As our striking cover photograph shows, Wales celebrated a great footballing success during 2016. At the Library, it was also a year of considerable achievement and progress despite continuing financial challenges. In this Review, we note a wide range of events, new services and partnerships, high quality exhibitions and an increasing emphasis on making far more of the national collections available in Aberystwyth and beyond. It has been particularly heartening to see the success of the educational programme, generously supported by the Scottish Power Foundation.

Following a wide ranging public consultation, the Library completed its Strategy for 2017-2021 and Operational Plan which has set ambitious targets to safeguard our status as the nation’s memory and looks forward to becoming a national digital library extending access to new audiences. Achieving these aims will require the maintenance of our existing core funding and improving our ability to raise our own income wherever possible. We are grateful to Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure and his officials for continuing to support the important work of the Library in serving the people of Wales. Library Management and the Board of Trustees have worked together during the year to progress the recommendations of the Wales Audit Office report on governance issues and we have been grateful for the support of Wales Audit Office colleagues.

We welcomed the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales to new offices at the Library at the start of the year. This has stimulated new ideas for working together and sharing facilities which will be further developed under the Historic Wales partnership.

We hope that you will enjoy reading about our activities during a productive and successful year. We would be delighted to welcome you to visit the Library at its wonderful location overlooking the sea in Aberystwyth.

Rhodri Glyn Thomas
President

Linda Tomos
Chief Executive and Librarian
Helping us to Achieve, the National Library of Wales’ scheme to expand access to archives by developing a team of skilled volunteers, won the prestigious national Archive Volunteering Award for 2016. Sponsored by the Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) and sector partners, this annual award recognises outstanding work involving volunteers within an institutional archive service.

The scheme has been engaging with volunteers since 2012, including all ages and backgrounds, in the belief that taking part in cultural activity can boost skills, engagement, self-esteem and aspiration, and enhance participants’ workplace and social skills, whilst also contributing to the Library’s Strategy of making its collections more accessible to a wider audience. The scheme has targeted specific groups – the young and economically inactive and older people – and the roles filled by the volunteers have included transcribing text, creating databases, digitising, research, conservation tasks and public presentations.

“The Library is committed to developing this innovative approach which is actively helping people to improve their quality of life and obtain workplace skills as well as learning more about our culture and heritage.”

Linda Tomos, Chief Executive and Librarian

The judge said:

“Helping us to Achieve was the stand-out nomination in a very strong field. In 2015–16 alone, 65 project volunteers took part in the scheme, volunteering the equivalent of over 1,000 days of their time. They completed 10 projects and tasks, another 10 are still in progress. 769 online volunteers also participated in ‘Cynefin,’ a ground-breaking project to geo-reference Wales’ Tithe Maps. ‘Helping us to Achieve’ has involved wide community collaboration and support, a diverse range of volunteers, and benefited from professional archive staff support at the National Library, as well as top-management backing. The scheme has also delivered at an individual level: around 20% of the volunteers have moved on to paid employment.”

“Because I have had the experience of suffering mental illness in the past, volunteering has been a blessing beyond words.”

“Through the experience I have made friends with some lovely and like-minded people. This has given me a lot of confidence – I don’t feel intimidated by the workplace – I feel I belong.”

“I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I like the general atmosphere of quiet and calmness. This is important to me because my epilepsy is mostly stress related.”
UNESCO Award

In June, an awards ceremony was held in the Senedd in Cardiff to celebrate the inclusion of Robert Johnson’s survey of Crickhowell and Tretower as one of eight items to join the UNESCO United Kingdom Memory of the World Register. This is the equivalent of World Heritage status for documentary heritage.

Johnson’s volume is an unique and valuable part of the story of estate mapping in Britain, being the earliest known example of a volume of decorative estate maps and the earliest extant set of estate maps for Wales. The entire volume has been digitised and can be seen on the Library’s website.

