Action plan in place by 30 September 2015	HOS		September 2015
1.6	Implement systems for monitoring the demography of museum and archive users e.g. age, ethnicity. Review the effectiveness of the monitoring systems. Produce report with recommendations	Report produced by 28 February 2015 Monitoring system in place by 31 March 2015	SSDM	BCET	March 2015 November 2015
1.7	Open the new museum space and archives search room at The Library @ Willesden Green	Fortnightly project meetings Temporary exhibition to be received and installed by 30 June 2015	HCM		July 2015

Objective 2: Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partners(s)	Target Date
2.1	Produce and implement an action plan to increase participation from a wider audience range than currently use the service. This will be informed by robust audience research to confirm best practise which will result in the development of an Audience Development Plan	Liaison with other Borough archives by 30 April 2015 Establish an audience panel by 31 July 2015 Monthly progress meetings	AHM	MA	December 2015

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partners(s)	Target Date
2.2	Improve the marketing of services including exploring options for maximising the use of social media	<p>Monthly progress meetings</p> <p>Analysis of current social media output by Brent and by other Local Authority archives by 30 April 2015</p> <p>Draw up actions to expand reach by 30 June 2015</p>	MO		April 2015
2.3	Identify core subject areas in order to offer new workshops, loan boxes and resources to schools to meet the needs of the 2014 curriculum through liaison with local schools and the Department of Education. 2014-15 will act as a pilot year to allow us to amend sessions and ensure that they are fit for purpose.	<p>Liaison with schools to identify and meet their needs by April 2015</p> <p>Replenish and add to existing loans boxes to reflect any changes by 30 June 2015</p>	LO	Local schools	December 2015
2.4	Build closer relationships with local colleges and universities by broadening the reach of our collections.	<p>Establish a group of partners by 31 July 2015</p> <p>Quarterly meetings</p> <p>Create a robust offer for local colleges/universities by 30 December 2015</p>	HCM	Local colleges and universities	April 2016
2.5	Develop a robust heritage volunteer policy and launch the heritage volunteer programme.	<p>Volunteers Policy to be completed by 30 April 2015</p> <p>Recruitment of volunteers to begin in 31 May 2015</p>	HCM	TNA ACE Libraries	July 2015

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partners(s)	Target Date
2.6	Establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group to fundraise and act as advocates for the service.	Research best practise for establishing Friends Groups by 30 April 2015 Quarterly meetings Market and recruit interested parties by 31 December 2015	AHM	TNA MA London Borough Archives	April 2016

Objective 3: Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
3.1	Produce an options paper that explores options for alternative governance arrangements under guidance of TNA and ACE together with input and research by the whole Arts & Heritage team	Seek advice from professional bodies and other Local Authority archives by 28 February 2015	LAH	TNA ACE	April 2015
3.2	Review income generation opportunities within the service. Produce and implement an action plan	Review exiting opportunities by 31 March 2015	AHM		September 2015
3.3	Assess the viability of introducing a professional research service for individuals who are not able to visit the archive in person	Prepare a paper on available options and current examples in other Local Authority archives by 30 April 2015 Depending on the outcomes of the research, develop a bank of interested freelancers by 31 December 2015	HCM	Freelance researchers and genealogists	April 2016

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
3.4	Develop a heritage publications programme including a review of stock (books, pamphlets, postcards, reproduction items) and how it is marketed.	Review current stock by 31 March 2015 Re-print/commission postcard stock by 31 July 2015 Purchase new stock where gaps exist by 31 July 2015	HCM	Comms Libraries History Societies	August 2015
3.5	Produce an options paper for collaborative working with other authorities	Liaison meetings with Local Authority archives by 30 March 2015	AHM	LAPB TNA	April 2015
3.6	Develop a Policy Statement regarding our approach to the environmental sustainability of the new museum	Liaison with ACE and MA regarding updated developments in the sector by 30 June 2015 Work closely with the Sustainable Exhibitions for Museums Group to ensure best practise and receive advise by 31 July 2015 Establish an action plan to implement necessary changes by 30 November 2015	HCM	ACE MA	December 2015
3.7	Achieve and maintain Museum Accreditation	Quarterly meetings with ACE/MA Submit completed collections policy by 31 December 2015 Submit completed environmental sustainability	AHM	ACE	April 2016

	Action	Key Progress Milestones	Lead	Partner(s)	Target Date
		policy by 31 December 2015			
3.8	Achieve and maintain Archives Accreditation.	Quarterly meetings with TNA Re-configure and improve storage conditions in the archive strong-room to meet environmental standards by 31 December 2017	AHM	TNA	April 2018

Key to Abbreviations

MOL- Museum of London

HOS– Head of Service (Libraries, Arts and Heritage)

AHM – Arts & Heritage Manager

HCM- Heritage Collections Manager

MO– Marketing Officer (Libraries, Arts and Heritage)

LO – Learning Officer

BCET- Brent Council Equality Team

SSDM – Strategy and Service Development Manager

ACE- Arts Council England

TNA- The National Archives

ITU- Information Technology Unit

LAPB- London Archives Project Board

AIM – Association of Independent Museums

KCL – King’s College London Archives

LMA – London Metropolitan Archive

Axiell – Collections database software company

Draft Equality Analysis- Museum and Archives Strategy

Please contact the Corporate Diversity team before completing this form. The form is to be used for both predictive Equality Analysis and any reviews of existing policies and practices that may be carried out.

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
<p>Directorate: Environment and Neighbourhood</p> <p>Service Area: Libraries Arts and Heritage</p>	<p>Person Responsible:</p> <p>Name: Aine Ryan</p> <p>Title: Strategy and Service Development Officer</p> <p>Contact No: 020 8937 5633</p> <p>Signed:</p>
<p>Name of policy: Museum and Archive Strategy</p>	<p>Date analysis started: 15/01/2014</p> <p>Completion date: 29/11/2014</p> <p>Review date: November 2015</p>
<p>Is the policy:</p> <p>New X</p>	<p>Auditing Details:</p> <p>Name: Environment and Neighbourhood DMT</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Contact No: 020 8937 5622</p> <p>Signed:</p>
<p>Signing Off Manager: responsible for review and monitoring</p> <p>Name: Neil Davies</p> <p>Title: Strategy and Service Development Manager</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Contact No:</p> <p>Signed:</p>	<p>Decision Maker:</p> <p>Name individual /group/meeting/ committee:</p> <p>Brent Council Executive</p> <p>Date: 26 January 2015</p>

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?

Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve and provide free access to the borough's past, offering enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all. Heritage services face unprecedented challenges but also opportunities to re-evaluate and re-model services for the better. A new cultural centre, The Library@Willesden Green, will open in 2015 with a redesigned museum space and new archives facilities. The Museum and Archive strategy sets out a vision and set of objectives to enable the service to evolve to meet the needs of a wider audience.

The vision of the strategy is 'Brent's museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities'. Three objectives have been identified to deliver this vision:

- Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by caring for the collections, telling their stories and making them available to all
- Increase the scope and use of the collections through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners
- Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

An action plan accompanies the draft strategy and includes the following actions:

- Open the new museum space and archives search room
- Develop a joint collections policy for museum and archives materials
- Produce a digitisation policy and action plan
- Produce a volunteer policy and establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group
- Explore options for alternative governance arrangements
- Develop a schedule of collaborative projects with other authorities

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:?

The strategy has the potential to positively impact on all groups as the museum and the archives have the scope and the potential to make a stronger contribution to the council's corporate priorities and to heighten people's knowledge and awareness of the borough's heritage. An understanding of Brent's history has an important role to play in giving people a sense of place and increasing their interest and pride in their surroundings. The rich collections of materials in Brent's museum and archives, along with the programmes of exhibitions and events, can promote learning, community cohesion and resilience, and health and wellbeing.

Brent Museum and Archives are committed to engaging with the diverse local community through a varied exhibition and learning programme.

Public interest in history, particularly family and local, continues to grow, demonstrating that there is a large potential audience for archives and local studies. For example, the Who Do You Think You Are show at London Olympia attracted 15,000 visitors in 2013. Websites such as Ancestry and Findmypast continue to expand and membership of the National Trust increases each year.

From supporting children's education to motivating adults to discover more about history, museums and archives can inspire a passion for knowledge and learning. Collections can be used to encourage reflection on contemporary issues, promote human rights, challenge

prejudice and champion equality. Displays can be presented to challenge assumptions and stimulate thought about issues such as discrimination, poverty and climate change.

