

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Culture, Heritage & Libraries	24/11/2014
Subject: London Metropolitan Archives: the <i>Speak Out London - Diversity City</i> grant award and its ongoing work with the LGBTQ community	Public
Report of: Director of Culture, Heritage & Libraries	For Information
Summary	
<p>This report provides information on the recent Heritage Lottery Fund grant to LMA of £86,000 for <i>Speak Out London - Diversity City</i> and an update on the partnership work that it undertakes with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) community.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report 	

Main Report

Background

1. London Metropolitan Archives' core activities encompass the collection of records of London's rich past history and its vibrant and diverse present, for the use and benefit of present and future generations. This is in line with the City's Corporate Plan, specifically its Key Policy Priorities to maximise '*the opportunities and benefits afforded by our role in supporting London's communities*' and to increase '*the impact of the City's cultural and heritage offer on the life of London and the nation*'. It also supports the Cultural Strategy strand *Breaking down Barriers* as well as the Culture, Heritage and Libraries departmental strategy '*to refocus our services with more community engagement and partnership with others*'.
2. LMA approaches community work by developing close links with organisations and individuals operating in the same field, typically through community engagement initiatives e.g. in this area with the Hall-Carpenter Archives and the Bishopsgate Institute; involving individuals as external advisors on LMA steering groups e.g. for the annual LMA led LGBT conference; and by sitting on the steering committees of external groups e.g. Rainbow Jews.

Current Position

3. In July 2014 London Metropolitan Archives was awarded a grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund of £86,000 for *Speak Out London – Diversity City*. This

is an LGBTQ oral history project running from September 2014 to August 2016.

4. -The project will establish a community LGBTQ oral history/memorabilia archive at LMA, made available online and on site at LMA through our Mediatheque facility, which will record individual and community histories dating from 1945 to the present day. This new contemporary archive will form a powerful community collection to complement and challenge more formal historical records which, while important in themselves, do not tell the full story of London's LGBTQ history.
5. The project team will work closely with participants and volunteers, providing a rich programme of activities and events over the next two years. There will also be training and education opportunities which will support groups wanting to run their own oral/ memorabilia history sessions in the future. The *Speak Out London – Diversity City* archive will form a central part of LMA's service, ensuring its continuing development in the years ahead.
6. *Speak Out London - Diversity City* is only the latest development in LMA's longstanding work with the London LGBTQ community. Events and activities include:
 - An annual archives and history conference, organised by LMA since 2003, with speakers such as Peter Tatchell, Stella Duffy and Maureen Duffy
 - Regular attendance at the annual Pride festival in London
 - Participation in the national LGBTQ History Month, now in its tenth year. LMA will be making a presentation on its work at the LGBTQ History Month Festival in Manchester in 2015.
 - Regular seminars, talks and other events at LMA, including an LGBTQ History Club, which has attracted interest from other institutions wanting to replicate the engagement model.
 - Presentations at other events, such as the international LGBTQ Conference in Amsterdam in 2012 and Sutton House in 2013.
 - A partnership project for the past four years with Middlesex University students training in teaching Citizenship. As part of that work LGBTQ History resources for schools are being developed which support classroom activities linked to current affairs and Personal, Social and Health Education.
 - As part of the City's Education Strategy, work with the Museum of London and the Barbican Centre to develop a co-ordinated offer to support secondary schools address in the classroom issues such as homophobia, racism, gang culture and substance abuse, where each institution has specific experience.
7. In parallel with these community engagement activities LMA's Collections team has been actively seeking high quality archives to add to the holdings. These include papers from
 - Campaign for Homosexual Equality: Southwark/Lambeth Group
 - Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Advisory Group (advisors to the Metropolitan Police Service)

- 'rukus! Federation Limited, an organisation working with Black artists and activists
 - Individuals including Dr Gillian Spraggs and Peter Tatchell
8. There is also a strong strand of volunteering activity from the LGBTQ community; volunteers work regularly on the 'rukus! collection and in support of conferences and community events.
 9. LMA has also been invited to host the sixth international LGBTQ Archives, Libraries, Museums and Special Collections Conference in 2016 and this is currently being explored.

Conclusion

10. Achieving the Heritage Lottery Fund grant award for *Speak Out London - Diversity City* represents a step change in LMA's work with the LGBTQ community and will be a significant and innovative project in its own right.

Appendices

- None

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