Carto-Cymru

May 2016 saw the inaugural Carto-Cymru map symposium, which was held at the Library in association with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. The theme of the day was Shaping the Nation, which explored the role of maps in creating nations and national identity. Speakers from across the United Kingdom talked on a range of subjects around this topic.
In May 2016, we received this historic cup on deposit through the generosity of the Mirylees family. This fragile piece of wood is all that remains of an ancient mazer bowl generally known as the Nanteos Cup. The exact origin of the Cup is a mystery, but according to tradition the relic came into the possession of the Powell family of Nanteos from Strata Florida Abbey during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It is believed that seven Cistercian monks escaped from the abbey with the Cup and sought refuge at Nanteos. Following the death of the last of the brothers, the Cup was left to the family and has been treasured and preserved ever since. According to one tradition, the Nanteos Cup is the Holy Grail, the Cup from which Christ and his disciples drank at the Last Supper. Since the 19th century it has been claimed that the Cup possesses a supernatural power to heal. The Cup would be lent to the unwell in exchange for a valuable deposit such as a gold watch or coins, to ensure its safe return to Nanteos.
New acquisitions

Our collection of archives and manuscripts has been greatly enhanced during the year and new acquisitions range from a warrant signed by Charles I in 1636, a letter by Prince Rupert in 1645, and an early 19th century Welsh tour journal, to a poem by Sarah Jane Rees (‘Cranogwen’) dated 1905. They also include Lewis Morris’ own copy of *Poly-Olbion* by Michael Drayton (1612), to a volume relating to the Anglesey militia (1807–1813), material relating to both world wars, and the archive of the Red Kite Committee in Wales.

Highlights from the political papers include a collection of letters, documents and photographs related to David Lloyd George, Frances Stevenson and Jennifer Longford, and papers of Gordon Macdonald (1st Baron Macdonald of Gwaenysgor, 1888–1966), Labour politician and British Governor of Newfoundland. We have also collected the papers of the civil rights movement CEFN and campaign groups such as Tomorrow’s Wales and the National Language Forum. Papers of various politicians such as James Donnelly Touhig (Baron Touhig), Lord Temple Morris, John Morris (Baron Morris of Aberavon), Elfyn Llwyd, T E Ellis, and Gwynfor Evans have been added to our collections.

The musical collections were augmented by scores and arrangements by the composer Idris Lewis, (the musical director of the Welsh region of the BBC), and compositions by John Metcalf, Gilmor Griffiths and J T Rees. An unexpected discovery was the papers of the notable cerdd dant performer Ted Richards (Iorwerth Maldwyn) relating to Nansi Richards, and we are grateful to have received further additions to the Alun Hoddinott archive, and to the Meredydd Evans and Phyllis Kinney papers.

This year we successfully acquired papers of, or relating to, the artists Kyffin Williams, Gwilym Prichard, Augustus John and Edwin John, and the authors Gwyn ap Gwilym, R Geraint Gruffydd, Harri Pritchard Jones, Marion Eames, John Cowper Powys, T Glynne Davies, Saunders Lewis, Tony Curtis, T Llew Jones, J H Davies, T I Ellis and Mari Ellis.
The Library is grateful to everyone who donates material and funds to enable us to build the collection. We are also grateful to the Friends of the National Libraries for their contributions to enable us to purchase a letter from the artist and writer David Jones, 1967 and a heraldic pedigree made for Gawen Goodman of Ruthin in 1584, which was once thought to have been lost.

In a historic auction at Bonhams, London in March, the National Library of Wales purchased a number of valuable manuscripts and pictures from the Glyn Cywarch collection – the property of Lord Harlech. These included William Ormsby Gore’s journal for 1854, three game books, three catalogues of the contents of the historic library at Broguntyn (Porkington) and three watercolours by Moses Griffiths. They will be added to the existing Broguntyn Estate and Family Records at the Library.
In September, a collaborative exhibition between the Welsh Political Archive and the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies was held in the Pierhead in Cardiff Bay. The theme of the exhibition Chwyldro (Revolution) explored the influence of the French Revolution on Wales and the development of radical politics in Wales since that time. The exhibition was opened by Elin Jones AM, President of the National Assembly. To coincide with the exhibition, a meeting of the Welsh Political Archive’s Advisory Committee was held for the first time outside of Aberystwyth, in the Senedd in Cardiff Bay.