Brent has a successful track record of working with schools and families. In the past year the school outreach programme has reached over 2,500 children from twenty different schools. At Lyon Park Infant School approximately 400 students took part in Black History month and local history projects as well as other stand-alone taught sessions.

Archive services naturally attract students and researchers but there are areas that can be further developed. For example, classes could be provided on the use of primary sources to give students a clear idea of the resources available to them.

Finally, a new cultural centre, The Library@Willesden Green, is scheduled to open in the summer of 2015 and will house a redesigned museum space and new archives facilities. The previous location of the facilities within the building had a minimising impact on visitor access. Despite the challenges of the current economic climate Brent Council has invested in the opportunity to create a purpose built space and improve the borough's cultural and heritage offer.

The new design will maximise visibility and encourage visitor flow to the integrated museum and archives area on the second floor. This will be a secure and environmentally controlled space for the permanent museum; archives search room; exhibition gallery and education room. Clear signage and a heritage 'object trail' throughout the building will stimulate interest in the collections and exhibitions.

The museum and archives will share a joint collection policy and work together on exhibitions, projects and a range of learning programmes. The proximity to the library space in the centre presents a more cohesive heritage offer to visitors.

The museum will tell the history of the borough and its communities with a collection of objects reflecting its diversity and the contribution of residents past and present in shaping the area. The content will chronologically show the rich social history of the borough: dating from the Iron Age, Roman and Saxon eras, the Industrial Revolution, the Victorian age, the two world wars, youth cultures from the 1950s to the 1970s, politics and protests and Brent today. It will highlight stories and characters that make Brent unique and demonstrate its cultural achievements and scientific innovations. The aim is to inspire and engage visitors with the borough's diverse history through an accessible and enjoyable approach which also aids learning.

The new archives search room and storage facilities will be complemented by a new comprehensive guide to the collections and enhanced access to digitised material. Brent Archives service is the primary local history resource for residents and for researchers from across the country and abroad. The focus for the service will be increasing access for physical and virtual visitors.

In conclusion, the strategy itself will impact positively on all characteristics although there is a need to improve equality monitoring and recording systems as highlighted in section 6.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

The following are the key findings from the two stage consultation process:

- A more proactive approach can be adopted for the acquisition and display of materials and objects from businesses, schools and community organisations
- Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for

the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way

- Capacity to deliver service improvements can be achieved by strengthening structured collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. For example, volunteers could undertake a floor walking role in the museum
- Consideration should be given to renaming Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility Brent Museum and Local History Centre may generate more interest amongst non users of the service, particularly younger people
- Workforce development is a priority for the Heritage sector as a whole in order for authorities to deliver seamless services to a diverse audience
- On the evidence of the Archives survey approximately 70% of visitors are Brent residents, the vast majority of whom live in the south of the borough and who declared their ethnicity as white
- Young people like creative and interactive ways of finding out information e.g. touch screens, arts and craft activities and competitions
- The challenges to the financial future of museum and archive services must be recognised and a sustainable and cost effective approach adopted. The options of devolving services to a trust status or adopting a shared service approach need to be given detailed consideration
- New audiences will engage with Brent Museum and Archives if improvements are made to the marketing of services and content of the online and digital offers
- The management and development of Brent's collections need to be reviewed and revised to make them more easily accessible to a wider range of people.

In order to glean more detailed information particularly from identified target groups of residents a series of focus groups/group interviews was commissioned in September 2014.

Some broad statements can be made about the data supplied by the 48 participants and these include:

- All of the groups were able to understand what a museum is, but the difference between a museum and an archive (and how an archive can help people to research history) needs perhaps more explanation, particularly for those whose first language is not English.
- □ On the whole, the white Europeans in the groups visited museums more than the people from other ethnic groups.
- The minority ethnic groups in the exercise (Indian and Somali) tended to see museums as somewhere they could enjoy their own culture, or demonstrate it to others; the white Europeans (these included the Irish group) in the exercise were more likely to see museums as a chance to view the culture of others
- Location plays a large part in whether people visit museums; there were those who would visit a museum out of curiosity wherever it was.
- Principally, the groups saw museums as a repository for everyday objects that tell stories of the past; a few saw them as places where documents are kept
- What most people in the exercise wanted out of a Brent museum was for it to be a place where cultures within Brent are shared (through the display of everyday objects, documents and stories that explain those cultures), as well as being a place where the history and geography of Brent is displayed and explained
- Although the idea of a permanent exhibition was popular with some of the participants, the most popular form of exhibition was a temporary one, which could be topical, and could travel.
- No-one in any of the groups indicated that they *would not* be willing to donate an object to a museum; the largest barrier to this would seem to be to get people to understand what would be the sort of material a museum might want (i.e. to help people realise the value of what they simply see as

everyday objects or materials). In this context, some sort of publicised 'donation event' might be popular.

Where relevant and appropriate the strategy and action plan have been revised to reflect the comments received, including the wording of the vision and the three objectives.

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the Council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

(a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

The strategy has the potential to positively impact on all groups as the museum and the archives have the scope and the potential to make a stronger contribution to the council's corporate priorities and to heighten people's knowledge and awareness of the borough's heritage. An understanding of Brent's history has an important role to play in giving people a sense of place and increasing their interest and pride in their surroundings.

The rich collections of materials in Brent's museum and archives, along with the programmes of exhibitions and events, can promote learning, community cohesion and resilience, and health and wellbeing; ultimately fitting in with this objective.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity and (C) Foster good relations

Museums, archives and local history collections belong to everyone and help to define a place by shaping identity and contributing to local distinctiveness. Some people already have a strong sense of ownership of their heritage but the population shifts of recent decades mean that the diversity of local areas is not always fully reflected in core collections. This can be addressed by working with communities to collect and then represent a place's diverse and collective history, thus shaping the future direction of the service.

Heritage services have a key role to play in generating understanding between different cultures by illustrating varied lives, experiences and beliefs; stimulating empathy by helping people to learn about and understand each other.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment? Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

A two stage consultation process was undertaken; a preliminary stage to gather feedback and data to inform the production of the draft strategy, followed by a full public and stakeholder consultation on the draft strategy and action plan.

Stage 1- Preliminary Consultation

- Internal stakeholders - Regeneration and Major Projects, Children and Families, ITU, BACES and Legal and Democratic Services
- Wembley History Society and Willesden Local History Society
- External stakeholder focus group
- Museum of London
- National Archives
- Mount Stewart Junior School and St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- Archives Visitor survey
- Best practice visits to other London boroughs

Stage Two: Formal Consultation

A three-month consultation period on the draft strategy was undertaken through:

- An online questionnaire with paper copies available on request
- Consultation documentation sent to approximately 1500 stakeholders including individuals, The Citizens' Panel¹, volunteers and voluntary organisations and national agencies including the Museum of London and The National Archives
- Two informal drop-in sessions
- Officer attendance at three Brent Connects Forums
- Officer attendance at two stakeholder meetings, one of which was with Brent History Societies

Questionnaire Survey

The survey was available on the Council's Consultation Portal and 34 completed questionnaires were submitted.

- 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the vision of the draft strategy while agreement for each of the three draft objectives ranged from 82% to 85%.
- 73% and 68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the draft strategy and action plan respectively covered the key issues relating to museum and archives provision in Brent.
- Over half of respondents (59%) had visited Brent Museum during the past year. However, only a third (35%) had visited Brent Archive Services during the past two years whilst 24% had visited the Archives website during the same period
- Over half of respondents (58%) would be interested in being a Friend of Brent Museum and Archives and over a third (38%) would be interested in volunteering.

140 additional individual comments were received from 34 respondents and these included:

Concern about the wording of the draft strategy; the staffing policy; physical access to the museum and library including suggestions for part of the materials to be available elsewhere in the Borough; various aspects of the implementation of the strategy; governance issues; charging policy; the role of volunteers; the relationship of the service to sectors of the community; the needs for on-going user consultation and the similarities between Brent and other areas was as important as highlighting the differences.

Although the programme of consultation on the draft strategy was a comprehensive one, the level of feedback response was lower than anticipated. This can be partly attributed to the fact that the draft strategy broadly reflected the feedback received during the first stage of the consultation.

Focus group consultation

In order to glean more detailed information particularly from identified target groups of residents a series of focus groups/group interviews was commissioned in September 2014.

