

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group for the Delivery of the
Recommendations in the *What's in Store?* Report
held in the
National Museum & Gallery Cardiff and CyMAL, Aberystwyth
Wednesday 11th May 2005**

Present: Mike Houlihan, Chair (MH); Richard Brewer, NMGW (RJB); Vince Devine, Cadw (VD); Gareth Edwards, RCAHMW (GE); Mary Ellis, CyMAL (ME); Gavin H. Evans, Archaeological Archives Forum (GHE); Jane Henderson, Cardiff University (JH); Kate Howell, IFA (Wales) (KH); Hilary Malaws, RCAHMW (HM); Frank Olding, Federation of Museums & Art Galleries of Wales (FO); Emma Plunkett-Dillon, CBA (Wales) (EP-D) and Elizabeth Walker, NMGW (EAW).

1. Welcome and introductions

Mike Houlihan welcomed Kate Howell, Frank Olding and Emma Plunkett-Dillon to their first meeting.

2. The minutes of the meeting held 17th March 2005

The minutes were accepted as a correct and accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Minute 5.4 – recommendation 6 – the discussion was held over until the next meeting. **Action: RJB & HM** to meet and report back to the next meeting.

3.2 Minute 5.4 – recommendation 6 – Gavin Evans reported on initiatives underway in England. The main area of progress appears to be the OASIS project which is beginning to address issues of access to grey literature in England and the work of the ADS who are developing standards for the curation of digital archives.

3.3 Minute 5.5 – recommendation 8 – Gavin Evans reported that there are a number of organisations across the U.K. providing training courses for archaeology. The Archaeology Training Forum helps co-ordinate and develop training provision for archaeologists across the country. CyMAL are currently undertaking a training needs analysis for the non-national museum curators. **Action: GHE & ME** to contact Denise Lavis to see if there are areas that the *What's in Store?* Delivery Group can contribute to.

It was agreed that there are two types of training provision; that requested directly by Museum curators that can be facilitated by CyMAL and training that may be required in order to implement the Delivery Group's recommendations and standards.

4. Report on a meeting held with Tom Cassidy, Chair of the Historic Environment Group

The Chairman reported that a meeting had been held with Tom Cassidy and Richard Avent at the Cadw offices. The summary notes of the discussion had previously been circulated to members of the Delivery Group.

It was explained that the Delivery Group has a clearly defined set of targets to deliver the recommendations of the *What's in Store?* report so is intended to be a group that will have a natural end to its work. The Group has authority to apply for funding and will be expected to rely on the organisations in which members work to provide the monitoring of any money received.

The Historic Environment Group will continue to be informed of the development of the strategic and the action plans by the Chairman.

The Delivery Group welcomed the outcome of the meeting which was seen to be very helpful in clarifying the role of the Group.

5. The Strategic Plan and the Action Plan

5.1 The Strategic Plan was accepted by the Group.

5.2 It was agreed that the Action Plan needs to be updated in the light of discussion of recommendation 8. The more detailed plan for recommendations 4, 5 and 7 needs to be incorporated. **Action: MH & EAW** to update.

The Action Plan is a document that will develop and change as work on the recommendations progresses.

6. Recommendation 2 – create a database of Welsh archaeological collections

A draft application to CyMAL for funding for a feasibility study for a database had been circulated for comment prior to the meeting. Hilary Malaws explained that some of the work is dependent upon the RCAHMS who have confirmed that they can undertake the aspects that concern them, however, this work will be critical upon the swift appointment of a consultant to undertake the project.

Mary Ellis observed that the project might be better split over two years given the need to go out to tender for three quotes from people willing to undertake the work. She also confirmed that CyMAL would be able to take a decision in around 10 days following receipt of the bid. **Action: HM** to check that RCAHMS are happy with this and revise the application accordingly.

Work will commence to draw up the Project Initiation Document (PID) which the Group will be invited to comment on. The aim will be to sign it off at the next meeting (or electronically beforehand if required earlier). **Action HM & GE** to draft the PID.

A list of consultants who might be approached to undertake the work will be created. Names and addresses should be sent to Elizabeth Walker.
Action: EAW to collate a list of potential consultants.

The financial arrangements were discussed as RCAHMMW is unable to manage funding for external projects. It was agreed that the bid to CyMAL will be submitted in the name of the Delivery Group but that the Federation of Museums & Art Galleries in Wales will administer any grant obtained via an arrangement it has with Carmarthenshire County Council.

7. Recommendation 3 – establish a national panel for archaeology

The meeting with Tom Cassidy and Richard Avent resulted in a suggestion that the Drafting Group might become a National Panel for Archaeological Archives, as it was felt that a Panel for Archaeology would be too difficult to create.

Jane Henderson expressed concerns about this saying that the original aim of the recommendation was to look more broadly at archaeology as a whole rather than solely at issues concerning archives. The issue of the Delivery Group itself having a proposed short lifespan as well was raised.

Kate Howell raised concerns about the definition of archaeological archives used by the original *What's in Store?* Steering Group and asked whether this could be revisited in the context of the discussion about a national panel.

Action: JH to draft terms of reference for a National Panel for discussion at a future meeting. A longer time slot will be allocated to enable a full discussion about this and the definition at a future meeting **Action: EAW**.

8. Recommendations 4, 5 and 7 – standards for archaeological archives

A draft action plan for the delivery of this recommendation had been circulated. **Action: MH & EAW** to incorporate this into the main Action Plan.

Work gathering information on the stages that the procedure should address and the issues that may require more discussion have been collated. **Action: EAW** will arrange a meeting of those working on this and will circulate the progress summary prior to the next Delivery Group meeting.

Jane Henderson and Elizabeth Walker will be discussing the development of standards with members of the Federation of Museums & Art Galleries of Wales at their Archaeology Study Day on May 17th.

9. Recommendation 1 – creation of shared archaeological resource centre(s)

The Chairman of the Historic Environment Group has expressed his willingness to support a bid for funding to progress this recommendation. It may be possible to apply for funding through the Culture Fund, but there will be a delay before this can be done. It was agreed that the Working

Group might be able to start to tackle some of the issues to pave the way for a bid for funding.

Action: MH to explore the issues with the Culture Division of the National Assembly to discuss options for the potential for funding the delivery of this recommendation.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 It was reported that the Federation of Museums & Art Galleries in Wales will be holding a study day on Archaeology at which several members of the Delivery Group will be speaking.

10.2 Frank Olding asked about SWISH's ability to present data generated in the TOAD format. Hilary Malaws reassured everyone that SWISH acts as a portal for all databases on a non-commercial basis and that anyone using the data would not be aware of which database the record was created on.

10.3 Gavin Evans reported that AAF have been seeking funding from Wales for a project to develop standards for archaeological archives **Action: EAW** will draft a letter to the Secretary of AAF to remind them that Wales should continue to be featured in the documentation but explaining the work of the Delivery Group.

10.4 It was noted that a draft of MAP3 is currently being prepared by English Heritage. It was unclear how Cadw might apply this **Action: VD** to establish what Cadw's view is on the draft document.

10.5 It was felt that the MAP3 document might be helpful in developing standards for archaeological archives **Action: EAW** to seek to obtain a copy of the document for use by the Delivery Group.

10.6 It was noted that Charles Hill has resigned from the Group and has suggested that one of the Principal Archaeology Officers from one of the Trusts should attend future meetings. **Action: EAW** to contact Louise Austin to seek a new representative from the Trusts.

11. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting will be held Friday 24th June 2pm. If possible it will be by video conference between Cardiff and Aberystwyth.