The Welsh Political Archive’s annual lecture was delivered by the Right Honourable Ann Clwyd MP in November. The Drwm was full to listen to the speaker deliver a fascinating lecture on the miners’ strike and the sterling effort to save Tower Colliery.
Exhibitions

Girlguiding Cymru: Pushing Boundaries
This exhibition traced the movement from its inception in 1910 to Girlguiding Cymru today. As well as photographs and original items from its archive, Girlguiding Cymru used the Library’s collections to examine how the movement has pushed the boundaries and influenced the lives of young women throughout the years.

Mametz: Aled Rhys Hughes & David Jones
Photographs of Mametz Wood taken by the photographer Aled Rhys Hughes, inspired by David Jones’ famous poem *In Parenthesis* which explores the notion of landscape and memory. Items from the Library’s David Jones archive were shown alongside the striking images that even today show the scars of battle.

Black October
Over the last fifty years, people from around the world have recalled the Aberfan disaster through literature, art, music and film. The exhibition examined the disaster itself and the response to it, and commemorated anew.

Aberfan: The Days After
An opportunity to see a collection of photographs by the distinguished American photographer I C Rapoport, commemorating the Aberfan disaster and record the efforts of residents to cope with life after the disaster.

Legends!
An opportunity to come ‘face to face’ with Welsh heroes depicted within the National Portrait Collection.

Fallen Poets: Hedd Wyn and Edward Thomas
One hundred years ago, two poets were killed in battle during the Great War: Hedd Wyn and Edward Thomas. Through our diverse collections we celebrate the life and work of these war poets.

Artists in the Archives: 60 Years of 56 Group Wales
Using items from the Library archive and picture collection, we looked back at sixty years of one of Wales’ most prominent groups of professional artists.

Stories of the Saints
This exhibition, curated by the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, demonstrated the survival of medieval traditions about the holy men and women who represent an important part of the country’s cultural inheritance.
In May, following a generous donation of £40,000 by the Friends of the Library, Rhydian Davies and Julian Evans were appointed to two trainee posts in the Conservation Department. Both have already learned a number of processes which include cleaning items, cutting preservation mounts, and how to produce archival boxes on our Kasemake machine. They have also learned how to monitor and record the Library’s environmental conditions, and both have started to learn how to handle and repair paper and printed volumes. By the end of 2017, they will also be versed in how to treat acetate negatives which suffer from vinegar syndrome.

The Library is committed to establishing these as permanent posts. This will ensure a means of transferring important and unique skills to the next generation of conservators at the Library.

Within a couple of years, it is anticipated that they will be registered on the Archives and Records Association (ARA) conservation course which will develop their skills further and lead to a professional qualification.

“The Conservation Department is such an interesting place to work. I’ve already learnt so much and I look forward to developing my skills further.”

Julian Evans
Conservation Assistant in training
A selection of events in the Drwm

Angus McBean: Wales’ greatest photographer  
Adrian Woodhouse

Disability and the coal industry in south Wales, 1850 – 1947  
Steve Thompson

Warfare and literature in Wales 1039 – 1136  
Dr David Moore

Is there a future for the news? - Challenges of the digital age  
Huw Edwards

An evening of Antiques and Anecdotes  
Marc Allum

Adventures in Wales and the world  
Tori James

LENS Photography Festival: Conflict  
David Jones’s In Parenthesis  
Welsh National Opera

The Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos (1916 – 2001)  
Rev Dr D Ben Rees

Hunting Glyndŵr  
Mike Parker

Welsh Political Archive Annual Lecture: Y Berth sy’n Llosgî!  
The Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP

Romanticism in the Welsh language  
Dr Peter Wakelin

NLW Friends Event: Strata Florida and its Sacred Landscape: a context for the Nanteos Cup  
Professor David Austin

A Nation of Map Addicts  
Mike Parker

A Taste of the Avant-Garde: 56 Group Wales, 60 years  
David Moore

Gregynog Festival Day: Éire  
Ifor ap Glyn
As part of the Library’s contribution to the Welsh Government’s Fusion Programme, the Education Department worked in partnership with Carmarthenshire Communities First to provide educational opportunities for pupils in Llanelli.