Four groups were set up with different target sample sectors of the population as follows:

¹ Brent Citizens' Panel started as a partnership between the Council, the police and Brent Health Action Zone. It consists of local residents who reflect Brent's diverse population. The main aim of the panel is to provide a platform through which we can learn residents' views on local services.

Demographic	Number in the Group
Retired Irish members of the Brent community living in a sheltered housing project (Innisfree)	14
Somali members of the Brent community	8
A sub-set of Brent's citizen's panel, containing a mix of demographics (but with a heavy bias to white European)	9
Indian (primarily Gujarati) members of the Brent community	17

The three areas for exploration in these groups were:

- 1) What will make their communities engage with the museum and archives?
- 2) What kind of subjects would they like to see covered in our exhibition programmes?
- 3) How we can make our collections more relevant and how we can gain the trust of communities so that they will donate material to the collections?

Some broad statements can be made about the data supplied by the 48 participants and these include:

- All of the groups were able to understand what a museum is, but the difference between a museum and an archive (and how an archive can help people to research history) needs perhaps more explanation, particularly for those whose first language is not English.
- On the whole, the white Europeans in the groups visited museums more than the people from other ethnic groups.
- The minority ethnic groups in the exercise (Indian and Somali) tended to see museums as somewhere they could enjoy their own culture, or demonstrate it to others; the white Europeans (these included the Irish group) in the exercise were more likely to see museums as a chance to view the culture of others
- Location plays a large part in whether people visit museums; there were those who would visit a museum out of curiosity wherever it was.
- Principally, the groups saw museums as a repository for everyday objects that tell stories of the past; a few saw them as places where documents are kept
- What most people in the exercise wanted out of a Brent museum was for it to be a place where cultures within Brent are shared (through the display of everyday objects, documents and stories that explain those cultures), as well as being a place where the history and geography of Brent is displayed and explained
- Although the idea of a permanent exhibition was popular with some of the participants, the most popular form of exhibition was a temporary one, which could be topical, and could travel.

- No-one in any of the groups indicated that they *would not* be willing to donate an object to a museum; the largest barrier to this would seem to be to get people to understand what would be the sort of material a museum might want (i.e. to help people realise the value of what they simply see as everyday objects or materials). In this context, some sort of publicised 'donation event' might be popular.

It can be concluded that the findings of the focus groups fits in to the vision and objectives of the strategy.

6. Have you have identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate against this impact.

While there is no evidence to suggest that the strategy itself will affect some groups of people; recent surveys indicate that approximately 75% of visitors to the museum are Brent residents, while 70% of visitors to the archives are residents. Further analysis showed that a large proportion of visitors live in the Willesden Green area or in the south of the borough, demonstrating that the facilities currently have a localised appeal. There are clear opportunities for increasing engagement amongst current users and attracting new visitors from the wider Brent area and outside the borough.

Current demographic data indicates that the users of the museums are reflective of the borough while the archives profile portrays a different picture with comparatively low representation from all strands of the Black community and an over representation from the White group. In order to tackle these gaps the service has recently undertaken the following projects:

- An exhibition and community project celebrating African culture that resulted in materials being exhibited and added to the collection
- Belonging in Brent; an oral history project which aimed to illustrate the life stories of three communities, namely Jewish people from Europe, Irish and West Indian people who settled in Brent between from the 1930s to the 1950s
- British Empire Exhibition engagement work has examined notions of empire amongst different communities

The focus group research showed that of the 48 participants across the 3 groups:

- All of the groups were able to understand what a museum is, but the difference between a museum and an archive (and how an archive can help people to research history) needs perhaps more explanation, particularly for those whose first language is not English.
- The minority ethnic groups in the exercise (Indian and Somali) tended to see museums as somewhere they could enjoy their own culture, or demonstrate it to others; the white Europeans (these included the Irish group) in the exercise were more likely to see museums as a chance to view the culture of others

The strategy has also incorporated these findings into the action plan under the objectives:

- Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by caring for the collections, telling their stories and making them available to all
- Increase the scope and use of the collections through wider community engagement

and working with a broader range of partners

In order to achieve these objective, it is felt that the equalities monitoring and recording systems need to be improved to ensure that we can accurately target any 'gaps'.

Brent Museum and Archives have a successful track record of working with schools and families. In the past year the school outreach programme reached 22,500 children from twenty different schools. As a result of findings from the stakeholder consultation, a review of the service currently provided will be undertaken to enable the Council to provide a more comprehensive and cost effective outreach programme particularly for secondary schools.

Archive services naturally attract students and researchers but there are areas that can be further developed. For example, classes could be provided on the use of primary sources to give students a clear idea of the resources available to them.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

Findings from the archives visitor survey and the stakeholder meeting summary notes are listed in Appendix 2 of the strategy document.

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis.

Protected Group	Positive impact	Adverse impact	Neutral
Age	X		
Disability	X		
Gender re-assignment	X		
Marriage and civil partnership	X		
Pregnancy and maternity	X		
Race	X		
Religion or belief	X		
Sex	X		
Sexual orientation	X		

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only).

Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

Continue with policy

The strategy has the potential to positively impact on all groups as the museum and the archives have the scope and the potential to make a stronger contribution to the council's corporate priorities and to heighten people's knowledge and awareness of the borough's heritage.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future.

Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

The strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis and equalities monitoring data and the equalities action plan in section 10 will be reviewed as part of this process.

10. Action plan and outcomes

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
Implement systems for monitoring the demography of museum and archive users e.g. age, ethnicity. Review the effectiveness of the monitoring systems. Produce report with recommendations.	March 2015 November 2015	SSDM	Robust equalities monitoring systems in place and any gaps incorporated into the service planning process.		
Produce a Consultation and Evaluation policy to ensure that users views are incorporated into serviceplanning	September 2015	HOS	Consultation and evaluation policy in place to inform service planning including the exhibitions and outreach programme		
Produce and implement an action plan to increase participation from a wider audience	April 2015	AHM			

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
range than currently use the service. This will be informed by robust audience research to confirm best practise which will result in the development of an Audience Development Plan					
Produce an exhibitions and outreach programme in accordance with the Interpretation Policy, to increase access to collections across the borough. The scope will include provision for using alternative venues in the borough for temporary exhibitions and public programming.	September 2015	AHM	Increased access to collections by under-represented groups		

Key to Abbreviations

SSDM- Strategy and Service Development Manager

HOS– Head of Service (Libraries, Arts and Heritage)

AHM – Arts & Heritage Manager

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Safeguarding Our History: A Museum and Archives Strategy for the London Borough of Brent



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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve and provide free access to the borough's past, offering enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all. Heritage services face unprecedented challenges but also opportunities to re-evaluate and re-model services for the better. A new cultural centre, The Library at Willesden Green, will open in 2015 with a redesigned museum space and new archives facilities. This strategy sets out a vision and set of objectives to enable the service to evolve to meet the needs of a wider audience.

2. Vision and Objectives

The vision of the strategy is

'Brent's museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities'.

Three objectives have been identified to deliver this vision:

- Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by caring for the collections, telling their stories and making them available to all
- Increase the scope and use of the collections through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners
- Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

An action plan accompanies the draft strategy and includes the following actions:

- Open the new museum space and archives search room
- Develop a joint collections policy for museum and archives materials
- Produce a digitisation policy and action plan
- Produce a volunteer policy and establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group
- Explore options for alternative governance arrangements
- Develop a schedule of collaborative projects with other authorities

3. National Context

The services that will thrive in the face of budget pressures are those that can re-vision and re-think their delivery models, working structures and partnerships.

'Museums Change Lives' is the Museum Association's vision for increasing social impact through connecting with a wider audience. 'Archives for the 21st Century in action', published by The National Archives, and recognises that developments in technology and growing public expectations have huge service delivery implications. The Arts Council England published 'Great art and culture for everyone' in 2013, bringing together its plans for the arts, museums and libraries for the first time.

