



FILM ARCHIVES JOIN HANDS TO SAVE UK SCREEN HERITAGE

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The BFI-led *UK Film Heritage Group* has published a consultation document detailing a strategy that aims to deliver more public access to the UK's screen heritage. The strategy recommends a more joined up approach to the care and preservation of national and regional moving image collections and the increased use of digital technologies.

The strategy that has been developed by the group identifies the urgent need for:

- funding to safeguard the collections that are immediately at risk of deterioration
- national and regional investment in securing the best infrastructure to support sustainable care for the collections
- the mass digitisation of archive film material that will enable widescale public access

Digital technology now offers an unprecedented opportunity to revolutionise access to the UK's moving image collections. The consultation strategy aims to capitalise on the digital revolution to give the public access to learn about and enjoy the nation's screen archive wherever they live and wherever the materials are held.

The strategy focuses on four principle areas for action:

- 1. Revitalising the regions** - key collections identified, cared for and made accessible to all;
- 2. Securing the National Collection** – investment in storage facilities and conservation, leading to access;

3. Developing digital access – digitisation and cataloguing of key British material for public access;

4. Education – integration of screen heritage with national curriculum through a national education pilot

The Strategy for UK Screen Heritage will have two phases: the first phase is focused primarily on the BFI National Archive, Regional Screen Agencies (RSAs) and RFAs and aims to stabilise the core infrastructure, and demonstrate clearly the public value of our screen heritage.

The second phase will focus on engagement and further consultation with other collections such as those held in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, UK organisations with moving image collections such as the BBC, ITN and the Imperial War Museum, plus Universities, museums and other key stakeholders. The aim will be to ensure that collectively the whole sector is signed up to the vision and committed to actively engaging in the strategy. It is expected that delivery of the strategy will be driven by a new Screen Heritage Steering Group.

Amanda Nevill, Director of the BFI, said:

“In this country we have the greatest collections of film in the world. Our film and television heritage is unparalleled. The public appetite and demand for archive film has never been greater but with much of the sector in critical condition right now it desperately needs investment. The sheer scale of archive holdings across the UK and the issues of rights ownership bring enormous challenges.

“This is an historic move as the BFI National Archive and the regional archives come together with a single vision, determined to preserve this remarkable heritage and make it accessible to all.”

The consultation will run until Friday 7 September and will involve stakeholder events across the country and will be publicised on www.bfi.org.uk.

To access a copy of the consultation strategy visit www.bfi.org.uk/screenheritage.

Comments can be made via the online feedback form available on the site.

Alternatively, copies of the strategy document and feedback form can be obtained by writing to:

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Notes to Editors:

The UK Film Heritage Group consists of the BFI, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA), National Council on Archives (NCA), Regional Film Archives (RFAs), Screen England, UK Film Council and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

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