During Kids in Museums 2017 Takeover Day in November, Year 6 pupils from Ysgol y Felin, Felin-Feol took over the Library by working side by side with staff on the desks in the Reading Rooms, in the Reception and Shop, assisting with the security of the building, digital work, exhibitions, accessioning new items for the collections, and working on film preservation. This gave the children unique experiences and provided an opportunity to increase their knowledge about the important work being carried out at the Library.

Through once again receiving generous sponsorship from ScottishPower, the Education Service was able to deliver an additional programme of outreach events. The programme included the Collect, Create, Innovate project with two schools in Fusion Programme Areas in Gwynedd which gave the pupils an opportunity to collect, digitise and produce online resources about their locality.

The sponsorship also enabled the publication of a booklet about the 6 most important icons in the Library, with sessions delivered which gave hundreds of primary school pupils the opportunity to work with these icons. In addition, ScottishPower sponsored part of the Library’s Welsh Baccalaureate qualification work by funding a booklet on the Harvard referencing style to support Welsh Baccalaureate pupils with their individual projects.

One significant highlight was the Masterpiece in School day when the Library’s copy of J M W Turner’s Dolbadarn Castle, was taken to Dolbadarn School in Llanberis, a stone’s throw from where the artist sketched over two centuries earlier. An artist was commissioned to lead the workshop to create a landscape for Year 6 pupils of Dolbadarn School and Year 12 pupils of Brynrefail School in the presence of the original masterpiece. During the afternoon, a workshop was held on the site of the ruins of Dolbadarn Castle.

With support from ScottishPower...
Unlocking Film Heritage

The end of March saw the culmination of Phase 3 of the extensive film digitisation work that the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales has been undertaking since 2014 as part of the UK-wide Unlocking Film Heritage (UFH) project, supported by the British Film Institute (BFI) with Lottery funding. This ground-breaking project has to date enabled the Archive to digitise a total of 675 films from its collection, placing them online for everyone within the UK to view, free of charge. The Archive opted to undertake the digitisation work in-house, thereby gaining valuable skills and experience for future digitising work, including the establishment of the all-important and detailed technical workflows.

This is the first time that the Archive has been able to make a substantial portion of its film collection widely available in this way and thanks go to all the rights-holders who have generously given their permissions to make this possible. The presence of the films on the online platform BFI Player has led to many viewings and generated much interest, sharing and comments, especially around those films which have a strong sense of place, where viewers can enjoy footage of the locality where they grew up, went to school or visited on holiday. The range of content means that people are also learning about the diversity of films in our collection - from unique and personal home movies and amateur footage reflecting hundreds of Welsh places, people and subjects, to professionally made documentaries, drama, advertising films and animation. Included also are some of our pioneering films, such as Syr Ifan ab Owen Edwards’ Y Chwarelwr (The Quarryman)1935 - the first Welsh language talkie, about the life and challenges of a quarryman and his family in pre-WW2 Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The films were all digitised and placed online under specific themes including Villages and Rural Life, Towns and Cities and Coast and Sea, with most titles geo-tagged to enable them to appear and be played from the BFI Player’s map of Britain.
Sinemaes

The Unlocking Film Heritage project brought opportunities to share our newly digitised films with live audiences, in addition to online viewers. The most exciting of these was the chance to partner with BAFTA Wales, S4C, Film Hub Wales and others to deliver content to the Eisteddfod’s first ever dedicated film tent - Sinemaes - at the National Eisteddfod in Abergavenny. Our contribution was a 1 hour 40 minute package of films and clips on the theme of Rural Life, specially curated with programme notes. The package played twice and sometimes three times a day for eight days, with around 450 attending. The screenings received very enthusiastic feedback. Here are some of the comments:

“Noson Lawen – Godidog!” [Marvellous]
“Entertaining and fascinating - I watched an accidentally comical drama about bandits - lots of fun”
“Really interesting selection of films - good variety of lengths and topics”
“Very interesting programme. Will look them up online and watch again.”
“Really interesting and a wide range of insights into Welsh life, in all its facets - thanks so much!”
“Profiad unigryw a didorol a gwych mewn lleoliod da!” [Unique, interesting and fantastic experience in a great venue!]