4. Key Themes

- Local identity – belonging to all and helping to define and shape a place
- Partnership working – building sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships with community groups, charities and other local organisations
- Community cohesion - contributing to an area's regeneration, helping people prepare for work and promoting conservation
- Learning for all – inspiring a passion for knowledge and learning while challenging assumptions and stimulating thought
- Using art to bring history to life – working collaboratively with libraries, arts organisations and artists to provide a richer cultural offer
- Digital content – engaging with more people through digital technology
- Health and wellbeing – boosting quality of life and improving health by engaging people with heritage collections in a supportive environment
- Service accreditation - The Museum and Archives accreditation schemes provide frameworks for meeting national standards and identifying strengths and areas for development.
- Service delivery models – considering alternative forms of governance including trust status and shared service arrangements.
- Volunteering – improving the customer offer and strengthening communities by engaging with local people in delivering services

5. Consultation Summary and findings

A two stage consultation process, best practice visits and a self-assessment presented the following key findings

- A more proactive approach can be adopted for the acquisition and display of materials and objects from businesses, schools and community organisations
- Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way
- Capacity to deliver service improvements can be achieved by strengthening structured collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. For example, volunteers could undertake a floor walking role in the museum
- Consideration should be given to renaming Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility Brent Museum and Local History Centre may generate more interest amongst non-users of the service, particularly younger people
- Workforce development is a priority for the Heritage sector as a whole in order for authorities to deliver seamless services to a diverse audience
- On the evidence of the Archives survey approximately 70% of visitors are Brent residents, the vast majority of whom live in the south of the borough and who declared their ethnicity as white
- Young people like creative and interactive ways of finding out information e.g. touch screens, arts and craft activities and competitions
- The challenges to the financial future of museum and archive services must be recognised and a sustainable and cost effective approach adopted. The options of devolving services to a trust status or adopting a shared service approach need to be given detailed consideration
- New audiences will engage with Brent Museum and Archives if improvements are made to the marketing of services and content of the online and digital offers
- The management and development of Brent's collections need to be reviewed and revised to make them more easily accessible to a wider range of people.

Section 1: Introduction

Brent Museum and Archives exist to collect, preserve, and provide free access to the borough's past, offering enjoyment, learning and inspiration for all. Heritage services face unprecedented challenges in today's economic climate. Maximising the accessibility of collections to demonstrate the value of museums and archives, challenging traditional ways of delivering services, and finding sustainable funding sources are unavoidable priorities. However, these challenges also present opportunities to re-evaluate and re-model services for the better. This strategy sets out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience.

An understanding of Brent's history has an important role to play in giving people a sense of place and increasing their interest and pride in their surroundings. The rich collections of materials in Brent's museum and archives, along with the programmes of exhibitions and events, can promote learning, community cohesion and resilience, and health and wellbeing.

High profile exhibitions and inclusive community work have given Brent a good reputation as an ambitious heritage service. Examples of successful projects and work that the service has delivered in recent years are included in the strategy. A strong commitment to engaging with the diverse local community is demonstrated in a varied exhibition and learning programme. Brent's track record of partnership working to reach wider audiences was instrumental in securing the high profile loan of the Divine Cat, an Egyptian treasure, from the British Museum. Over 5,000 visits were made to the exhibition over two months in 2009.

However, the service is entering an exciting phase of development and has the scope and potential to make a stronger contribution to the council's corporate priorities and to heighten people's knowledge and awareness of the borough's heritage. New museum and archives facilities are due to open in the summer of 2015, offering excellent purpose built spaces with improved access to the collections for residents and visitors to explore and enjoy. In the short term the First World War centenary programme and the Rugby World Cup Festival present opportunities to engage with new audiences, and work is currently being undertaken to identify longer term initiatives.

Public interest in history, particularly family and local, continues to grow, demonstrating that there is a large potential audience for archives and local studies. For example, the Who Do You Think You Are show at London Olympia attracted 15,000 visitors in 2013. Websites such as Ancestry and Findmypast continue to expand and membership of the National Trust increases each year.

The foundations of Brent's heritage collections were laid 120 years ago, when the first Willesden Green librarian, Frank Chennell, encouraged notable local residents to donate historical material. An important founding collection for Brent Museum was bequeathed to the Borough of Wembley in 1937 by the owner of the Express Dairies, George Titus Barham, along with his home and its grounds (now Barham Park.) First opened to the public in May 1977 as The Grange Museum of Community History, the renamed Brent Museum moved to Willesden Green Library Centre in 2006. Most items in the collection relate directly to the history of the borough and its predecessors, and over the past forty years the collection has developed largely through donations and bequests.

The museum's collection largely reflects working and domestic life in Brent from around 1850 to the present day, broadly comprising artefacts, video and oral history recordings, extending to some 10,000 items. There are some older items but the majority relate to this period. In recent years, a structured collecting policy has been implemented, placing greater

emphasis on collecting material that represents the diversity of the borough's population in the twenty-first century.

Brent Archives holds diverse collections related to the borough, its residents and communities. This includes the administrative records of Brent Council and its predecessors. Material in the collections ranges from council minutes and building plans to school records, papers of individuals and businesses, as well as historical maps, street directories, electoral registers, local census returns and an extensive collection of old photographs and postcards. There is a comprehensive collection of books and pamphlets and the main local newspapers on microfilm from 1870 onwards. A comprehensive enquiry service enables residents and visitors to consult the collections free of charge either in person or through written, email or telephone correspondence. For more detailed and complex enquiries there is a charge.

A new cultural centre, The Library at Willesden Green, is scheduled to open in the summer of 2015 and will house a redesigned museum space and new archives facilities. The previous location of the facilities within the building had a minimising impact on visitor access. Despite the challenges of the current economic climate Brent Council has invested in the opportunity to create a purpose built space and improve the borough's cultural and heritage offer.

The new design will maximise visibility and encourage visitor flow to the integrated museum and archives area on the second floor. This will be a secure and environmentally controlled space for the permanent museum; archives search room; exhibition gallery and education room. Clear signage and a heritage 'object trail' throughout the building will stimulate interest in the collections and exhibitions.

The museum and archives will share a joint collection policy and work together on exhibitions, projects and a range of learning programmes. The proximity to the library space in the centre presents a more cohesive heritage offer to visitors.

The museum will tell the history of the borough and its communities with a collection of objects reflecting its diversity and the contribution of residents past and present in shaping the area. The content will chronologically show the rich social history of the borough: dating from the Iron Age, Roman and Saxon eras, the Industrial Revolution, the Victorian age, the two world wars, youth cultures from the 1950s to the 1970s, politics and protests and Brent today. It will highlight stories and characters that make Brent unique and demonstrate its cultural achievements and scientific innovations. The aim is to inspire and engage visitors with the borough's diverse history through an accessible and enjoyable approach which also aids learning.

The new archives search room and storage facilities will be complemented by a new comprehensive guide to the collections and enhanced access to digitised material. Brent Archives service is the primary local history resource for residents and for researchers from across the country and abroad. The focus for the service will be increasing access for physical and virtual visitors.

Recent surveys indicate that approximately 75% of visitors to the museum are Brent residents, and 70% of visitors to the archives are residents. Further analysis showed that a large proportion of visitors live in the Willesden Green area or in the south of the borough, demonstrating that the facilities currently have a localised appeal. There are clear opportunities for increasing engagement amongst current users and attracting new visitors from the wider Brent area and outside the borough.

Section 2: Vision and objectives

The vision of the strategy is

‘Brent’s museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities.

Three objectives have been identified in order to achieve the vision:

Objectives

1. Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by caring for the collections, telling their stories and making them available to all.
2. Increase the scope and use of the collections through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.
3. Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

Objective 1: Ensure that everyone has access to the diverse history of Brent by improving the management and development of the heritage collections.

Actions to deliver this objective include:

- Redevelop and implement a museum and archives collections policy to cover the acquisition, loan and disposal of materials
- Produce an exhibitions and outreach programme, including alternative venues in the borough
- Re-design the heritage webpages to enhance the ease of locating information about what is held in the collections and encourage further learning.
- Participate in the London Archives Project and ensure that Brent is part of the shared service approach to digitisation, a London wide catalogue and joint programming.
- Produce a Consultation and Evaluation policy to ensure that users views are incorporated into our planning
- Implement systems for monitoring the demography of museum and archive users e.g. age, ethnicity.
- Open the new museum space and archives search room at The Library @ Willesden Green

Objective 2: Increase participation through wider community engagement and working with a broader range of partners.

Actions to deliver this objective include:

- Produce and implement an action plan to increase participation from a wider audience range
- Develop and implement an improved offer for researchers and academics through closer working with local colleges and universities
- Improve the marketing of services including exploring options for maximising the use of social media

- Identify core subject areas in order to offer new workshops, loan boxes and resources to schools to meet the needs of the 2014 curriculum
- Develop a robust heritage volunteer policy and launch the heritage volunteer programme.
- Establish a Friends of Brent Museum and Archives group to fundraise and act as advocates for the service.

