**DCMS Open Data Forum.**

**Monday 14th April**

Attendees:

Bill Thompson (BBC)

Neil Wilson (BL)

Daniel Evans (Science Museum)

Alex Pilcher (Tate)

Richard Keyte (DCMS)

Tom Knight (DCMS)

Ben Horan (DCMS)

Laura Clayton (EH)

Rob Scott (BFI)

Katelyn Rogers (OKF)

Steve Benton (Wikimedia)

Annette Ure (NHM)

Vince Smith (NHM)

John Jackson (NHM)

Jane Audas (IWM)

Andrew Turton (GC)

Max Beverton (OfCom

**Introduction**

**Tom Knight** provided a re-cap of the first event. It was agreed to focus in April on economic and social business cases for open data. DCMS has an understanding of intrinsic value of culture and does a lot of work around it, however there is a need for a better understanding and explanation of the benefits and business case for Open Data. **Richard Keyte** provided an update from DCMS more generally; we are still very interested in opening and sharing data, and to identify common difficulties, and see if the group or Department can help overcome. If anyone has interest in DCMS data, or other contacts the department could provide please let us know. We are keen to understand how DCMS can leverage its position. If people think smaller groups would be of more use DCMS would be happy to facilitate, e.g. a regulators group with contacts from other Depts.

**Bill Thompson – Head of Participation Development in Archive Group at BBC**

*BBC Memorandum of Understanding*

Bill gave an introduction to the current situation at the BBC and the background to the signing of the MoU. He outlined the BBC’s general trend towards openness but the lack of any concrete policy in the area. He designed the MoU as appoint of reference for staff and colleagues, to show high level support and to enable discussion about openness. The MoU was an attempt to clarify and lock down the BBC’s position, and act as a starting point from which to explore and share thinking, and also act as leverage in future discussions with colleagues. MoU was signed last year, as documented on the wiki page: <https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Potential_memorandum_of_understanding_and_collaboration_with_BBC>

Bill covered growing the archive, and the BBC store. Commercialisation is only one approach – lots of the material is not suitable for a commercial approach, yet still has huge cultural and social value. The MoU sets out a public statement covering their commitment to open data, web and internet, and also won the support of James Purnell (BBC's Director of Strategy and Digital) which gave added impact in internal discussions and highlighted top level support.

**Comments:**

**Natural History Museum** – has worked on a European common position for the big six in Natural History– this has been productive so far. There was no binding commitment, but it outlined aspirations, and helps to work towards ‘critical mass’ of enthusiasm.

**Daniel Evans - Science Museum**

*Business case for Open Data at the Science Museum*

Daniel gave an overview of the Science Museum’s background in the area. Project: aiming to bring people along and get buy-in, with separate methods for ‘open’ and ‘linked ‘ and ‘linked open’ data. Helping to get other people get visibility and awareness of content and engagement – openness helps. Approach to deriving values from content – have taken approach of calculating value as = quality vs reach.

Letting other people do things with data can be a mental step but is very important. Internal reluctance can be overcome by shouting about successes. He gave the example of the *Climate Change game* (2011) – users could rip it back to their own sites. It was initially seeded on 12 websites – before long 1000 sites had it, with 6 million hits. This multiplied value and impact of what they were doing and massively broadened range. Also gave example of ‘Brought this to life’ (<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife.aspx> ). Pictures blogged from the site have been re-blogged and even appeared in the Huffington Post – significantly boosted search engine hits. This success, and the way it has been shared to colleagues has helped build a very good reputation within the organisation. Ultimately formed presumption of openness – very light and non-binding but effective.

**Comments:**

**British Library** – chance to play this situation both ways. Combination of online image sales and 1 million images on Flickr freely available. Has broad reach – images have been used on a huge range of things, even on custom skateboards! This approach is nuanced with different releases (variety of sizes and formats), some which have been monetised and some not, depending on uses and values, achieving ‘best of both worlds’.

**Katelyn Rogers - OPEN GLAM Working Group**

Katelyn presented on the successes of the Open Glam working group (full presentation here: ) Open Glam is starting to build a real community around the working group. The general perception within the field that had previously been promoted is ‘build it and they will come’. In reality this is not the case, and while there has been lots of discussion about benefits and releasing value, to get results we need people working with it (building apps, using data and exploring new directions). Gave examples of:

* Institute of Sound and Vision in Netherlands
* Wikimedian in residence scheme
* HistoryPin
* Brooklyn museum
* Rijksmuseum
* RLUK (Research Libraries UK)

**Comments:**

The **Science Museum’s** Zooniverse projectis working on data, and asking for key specific tasks to be undertaken. This is a good example of a practical/clever interface, and manages interaction very well. From there some people will look at further involvement or invent projects (‘pyramid of engagement’). Need to ensure that pilot projects work and have deliverables - might not accurately replicate bigger release, but will still help build community, experience and acceptance/familiarity.

**NHM** – raised the transcription example as a potentially tricky but also very useful direction.

**UCL** have also been running an open transcribing project - <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/transcribe-bentham/>. It is clearly a very interesting concept but has suffered issues with engagement.

**General discussion:**

**Wikimedian in residence**

Other ALBs already have wiki assistance. Wikimedia can circulate case studies to anyone who is interested- <http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedian_in_Residence> . The **BBC** has experience of them adding real value – having a data literate individual on the team can be a big asset and help unlock capacity. A data architect in residence not only adds beautification to what you have but can make maximum use of data, and supports the internal case by showcasing what can be done, and that there is external interest. Depending on their specific skillset they can help explain benefits and encourage releases, build internal and external communities, and look at linking work to external communities.

**Wikimania**

This year we are lucky to have it at the London Barbican. Has a broader focus than purely wiki-related topics, looking at wider open data/content/licensing. It runs from 9th-11th August, and will include specific focus on open data, providing opportunities to see and meet users and advocates. Main site: <http://wikimania2014.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page> The main event is also preceded by an Open Data hack – July 5th/6th which again people are welcome at - <http://wikimania2014.wikimedia.org/wiki/Fringe/Open_Data_Hack>

**What can DCMS do better?**

The group was asked for comments on what DCMS could do to better support members. The following were suggested:

* Be vocal about events and work – do help ALBs to work under the banner of DCMS
* Start to help identify the demand

DCMS is currently setting up a public page on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) which will include content from Forum meetings, contributions from participants, and act as a contact point for queries or requests. DCMS will also look at coming up with a draft MoU regarding our suggested approach to Open Data for ALBS. **DCMS request** – if releasing data or tools please link to [www.data.gov.uk](http://www.data.gov.uk) – we can provide support, and it will help flag that it is available and what organisations are releasing.

**Ideas for July/August meeting:**

Ofcom, BBC, British Library and Science Museum all volunteered facilities for future events

* MoU/Statement for DCMS ALBS
* Further specific case studies for discussion
* Building communities – specific guidance and examples
* Making Open Data business as usual
* Useable metrics that people can agree too (including KPIs etc)
* Usability and spread of open data
* Wikimania – lead-in about contributions and planned content, or feedback following main event
* OfCom – possible content on upcoming releases