ITV Cymru Archive: Documentary Programme Award

The documentary programme The Aberfan Young Wives’ Club won the Best Factual (History) category of the 2017 Royal Television Society Programme Awards in London in March. Extensive footage prepared by the National Screen and Sound Archive was used for this programme which was produced in partnership between ITV Cymru Wales and ITV Studios to mark the 50th anniversary of the Aberfan disaster.
The Library on the Big Screen

Recognised as one of Wales’ most iconic landmarks, the National Library achieved fame in the film world last year. *The Library Suicides* is based on Fflur Dafydd’s bestselling novel *Y Llyfrgell* which won her the Daniel Owen Memorial Prize at the 2009 National Eisteddfod, and marks award winning director Euros Lyn’s feature length debut.

The director said:
“For me, working on this film was like being a child in a sweet shop – it brought so many of my loves together. I’m a huge fan of this genre and it was great that I could make my first feature film in Welsh. To be allowed then to film in the wonderfully atmospheric National Library of Wales was the icing on the cake – it’s a fantastic location.”

The film received its world premiere at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and received rave reviews. At the same festival, actress Catrin Stewart was awarded the top performance award and it is the first time a Welsh language performance has been awarded this prize.

“This is the first time a feature film has been set at the Library but I doubt if it will be the last. It will be sure to spark people’s interest in the Library.”

Linda Tomos
Chief Executive and Librarian
Cymru’n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918

The Library has once again provided an active contribution to Wales’ successful First World War commemoration programme. We were delighted to work with the noted photographer Aled Rhys Hughes to display his thought provoking exhibition of photographs of Mametz Wood where Welsh soldiers were lost in battle in 1916. Aled was inspired by the work of the artist and writer David Jones who survived the battle and wrote the seminal poem *In Parenthesis*, based on his experiences.

The Cardiff-based performance of a new opera based on *In Parenthesis* by Welsh National Opera was screened at the Library, as was a film of the Battle of the Somme, made in 1916.

The exhibition celebrating the life and work of two of Wales’ foremost poets lost in the conflict, Hedd Wyn and Edward Thomas, was very well received and prompted poignant comments from visitors on the wider loss of family members in war. The video of recitations from the poets’ work is available on the Library’s YouTube channel.

Material was added to the cymru1914.org website. The website contains over 1 million documents, photographs, sound clips, newspapers, archives and journals. Educational resources were also completed for the Welsh Government education platform, Hwb.
In March, the Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW) and the Wales Higher Education and Libraries Forum (WHELF) met with staff at the Library to discuss their digital preservation requirements and progress being made on developing a digital preservation policy, technical infrastructure and skills sharing across Wales. The information will feed into the development of a National Digital Preservation Strategy.

NLW@ Cardiff

For the first time in its history the Library has a service access point outside Aberystwyth!

The Library, in collaboration with Cardiff University, has secured space in the University Library, which offers access to tens of thousands of legal deposit items from the National Library, including e-books and e-journals. This is an exciting development not only for the Library but for the people of Cardiff and its environs who can access freely and easily a wealth of material which is currently only available in our reading rooms in Aberystwyth.
An important milestone for the Education Department this year was the culmination of a three year craft project funded by the Eluned Gymraes Davies bequest. Ystafell Eluned Gymraes Davies was opened at the Library in acknowledgement of her generous gift and to display the works created by the six projects in different parts of Wales. Over 200 people were given the opportunity to learn new crafts, and opportunities were created for adults and children to continue to learn about and use handicrafts. The craft work produced includes embroidery from Swansea, metal work from Pen Llŷn, woollen blankets woven in Wrexham, wood carvings from Merthyr Tydfil and silk paintings from Anglesey.
In April, we welcomed the Royal Commission to its new offices in the Library. A new state of the art storage area has been created for its collections through the infilling of a courtyard. The area includes six floors of storage, which have differing environmental conditions according to the type of material held. This storage area is home to archives, printed material, photographs and pictures. The Royal Commission has also opened a search room and library next to the North Reading Room. Whilst planning for the future, there will be many exciting opportunities for both organisations to collaborate.