Objective 3: Provide a financially and environmentally sustainable service which meets the needs of current and future users.

Actions to deliver this objective include:

- Produce an options paper that explores options for alternative governance arrangements
- Review income generation opportunities: produce and implement an action plan
- Assess the viability of introducing a professional research service.
- Develop a heritage publications programme, including how current stock is marketed and future plans
- Produce an options paper for collaborative working with other authorities
- Develop a Policy Statement regarding our approach to the environmental sustainability of the new museum
- Achieve and maintain Museum Accreditation
- Achieve and maintain Archives Accreditation.

A detailed action plan for the first year of the life of the strategy is outlined in Appendix 3. The action plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and an updated action plan produced on an annual basis.

Section 3: National Context

Museum and archives services in the UK are undergoing significant change in terms of organization, function and status. The environment in which local authority museums now operate is complex and diverse. Success in meeting strategic goals often depends on acquiring external funding and meeting the criteria of different funding agencies.

Many services are reported to be expecting cuts of 15-30% over the next three years. Service improvements that have been delivered through additional investment over the past decade are no longer sustainable. There is an increased imperative to improve productivity and contribute demonstrably to economic regeneration. The sector recognises that the services that will thrive in this environment are those that are able to re-vision and re-think their service delivery models, traditional working structures and partnerships.

In some cases the need to respond decisively to the economic downturn is providing the stimulus services. However for others the devolvement of services from local government direct delivery presents a longer term opportunity for the re-visioning of museums and archive provision in the context of wider social change whilst also accelerating growth.

Museums

“Museums change people’s lives. They enrich the lives of individuals, contribute to strong and resilient communities, and help create a fair and just society. Museums in turn are immensely enriched by the skills and creativity of their public.”

Museums Change Lives published by the Museums Association in July 2013

www.museumsassociation.org/museums-change-lives

Museums are highly trusted by the public and audiences are increasing with over half the adult population of England visiting a UK museum in 2012, as revealed by the Taking Part survey. There has been significant change in recent years as government and lottery funding has enabled museums to make better use of their collections to meet the needs of more people. The best services are striving to realise their full potential by building two way relationships with communities, becoming increasingly outward looking and further developing partnership working.

Museums Change Lives is the Museum Association’s vision for increasing social impact by building on the traditional role of preserving collections to connect with a wider audience.

The ten key principles are:

- Every museum is different, but all can maximise their social impact
- Everyone has the right to meaningful participation in the work of museums
- Audiences are creators as well as consumers of knowledge; their insights and expertise enrich and transform the museum experience for others
- Active public participation changes museums for the better
- Museums foster questioning, debate and critical thinking
- Good museums offer excellent experiences that meet public needs
- Effective museums engage with contemporary issues
- Social justice is at the heart of the impact of museums
- Museums are not neutral spaces
- Museums are rooted in places and contribute to local distinctiveness

Archives

“Archives are a vital part of our cultural heritage. They help people, communities and nations make sense of the present and discover a shared sense of their past. They are evidence of events and decisions..... and of people’s own identities.”

Archives for the 21st Century in action: refreshed 2012-15, published by The National Archives (TNA) in 2012

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archives-21-century.htm>

The refreshed action plan, based on *Archives for the 21st Century* (2009), recognises that developments in technology and a growth in public expectations have huge service delivery implications. It makes five recommendations, in a context where governance and funding challenges mean that the status quo is not an option.

- Built to last: develop bigger and better services in partnership –working towards increased sustainability in the sector
- Effective, skilled workforce: strengthened leadership and a responsive workforce
- Digital by design: a co-ordinated response to the growing challenge of managing digital information so that it is accessible now and remains discoverable in the future
- More accessible online: comprehensive online access for archive discovery through catalogues, and to digitised archive content by citizens at a time and place that suits them
- Real outcomes through partnership: active participation in cultural and learning partnerships promoting a sense of identity and a place within the community

Arts and Culture – national context

Arts Council England (ACE) published ‘Great art and culture for everyone’, a revised ten year strategic plan, in 2013. It brings together ACE’s plans for the arts, museums and libraries sectors in one document which identifies five goals.

1. Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries: the work produced by arts organisations and museums, and services provided by libraries, reflects the diversity of contemporary England
2. Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries: more people have the opportunity to experience and participate in culture with increased engagement levels from those sections of the community that are currently underrepresented; there is a demonstrable increase in the depth and quality of people’s cultural experiences
3. Arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable: museums can demonstrate an ability to adapt to their external environment and increase their share of income from a wider range of sources; the cultural sector embraces environmental sustainability
4. The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled: the workforce reflects the diversity of the country indicating that there are fair routes to career entry and progression
5. Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries: more children and young people receive a high-quality cultural education in and out of school.

Section 4: Key themes

This section sets out the key themes of the strategy, with examples of Brent Museum projects and case studies from elsewhere that illustrate what we would like to do in the future.

1. Local Identity

Museums, archives and local history collections belong to everyone and help to define a place by shaping identity and contributing to local distinctiveness. Some people already have a strong sense of ownership of their heritage but the population shifts of recent decades mean that the diversity of local areas is not always fully reflected in core collections. This can be addressed by working with communities to collect and then represent a place's diverse and collective history, thus shaping the future direction of the service.

Heritage services have a key role to play in generating understanding between different cultures by illustrating varied lives, experiences and beliefs; stimulating empathy by helping people to learn about and understand each other.



Brent participated in a London Museums Hub project, 'Reassessing what we collect', working with experts and community groups to establish and share new understandings of its collections. Contemporary collecting is central to Brent Museum's work, ensuring that it continues to evolve and embrace the concept of being a "community museum."

The museum has worked with local Brazilian and Polish groups, both of which communities are currently under-represented amongst service users. Participants were consulted on which objects, representative of their culture, they thought the museum could acquire. A series of workshops, tours and photographic sessions examined how and why objects are collected and documented whilst exploring what it means to be a Brazilian or a Pole living in London. The project resulted in oral history recordings and photographs being added to the Museum and Archives collections.

Case study: Bengali East Project, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

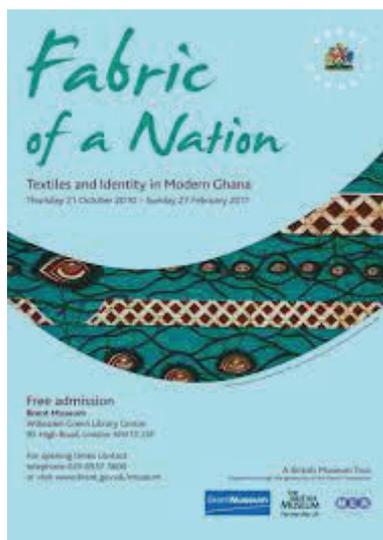
The Local History Library and Archives in Tower Hamlets ran a twelve month trainee scheme to develop new collections and engage with local audiences from communities underrepresented in the archive. A partnership agreement was formed with a local Bengali cultural heritage trust that works with young people on a voluntary basis to promote Bengali culture to a wider audience. The involvement of the trust ensured ownership of the project by community stakeholders.

Staff provided training in heritage skills including cataloguing, digitisation, oral history and preservation. This enabled the trainee to acquire materials and record interviews with community members on behalf of the council. At the final stage of the project the trainee curated an exhibition, booklet and events programme, showcasing highlights from the newly acquired archival and oral history collections. A similar project was subsequently undertaken with the Somali community.

<http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history-resources-the-bengali-east-end>

2. Volunteering

Increasing numbers of people are volunteering to help heritage services to improve their customer offer and create a sense of citizenship. A survey conducted by the Museums Association in 2013 found that 47% of museums had seen an increase in volunteers in the past year. Volunteering can strengthen communities by engaging local people in delivering services and projects, whilst offering a route into work. Heritage services have benefitted from volunteers assisting with front of house work, cataloguing records and undertaking research work for many years. Success is dependent on volunteers being trained and supported to the required level. This includes thinking beyond traditional roles and creating opportunities for people who might not otherwise be able to volunteer.



Brent has a strong record of working with volunteers and in 2011 took part in a partnership volunteer training programme with Croydon Museum, which included training at the British Museum. The aim of the project was to recruit volunteers as invigilators for an exhibition in Brent showing material loaned from the British Museum, *Fabric of a Nation*. Volunteers recruited during this period were invaluable and the service will be offering various volunteering opportunities once the new museum and archive search room open in 2015.

