

Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Newsplan (Cymru) Working Party held at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, on Tuesday 14 October 1997

Present: David Shone, John Thomas, Christopher Edwards, Marilyn Jones, Non Jenkins, Beti Jones, Rhidian Griffiths, Iwan Jones (Secretary)

### 1. Apologies and personal matters

Apologies for absence were received from Susan Ellis (Conwy), Brynmor Jones (Cardiff), Rebeca Little (Bridgend), Susan Pugh (Newport), Kay Warren-Morgan (Rhondda Cynon Taff) and Gareth Haulfryn Williams (Gwynedd). John Thomas (Wrexham, substituting for Joy Thomas) and Marilyn Jones (Swansea) were welcomed to their first meeting. In the absence of Brynmor Jones, Chairman of the Working Party, David Shone agreed to chair the meeting.

### 2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 March 1997 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of 11 March 1997 had been circulated and were accepted as a correct record, subject to the correction of the titles of certain newspapers. The Herald of Wales (Item 3 para 2) should read Yr Herald Cymraeg and the Penarth Times (Item 3 para 6) had not yet been filmed.

### 3. Review of progress, future plans and work in progress

Flintshire. David Shone reported that Flintshire continued to film 'inherited titles' which had been filmed by Clwyd. Flintshire had reviewed holdings of both archives and libraries and had produced a lengthy print-out which revealed that there was need for substantial retrospective filming to fill gaps in the collections. He saw cooperation with other authorities, both directly and through the Newsplan Working Party, as the way to avoid duplication of effort.

Wrexham. John Thomas said that although Joy Thomas had taken on additional duties she was still involved with Newsplan. Like Flintshire, Wrexham was actively encouraging liaison between its libraries and archives, and looking to cooperate with other authorities in order to make the best use of resources.

The Vale of Glamorgan. Christopher Edwards said that although the authority had not 'inherited' titles for on-going filming some retrospective filming was necessary. He hoped to find funds in the next financial year to allow cooperative filming, probably with Cardiff as a partner.

Swansea. Marilyn Jones said that although there was no on-going filming at Swansea she hoped that money might be made available in future.

The National Library of Wales. Non Jenkins said that the National Library continued to film a number of current newspapers and had now completed the retrospective filming of the Cambrian News which had been made possible by the last of the Mellon funding. The Library had borrowed runs of the Carmarthen Journal from Carmarthen in order to

refilm some issues because the commercially-processed master negatives of this important newspaper had faded and now reproduced poorly. The Library had also filmed Y Drafod, the Welsh-language newspaper of Patagonia.

The National Library was always anxious to undertake cooperative filming with other libraries in order to share the cost. It was agreed that local government reorganization had severely reduced the amount of money available for filming, and that this was reflected in the lack of new cooperative filming projects. Authorities were already fully stretched in maintaining existing filming commitments. The priority was still to persuade more people to take an active interest in Newsplan.

#### 4. Report on the Newsplan (Wales) Database

The British Library had agreed to waive copyright on the published Newsplan Reports and this made it possible for the National Library of Wales to make an updated version of the Newsplan(Wales) Report available through its Internet site. Non Jenkins confirmed that the data would be made available once problems with the computer software package had been resolved.

Details of amendments to the Report, or news of changed locations or disposals of newspapers, were welcomed by Mrs Beti Jones of the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3BU. David Shone said Flintshire had recently been able to acquire over twenty bound volumes of the Daily Post which had been destined for disposal. Rhidian Griffiths said that the National Library was committed to preserving hard copies of newspapers and did not necessarily have all issues or all editions even of popular newspapers such as the Daily Post.

#### 5. Report on the LINC Newsplan Panel meetings of 30 April 1997 and 30 September 1997 and the Feasibility Study for a Newsplan Lottery Bid.

(1) The Smethurst Report on British Library Collecting Policy  
Iwan Jones reported on discussions regarding the Smethurst review of the BL's collecting policy. Andrew Phillips would be making recommendations for implementation of the Report to the British Library Board. One of the main recommendations was that the British Library should limit its collecting of local and free newspapers in paper form, and concentrate on obtaining microfilm. The English regions were concerned at this, since local libraries were not in general able to make a commitment to collect and preserve these newspapers. The National Libraries of Wales and Scotland were already collecting their own newspapers, and the National Library of Scotland intended to cooperate with Scottish libraries to ensure that a 'second copy' of newspapers was safeguarded in paper form.

The possibility of setting up a similar scheme in Wales was discussed. There were practical problems such as space for storage, access to unbound issues, and especially funding, but it was agreed that cooperative collecting was most desirable. The National Library of Wales would welcome the help of local libraries in filling gaps in its collection. David Shone said that the collecting of free newspapers represented a reasonable aspiration for local libraries. It was understood that Dr Lionel Madden, Chairman of the

Implementation Committee, would raise the matter of the 'second copy' with Chief Librarians.

(2) Third Newsplan Conference

The LINC Newsplan Panel had agreed that the Third Newsplan Conference should be held at Durham on 16-17 March 1998.

(3) Feasibility Study for a Newsplan bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund  
The Feasibility Study had already been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Dr Dennis Griffiths, Chairman of the British Library Newspaper Library Consultative Committee and formerly Production Director of Express Newspapers, had been appointed to prepare the bid. Iwan Jones outlined the strict timetable which had been set to enable the bid to be completed by Christmas. It was intended that the bid would ask for major funding to allow the filming of priority newspapers between 1820 and 1950. Libraries would need to cooperate to ensure that the best available copies were filmed. The preparation and filming would be carried out to preservation standards, based on the Mellon standards and the new ISO 4087 draft standard, and it was intended that it would take place over a five-year period at the British Library Newspaper Library, the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales. A list of priority titles was being prepared, based on priorities identified in the Newsplan (Wales) Report.

It was proposed that shared funding would be generated by sponsorship from the newspaper industry and used to provide public libraries with microfilm readers. The Working Party felt that each of the Welsh authorities could use two readers for the main library with one additional machine for each 'major' branch library (as defined by CIPFA statistics). Mention was made of the value of reader-printers and readers which could accommodate microfiche as well as film.

The proposals for the Heritage Lottery Bid, particularly the provision of microfilm readers, were warmly welcomed. Local government reorganisation had made local funding for microfilming much tighter and it was therefore more important than ever to make use of Lottery support when that was possible. The present overall bid did not rule out regional or local bids at a later stage.

6. Any other business

(1) Second Newsplan (Wales) Seminar

It was agreed that a Second Newsplan (Wales) Seminar would be useful to generate interest and involvement if and when the Lottery bid succeeded. The autumn of 1998 might be a suitable time for the Seminar.

(2) Presentation of the index to The Cambrian

Marilyn Jones gave a presentation on the project to create an automated index to The Cambrian newspaper, which she supervised. The Cambrian, founded in 1804, was Wales's first weekly newspaper and gave a vivid and detailed account of life in and around Swansea during its most dramatic period of growth in the 19th century. The indexing project had started in the 1980s and now provided comprehensive access to the newspaper over the period from 1804 to 1870. Despite vicissitudes, work was continuing as resources allowed. Enquiries for access to the index were made through the Project Supervisor, and examples of the print-out and stories

generated were distributed. The Chairman thanked Marilyn Jones for her impressive presentation.

A presentation of The Times on CD-ROM was deferred until the next meeting.

7. Date and place of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 24 March 1998 at the National Library of Wales.