The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales moves to the Library

Sustainability

The Library is committed to supporting the environment and maintaining the sustainable management of its estate.

Photovoltaic panels have been placed on the Library’s roof and the electricity produced is used entirely within the Library building, and amounts to circa. 40,000 KwH per annum. This has resulted in reduced energy costs for the Library.

The Library has also set itself performance targets for monitoring the waste generated by the building, which are regularly monitored and reviewed.
Why visit the Library?

“I can’t think of anywhere better to study.”

“The best Library on the planet!”

“Thrilling!”

“Very helpful and knowledgeable staff.”

“Would definitely come back for another event here and recommend it to others as a venue.”

“Varying and interesting exhibitions.”

“Eye-opening!”

“The best library I have ever visited.”

“Unforgettable visit – very interesting.”

“It’s an amazing place in a beautiful town.”

“A privilege to be able to film here”

“It was good to be reminded how lucky we are to have such a treasure.”

“Magnificent place.”

“A wonderful study environment.”

“I was really surprised by the whole range of items kept in the Library.”

“Appreciated a chance to use my (learner’s) Welsh – everyone keen to help!”

“It was a real privilege to go behind the scenes and find out how everything worked.”

“The facilities and the food were of a very high standard.”

“It’s an amazing place in a beautiful town."

“Very helpful and knowledgeable staff.”

“Thrilling!”

“The best library I have ever visited.”

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“It was a real privilege to go behind the scenes and find out how everything worked.”

“The facilities and the food were of a very high standard.”
Our Thanks

Thank you to the Welsh Government and everyone who supported us financially and volunteered time and skills in 2016-17. It is generosity of this kind that ensures that the National Library of Wales continues to grow and fulfil our potential as one of Wales’ important national cultural organisations. To ensure that we effectively contribute to national life in the future we are largely dependent on broadening our sources of income. Donations given by the people of Wales were used to establish the Library and together we can continue that tradition and ensure that our heritage is secured for future generations.

Our special thanks to:

Chapters Members

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Dan Clayton-Jones Esq., Pontyclun
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ScottishPower Foundation
The British Film Institute
Heritage Lottery Fund
Foyle Foundation
Friends of the National Libraries

Association of Friends
John Dilwyn Williams Chair, Association of Friends and his fellow members. We would also like to express our thanks to Pedr ap Llwyd, Secretary and Anna Morgan, Co-ordinator who both stood down from their posts during the year.

Legacy
Mrs Dilys Mair Parry

Registered charity number: 525775
Towards the future...

The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 states that public bodies need to make sure that they consider the impact of their decisions on people who live their lives in Wales now and in the future. The Library has an important role to play not only to preserve culture and heritage for future generations in Wales and beyond, but also to enhance culture and heritage through the delivery of its charitable purpose to collect, preserve and give access to all kinds and forms of recorded knowledge, especially relating to Wales and the Welsh and other Celtic peoples, for the benefit of the public, including those engaged in research and learning.

Using digital technology to ensure that more people can have access to their heritage is one of the main drivers behind the Library’s Strategic Plan Memory of the Nation: Informing the Future 2017 - 2021, which commits us to doubling the number of digital items to 10 million by 2021. A new service point in the capital city which offers access to the Library’s electronic Legal Deposit collection has extended the Library’s reach beyond Aberystwyth for the first time in its history and this access is free for everyone.

The Library was built through the generosity of donations from individuals and we will continue to seek to build our collections through donations of money and materials. With your support we can ensure that these collections are protected and access is secured for future generations.

You can make a donation by going to our website www.llgc.org.uk. You can also help us through the following methods:

Gifts in wills:
Include a donation to the National Library of Wales in your will which will leave a lasting legacy for the nation. Even a small donation makes a real difference, so if the National Library of Wales has been important to you and if you share our values, keep us in mind. To discuss leaving a legacy please call Rhian on 01970 632938.

Spread the message:
Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Flickr, subscribe to our blog and share our stories to raise awareness of our work and our collections.

Volunteering:
How about volunteering at the National Library? For more information about available volunteer opportunities please contact Gwyneth on 01970 632991.