Museums are increasingly recruiting digital volunteers (also known as distance or e-volunteers) to work remotely on projects. Examples include transcribing and translating documents and specific research on buildings, transport systems and military history. This arrangement can increase the diversity of volunteer teams by involving people with, for example, full-time jobs or caring responsibilities that might not otherwise be able to contribute.

Arrangements to ensure that digital volunteers feel part of the team and are kept informed are crucial. York Museums Trust has established a digital volunteering team as part of a wider mission to increase social and digital engagement. A formal structure, including the provision of IT training, has been crucial to the success of the programme.

Case study: Peterborough- Forty Years On archives project

Vivacity, a not for profit organisation which manages many of Peterborough's culture and leisure facilities, recruits volunteers to take up structured opportunities in a supportive environment. Work undertaken includes documenting and conserving materials, delivering school sessions, guiding visitors and project work.

The "Forty Years On" project is run in partnership with the Eastern Angles theatre company. It aims to extend community engagement through a three year programme of theatre, oral history and archive work to explore, document and interpret local history from 1968 to 2008. It draws extensively on local expertise and takes a new approach to cataloguing large amounts of archives material.

Peterborough underwent extensive regeneration in the 1970s and 1980s, evolving from a large market town of 80,000 people into a small city of 166,000 people with an improved infrastructure and a transformed look. The official story is held in the Development Corporation archive, currently uncatalogued and inaccessible. It comprises over 450 boxes of documents, photographs and plans. There is also a hidden story in the memories of local people: from long-standing residents to new arrivals.

The project involved volunteers cataloguing records and recording oral history interviews. Material was then passed on to Eastern Angles who put on two theatre productions with the aid of volunteers.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/peterborough-archives-service.htm>

3. Partnership working

Museum and Archives can place themselves at the heart of their communities, helping to improve the local area by building mutually beneficial partnerships with charities, community groups, children's centres, schools, libraries, arts organisations and social services.

Brent is one of many boroughs with a strong tradition of working with a wide range of organisations. Going forward, a more strategic focus can be adopted to link projects with increasing engagement and building collections. It is crucial that partnerships are sustainable and deliverable with, for example, staffing capacity built into funding bids.

Partnership working with other authorities is on the increase in the sector. Brent is a key partner in the London Archives Project, with 33 London boroughs working together to increase access and awareness, as well as sustainability in the current economic climate. We intend to establish a framework for cooperation with other museum and archives services by identifying areas of shared interest and activity. We will look for opportunities where it would be more cost effective and in the better interests of service users for archives and museums to work together.



Brent Remembers is the borough's contribution to the Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) Digital War Memorial Project. The Libraries, Arts and Heritage team have brought together residents and community groups with two acclaimed poets and an actor for creative sessions commemorating the First World War. Brent is one of ten national partners who will be bringing their creative outputs together on a shared project site on the Historypin website. Without the expertise and support of Historypin, SCL, the Arts Council and the Heritage Lottery fund this project would not have been possible.

Work has been undertaken with the Somali Advice and Forum of Information, Lyon Park Junior School, Queens Park Community School and the wider community to develop and share an understanding of the local and global impact of the war. Using local stories, images of Brent and its residents from the archive, and objects from the museum for inspiration, a variety of poems and dramatic performances have been created to provide the starting point for deeper engagement and artist interpretation.

Case study: Reading Borough Council Donor Scheme

Reading Museum runs a donation scheme enabling local companies to house artefacts in their offices in return for annual donations. On loan from the museum, and housed in bespoke mobile showcases, the "flying objects" serve as talking points and demonstrate the support of the companies for their local museum.

There are 36 objects which include a Victorian fireman's helmet, an Iron Age sword dredged from the Thames, a prehistoric pot and a decorative stone from the ruins of Reading Abbey. The variety is important as members may select a different artefact for their offices every six months in return for their 1k annual donation.

The scheme was launched in 1998 following a set up grant of 32k from the Heritage Lottery Fund. A unique selling point is that the money donated directly funds the museum's education work, which includes lending objects to schools. Sixteen years on there are thirteen members, including the six founder members, and they include law, property and accountancy firms.

<http://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/get-involved/friends/adopt-object-reading-museum/>

4. Learning for all

From supporting children's education to motivating adults to discover more about history, museums and archives can inspire a passion for knowledge and learning. Collections can be used to encourage reflection on contemporary issues, promote human rights, challenge prejudice and champion equality. Displays can be presented to challenge assumptions and stimulate thought about issues such as discrimination, poverty and climate change.

Brent has a successful track record of working with schools and families. In the past year the school outreach programme has reached over 2,500 children from twenty different schools. At Lyon Park Infant School approximately 400 students took part in Black History month and local history projects as well as other stand-alone taught sessions.



Archive services naturally attract students and researchers but there are areas that can be further developed. For example, classes could be provided on the use of primary sources to give students a clear idea of the resources available to them.

Case study: The Stitch in Time project

The Museum of Manchester Regiment in Ashton-under-Lyne has hosted a sewing group since 2010. The group aims to open up the museum and its collections to a wider audience. Open to experts and beginners, the group is free to attend and is a fun way to meet new people, develop skills and swap sewing patterns. Some participants found that attending the group had a positive impact in respect of on-going health issues.

The museum held an exhibition of community needlework to showcase the outcome of a group project. One exhibit was a quilt with each of its squares having an image illustrating why participants felt proud of Tameside. The group gained its first international member after featuring in a cross-stitch magazine when a woman who had relocated to Australia in 1978 contributed work inspired by old maps of the area.

<http://www.tameside.gov.uk/museumsgalleries/stitchintime>

5. Art bringing history to life

Collaborative working between museums, archives, libraries and arts organisations and artists can provide a rich and comprehensive cultural offer. With over 300 museums and galleries and over 500 libraries in the south east of England, they are the perfect venues for bringing writers, artists and other arts professionals together with audiences.

The Arts Awards scheme, administered by the Arts Council in partnership with Trinity College, London, provides qualifications to young people and inspires them to explore their culture and heritage. In order to attain an award, young people may respond to different stimuli, including heritage collections and sites, to develop their understanding of the arts as well as their creativity, communication and leadership skills.



In 2011 the Stories of the World project funded Brent's commissioning of artists to work with two groups of young people, using the heritage collections to inspire creativity. The first group explored the costumes in the museum collection to inspire the making of a film about their identity and how they express themselves. The second group used archives photographs to explore the Harlesden area, working with a poet and a visual artist to write poems and create a piece of art work.

Case Study: The Truck Art Project in Luton

Truck Art is practiced on vehicles in Pakistan and South Asia, creating vibrant and highly personal works of art. The project celebrated Luton's strong links with Pakistan, where Bedford trucks produced in the town in the 1950s are still in use. With help from Vauxhall Motors, Luton Culture sourced a vintage Bedford truck from Malta and shipped it to the UK. With help from Re-Created (the museum's youth group), a gypsy artist and a Karachi based truck painter; the Bedford was transformed into a multi-coloured truck. Re-Created, with members aged from 11 to 25, works with staff in an advisory role, giving young people a voice in how the service is run. The team has worked on a range of projects and in this case co-curated the exhibition and the truck decoration. Six team members went to Pakistan to see the trucks and gain inspiration for their artistic creation.

<http://www.lutonculture.com/community-projects/past-projects/stories-of-the-world/truck-art/>

6. Digital Content

It is estimated that only 10% of all content in UK libraries, archives and museums is digitised. A 2010 EU report recommended that more be done to digitise Europe's cultural heritage to avoid slipping into a digital dark age. A 2012 survey revealed that, on average, European heritage organisations intend to digitise around 60% of their collections. It also showed that, in general, museums have made significantly more progress than libraries and archives.

Archive services have the opportunity to deliver services more efficiently and to engage with more people through digital and mobile technology. Engaging people in digital projects offers them the opportunity to develop both their interest in local history and their technology skills.

The digital collection at Brent Museum and Archives is a major resource with 75% of the photographic and prints and drawings collections available in digital format. These images are searchable and viewable through the public catalogue. It is planned to continue this work through the digitisation of the oral history collection.



