

# Chairman's statement

I became Chairman of the British Library Board in 2001 and this is the final year of my appointment. It has been a privilege to have been associated with such a significant institution during such a remarkable period. We have witnessed unprecedented turbulence and competition in the information sector. The challenges for libraries in the digital age are particularly critical for the British Library because of the scale and scope of our collections and operations.



Lord Eatwell, Chairman

**Google and other search engines have revolutionised the way people expect to access information. The traditional models of scholarly communication and publishing are being transformed. The accelerating pace of change was the context for the development of *Redefining the Library: The British Library's strategy 2005–2008*. We have established six strategic priorities that are critical to our mission and which the Board believes the Library must achieve if we are to continue to support UK research needs effectively. We report on our progress against these priorities in this Report and shall continue to do so in subsequent years.**

During the year I was honoured to be invited by the Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism to chair a Working Group on Competitiveness and Intellectual Property under the Creative Economy Programme. This Programme is a ministerial initiative designed to join together cultural institutions, policy makers and funding organisations to support the growth and productivity of the creative industries.

My engagement in this Ministerial programme coincided with the grand opening of the Library's Business & IP Centre at St Pancras

on 8 March 2006. The British Library is fast becoming the first choice provider of content, navigation and research services for the creative industries. The new Centre is designed to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs, from that first spark of inspiration to successfully launching and developing their business. At the launch event Sir Digby Jones of the CBI described the Centre as, 'a jewel in the crown of enterprise in this country'.

The British Library has a unique perspective to bring to the public debate on Copyright and Intellectual Property that was initiated during the year. This perspective derives from its position at the fulcrum of the balance of interests of rights holders and rights users. We submitted evidence to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport inquiry into New Media and the Creative Industries, to the All Party Parliamentary Internet Group inquiry into Digital Rights Management (DRM), and to the Gowers Review of Intellectual Property. The Library is continuing to play a high level advocacy role in this debate which is of critical significance for research, scholarship and innovation and for the creative economy of the UK. The Library recognises that there is a need to modernise copyright legislation for the digital age.



Her Majesty The Queen visiting the Library to open the *Front Page* exhibition

In that context we attach enormous importance to ensuring that the principles of fair dealing and library privilege – which have long existed in the analogue environment and which in our view strike an appropriate balance in the public interest between the rights holder and the user for print – is now re-interpreted and sustained for the digital age.

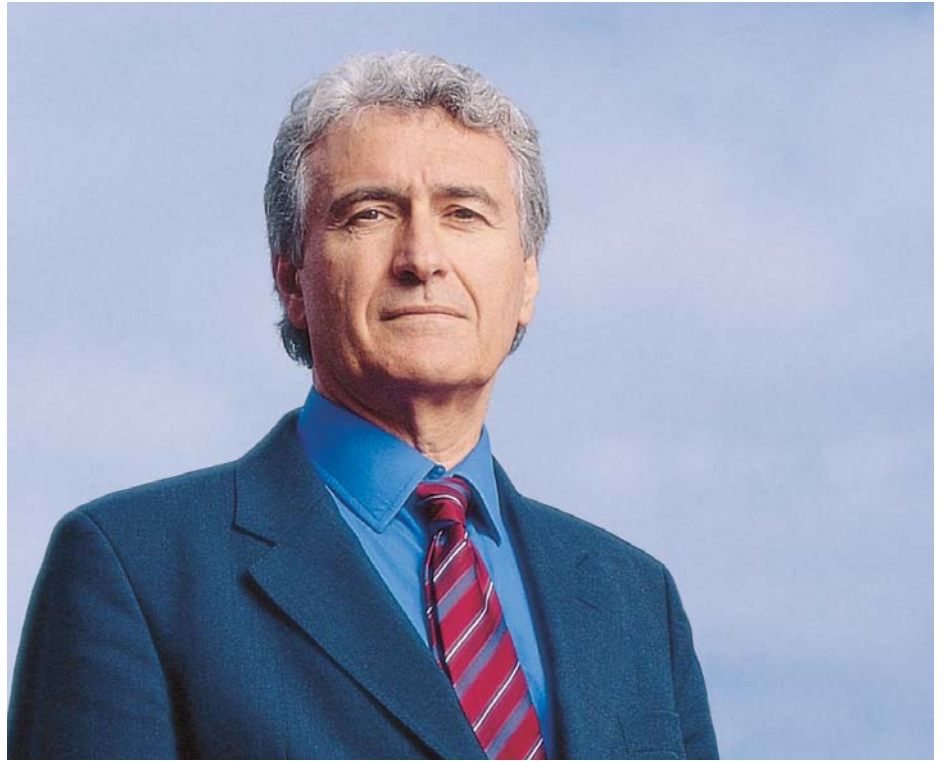
In the past year I have been delighted to see further recognition within Government of the contribution the Library makes to the nation. Following agreement by the Secretaries of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Education and Skills, and Trade and Industry, and in order to build and sustain effective cross-Departmental support which recognises the complexities of the British Library's business, a permanent interdepartmental group of senior officials has been established. This will help maximise the Library's impact and contribution to Government priorities and objectives. In addition a joint DCMS, DTI/OSI and DfES Funding Agreement with the British Library has been developed.

We would like to remember Mary, Viscountess Eccles, whose Estate has over the course of the year passed on her generous legacy to the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the



David Lammy MP, Minister of Culture,  
on his first ministerial visit

“The British Library plays an important role in the national economy through its support for UK research excellence and innovation, in addition to the major contribution it makes to the social and cultural enrichment of Britain’s citizens.”



British Library, thus securing its long-term future. I am also delighted that the Folio Society, a partner in publishing for many years, has increased its involvement with the Library through sponsorship of the Folio Society Gallery, which will provide us with improved exhibition space in the Entrance Hall at St Pancras. In addition, we would like to thank the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and other donors for enabling our acquisition of the exquisite William Byrd manuscript, *My Ladye Nevells Booke*. We remain most grateful to the many generous supporters of the Centre for Conservation, the *Codex Sinaiticus* Project, and many other initiatives about which you will read more in this Report.

Finally, as I come to the end of my term of appointment, it is appropriate that I pay tribute to the creativity, dedication and hard work of the Library’s staff. I leave with a keen appreciation of a great, world-class institution and with confidence that the British Library is well equipped to play a leading role in the 21st century, helping people to advance knowledge to enrich lives.

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