The Imperial War Museum has recently made 14,000 sound recordings available online to complete the digitisation of its collection. The museum takes the view that, in addition to improving access to the collection, digitisation has provided an excellent educational tool and enhanced the quality of the audience experience

Case Study: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea – Virtual Museum

The development of a Virtual Museum has brought to life the history of Kensington and Chelsea through information, illustrations and artefacts from archives in the borough's collections. The local history blog the "Library Time Machine" started in 2011 and has quickly become a phenomenon with an average of 12,000 page views per month. The weekly blog, created and written by the local history librarian, provides fascinating insights into the past lives of people who lived and worked in the borough.

Images from the blog have been re-posted nationally and internationally. Users have added their own comments and reminiscences, joining a wider community of learning inside the worldwide blogosphere. It has brought together descendants of some of the subjects as well as professional and family historians.

<http://rbkclocalstudies.wordpress.com/>

7. Health and Wellbeing

Museums and archives can boost people's quality of life and improve their mental and physical health through engagement with collections in the company of other people. They offer a supportive environment to visitors of all backgrounds and needs. Best practice examples include work undertaken with unemployed and homeless people, isolated older people and looked after children. Services are increasingly finding targeted ways to serve people with health needs, such as those with dementia or individuals in care homes.

A survey undertaken by the Scottish government has established a clear link between culture, good health and high life satisfaction. The Healthy Attendance report, based on data from the Scottish Household Survey 2011, showed that people who visited museums were 20% more likely to report good health and 37% more likely to report high life satisfaction than those who did not visit.



In 2011 Brent Museum and Archives engaged with local mental health service users through an Arts in Health project. The project saw a group of adults use the collections as inspiration to help them produce a piece of creative writing, with the results collected together in a community exhibition.

Heritage services can also contribute to an area's social and economic regeneration by helping people prepare for work, encouraging visitors to use local businesses and offering

support to local employers and workers. They are well placed to promote the conservation and recycling of items and can improve an area's environment by working with organisations such as transition towns.

Case Study - Leicestershire's Open Museum

Through its loans collections, Leicestershire's Open Museum aims to use objects and artworks to make a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of people of all ages. Sharing Stories is just one example of a project which has supported local communities with the NHS's five ways to wellbeing (to connect; be active; take notice; keep learning; to give.)

As an intergenerational project it engaged with two diverse and hard to reach audiences to develop meaningful heritage activities. It brought together a group of local care home residents and a group of teenagers with behavioural problems. The project was based on a theme of myths and legends with activities focused on telling and sharing stories. After gaining a better understanding of elderly people and how to use museum objects, the teenagers devised a range of activities for the residents.

The young people felt empowered to make a positive contribution and developed an interest in the objects. The residents engaged with the activities and felt stimulated by the interaction with people outside of their normal routine. They demonstrated decreased stress levels and negativity and empathised with the young people.

http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/leisure_tourism/museums/open_museum/wellbeingprojects.htm

8. Service accreditation

The Museum Accreditation Scheme is administered by Arts Council England (ACE), supporting approximately 1,800 museums to meet national standards and identify areas for development. The scheme has been adapted to help museums become more resilient through effective forward planning, taking a balanced approach to collection management and being responsive to user needs. There are three overarching requirements for accreditation.

1. Organisational health – accredited museums are responsible, responsive and resilient. This includes the need for a clear statement of purpose, appropriate management arrangements, effective forward planning, an appropriate workforce, and an organisational approach to environmental sustainability.
2. Collections - accredited museums manage collections effectively and make them and the information they hold about them available to everyone. This includes making satisfactory ownership arrangements, having approved policies for managing and developing collections, and being guided by a care and conservation plan.
3. Users and their experiences - accredited museums are welcoming and accessible. They exhibit their collections and have a planned approach to providing a good quality service for a broad range of users, backed up by robust user and non user profiling mechanisms. Visitors are offered a rewarding experience in a welcoming and accessible environment and a range of effective learning experiences are provided.

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/>

The Archives Service Accreditation scheme is a TNA framework for identifying strengths and areas for improvement. It is specific to archives but supports the move towards integrated management of cultural collections. It has three overarching sections: organisational health; collections; stakeholders and their experiences. These correlate with, but do not mirror, the Museum Accreditation Standard.

1. Organisational health – the service has a defining mission statement and a legally robust relationship to its parent body. Effective forward plans and formal terms of building occupancy should be in place in a financially stable environment. The workforce is an appropriate one to carry out its plans and volunteering policies support performance and workforce development.
2. Collections – the service has a co-ordinated approach to collections management and development. It can provide an action plan for enhancing catalogue records and tackling backlogs. A policy and action plan on care and conservation are in place to ensure the long term preservation of the collection. A tested recovery plan and procedures are in place to enable an effective response to emergency situations and ensure business continuity.
3. Stakeholders and their experiences – the service has a clear policy on access and engagement which demonstrates a good understanding of community needs. Mechanisms for gathering demographic data are in place and stakeholders are consulted to continuously improve community engagement.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/accreditation.htm>

Case Study- Kirtham Museum, Forward Planning and the Accreditation Scheme

The museum collections are drawn mainly from the communities of Redcar and Cleveland, as well as a collection of national significance; the finds from the Street House Anglo-Saxon cemetery, the only known Anglo-Saxon royal burial site in north-east England.

The museum was invited to submit its Accreditation Return in 2012. Officers realised that central to their planning, at a time when the council had to make savings, was a need to place service sustainability at the heart of their vision, A strategy evolved to place the museum at the centre of the council's thinking and priorities by

- *Raising the profile of the museum within the council and with stakeholders*
- *Maximising the use of the collections and the venue to reach out to new audiences, and forge new partnerships*

The forward planning process linked to the Accreditation Scheme has been hugely beneficial to the museum and its users, providing a renewed sense of purpose to drive forward an ambitious arts-focussed programme, which aligns with the purpose and direction of the local authority. There is a strong sense that the museum profile has been raised internally and externally, and that there is a greater sense of ownership from the council.

http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/media/documents/c1/a923/f6/Kirkleatham_Museum_Case_Study-01.pdf

9. Future planning and governance

A number of authorities have considered alternative forms of governance for heritage services in recent years. The most successful models to date have been the contracting out of services to trusts and shared service arrangements.

Historically, the most frequently implemented **trust model** is a non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO) with charitable status. A distinguishing feature is that profits cannot be distributed, but are invested back into the company. A distinction can be drawn between the outsourcing of services and the devolution of services via the creation of a trust.

- Outsourcing via a procurement process to award a contract to an external organisation to deliver a defined set of services for a fixed fee and time
- Devolution via a permanent transfer of services to a specially created charitable trust within an agreed delivery plan and funding arrangement. It doesn't require a tendering process but relies on a close ongoing working relationship. Devolution is the most common approach for setting up trusts in the heritage sector, which currently lacks an established commercial market.

In the case of **shared services**, there are two examples of London boroughs having implemented integrated service delivery arrangements. There are differences between the two examples but both demonstrate that an innovative model can deliver savings and provide a sound base on which to shape future development.

Bexley and Bromley have operated a shared service arrangement for their library and archives services since 2011, delivering benefits and efficiency savings. The archives services share a management post and strategic and back office functions. There is potential to further develop integrated working, including customer facing services.

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=10139&p=0>

The Triborough arrangement (Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Westminster) jointly manages three library and archives services while retaining the identity of the authorities. Using legislation and powers under Section 113 of the Local Government Act (1972) the changes delivered total savings of over £1million and facilitated service improvements. The focus has been on management and back office functions but a platform has been built to enable further service integration.

<http://www.goscl.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Tri-borough-Best-Practice-scl-11052012.pdf>

In **Manchester**, the redevelopment of the Central Library is bringing together two archive services. Greater Manchester County Record Office and Manchester Archives & Local Studies are linking up with complementary partners to create Archives+, a combined regional archive offer providing high quality customer services in an iconic building. The complementary partners include North West Film Archive, University of Manchester, Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Education Trust, Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society, British Film Institute, and Manchester Registration Service (Historic Registers).

<http://www.historypin.com/channels/view/10628/#!/photos/list/>

Case Study - The London Archives Project

The Association of London Chief Librarians (ALCL) and The National Archives (TNA) commissioned a study in 2013 to explore the potential advantages of archive services in London working more closely and creatively together. The project uncovered a complex landscape for archives and local studies in London in terms of size, range and resources. However, all London authorities share the ever increasing pressures on budgets, the need to look for alternative ways of funding services, and the need to demonstrate how heritage services meet council priorities.

An informal partnership between the boroughs, TNA, London Councils and the London Metropolitan Archives has been created to enable joint working initiatives and the projects below are already underway:

- The creation of a shared London archives catalogue by using the existing AIM25 network*
- Joint initiatives around WWI commemorative events, led by the London Metropolitan Archives*
- Joint initiatives around the 50th anniversary of the London boroughs in 2015*
- A digitisation partnership leading to a commercially viable shared images portal*
- London wide procurement of conservation, storage, services and materials*

Partners are also exploring a number of options, such as

- Shared marketing and collective branding/identity*
- Joint schools provision and learning resources linked to the London Curriculum*
- Working more effectively with HE and FE sector*
- A London wide volunteer programme*
- Joint bids for external funding and sponsorship*

<http://www.archivesforlondon.org/projects/>

Section 5: Consultation summary and findings

Survive and Thrive self assessment

A self assessment was completed against a framework of organisational characteristics at the outset of the strategy development process. The 'Survive and Thrive' framework is administered by the Museum of London to support museums and archives with organisational health in the current challenging climate. The following strengths and areas for development were identified:

Key strengths: Willesden Green redevelopment project, strong and varied programme of outreach work, service planning aligned to corporate priorities and the borough plan.

Key areas for improvement: communication and marketing, clear aspirations and vision, medium to long term planning, strategic approach to partnership working, clarifying alignment between the service offer and community needs.

Consultation

A two stage consultation process was undertaken; a preliminary stage to gather feedback and data to inform the production of the draft strategy, followed by a full public and stakeholder consultation on the draft strategy and action plan.

Stage 1- Preliminary Consultation

- Internal stakeholders - Regeneration and Major Projects, Children and Families, ITU, BACES and Legal and Democratic Services
- Wembley History Society and Willesden Local History Society
- External stakeholder focus group
- Museum of London
- National Archives
- Mount Stewart Junior School and St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- Archives Visitor survey
- Best practice visits to other London boroughs

Stage Two: Formal Consultation

A three-month consultation period on the draft strategy was undertaken through:

- An online questionnaire with paper copies available on request
- Consultation documentation sent to approximately 1500 stakeholders including individuals, The Citizens Panel¹, volunteers and voluntary organisations and national agencies including the Museum of London and The National Archives
- Two informal drop-in sessions
- Officer attendance at three Brent Connects Forums
- Officer attendance at two stakeholder meetings, one of which was with Brent History Societies

¹ Brent Citizens' Panel started as a partnership between the Council, the police and Brent Health Action Zone. It consists of local residents who reflect Brent's diverse population. The main aim of the panel is to provide a platform through which we can learn residents' views on local services.

Questionnaire Survey

The survey was available on the Council's Consultation Portal and 34 completed questionnaires were submitted.

- 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the vision of the draft strategy while agreement for each of the three draft objectives ranged from 82% to 85%.
- 73% and 68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the draft strategy and action plan respectively covered the key issues relating to museum and archives provision in Brent.
- Over half of respondents (59%) had visited Brent Museum during the past year. However, only a third (35%) had visited Brent Archive Services during the past two years whilst 24% had visited the Archives website during the same period
- Over half of respondents (58%) would be interested in being a Friend of Brent Museum and Archives and over a third (38%) would be interested in volunteering.

140 additional individual comments were received from 34 respondents and these included:

Concern about the wording of the draft strategy; the staffing policy; physical access to the museum and library including suggestions for part of the materials to be available elsewhere in the Borough; various aspects of the implementation of the strategy; governance issues; charging policy; the role of volunteers; the relationship of the service to sectors of the community; the needs for on-going user consultation and the similarities between Brent and other areas was as important as highlighting the differences.

Although the programme of consultation on the draft strategy was a comprehensive one, the level of feedback response was lower than anticipated. This can be partly attributed to the fact that the draft strategy broadly reflected the feedback received during the first stage of the consultation.

Focus group consultation

In order to glean more detailed feedback on future priorities for the service, particularly from identified target groups of residents, a series of focus groups/group interviews was commissioned in September 2014.

Four groups were set up with different target sample sectors of the population as follows:

Demographic	Number in the Group
Retired Irish members of the Brent community living in a sheltered housing project (Innisfree)	14
Somali members of the Brent community	8
A sub-set of Brent's citizen's panel, containing a mix of demographics (but with a heavy bias to white European)	9
Indian (primarily Gujarati) members of the Brent community	17

The three areas for exploration in these groups were:

- 1) What will make their communities engage with the museum and archives?
- 2) What kind of subjects would they like to see covered in our exhibition programmes?
- 3) How we can make our collections more relevant and how we can gain the trust of communities so that they will donate material to the collections?

Some broad statements can be made about the data supplied by the 48 participants and these include:

- All of the groups were able to understand what a museum is, but the difference between a museum and an archive (and how an archive can help people to research history) needs perhaps more explanation, particularly for those whose first language is not English.
- On the whole, the white Europeans in the groups visited museums more than the people from other ethnic groups.
- The minority ethnic groups in the exercise (Indian and Somali) tended to see museums as somewhere they could enjoy their own culture, or demonstrate it to others; the white Europeans (these included the Irish group) in the exercise were more likely to see museums as a chance to view the culture of others
- Location plays a large part in whether people visit museums; there were those who would visit a museum out of curiosity wherever it was.
- Principally, the groups saw museums as a repository for everyday objects that tell stories of the past; a few saw them as places where documents are kept
- What most people in the exercise wanted out of a Brent museum was for it to be a place where cultures within Brent are shared (through the display of everyday objects, documents and stories that explain those cultures), as well as being a place where the history and geography of Brent is displayed and explained
- Although the idea of a permanent exhibition was popular with some of the participants, the most popular form of exhibition was a temporary one, which could be topical, and could travel.
- No-one in any of the groups indicated that they *would not* be willing to donate an object to a museum; the largest barrier to this would seem to be to get people to understand what would be the sort of material a museum might want (i.e. to help people realise the value of what they simply see as everyday objects or materials). In this context, some sort of publicised 'donation event' might be popular.

It can be concluded that the findings of the focus groups fits in to the vision and objectives of the strategy.

Ongoing consultation

Furthermore, in recent years officers have undertaken consultative project work with a range of community groups reflecting the diversity of Brent. The feedback from this work has led to successful projects but has also been taken into account in the drawing up of this strategy.

Examples include:

- Working with Polish and Brazilian residents to collect objects and materials
- An exhibition and community project celebrating African culture that resulted in materials being exhibited and added to the collection

- Belonging in Brent; an oral history project which aimed to illustrate the life stories of three communities, namely Jewish people from Europe, Irish and West Indian people who settled in Brent between from the 1930s to the 1950s
- British Empire Exhibition engagement work has examined notions of empire amongst different communities
- The North West Somali project captured the lives and the experience of the Somali community in Brent in the form of oral history and photography.

In this way the service continuously engages with Brent's diverse communities, asking them to participate in the museum and archives work and to gain an understanding of what the service can offer for them. This engagement work is reflected in this strategy and the action plan.

Key findings

- A more proactive approach can be adopted for the acquisition and display of materials and objects from businesses, schools and community organisations
- Digitisation of Museum and Archives material, including oral history material, and the resulting widening of access to the rest of the UK and abroad should be a priority for the service. A cross London digitisation project is under way
- Capacity to deliver service improvements can be achieved by strengthening structured collaborative working with schools, local historians and volunteers. For example, volunteers could undertake a floor walking role in the museum
- Consideration should be given to renaming Brent Museum and Archives. For example, renaming the facility Brent Museum and Local History Centre may generate more interest amongst non-users of the service, particularly younger people
- Workforce development is a priority for the Heritage sector as a whole in order for authorities to deliver seamless services to a diverse audience
- On the evidence of the Archives survey approximately 70% of visitors are Brent residents, the vast majority of whom live in the south of the borough and who declared their ethnicity as white
- Young people like creative and interactive ways of finding out information e.g. touch screens, arts and craft activities and competitions
- The challenges to the financial future of museum and archive services must be recognised and a sustainable and cost effective approach adopted. The options of devolving services to a trust status or adopting a shared service approach need to be given detailed consideration
- New audiences will engage with Brent Museum and Archives if improvements are made to the marketing of services and content of the online and digital offers
- The management and development of Brent's collections need to be reviewed and revised to make them more easily accessible to a wider range of people.

Where relevant and appropriate the strategy and action plan have been revised to reflect the comments received, including the wording of the vision and the three objectives.