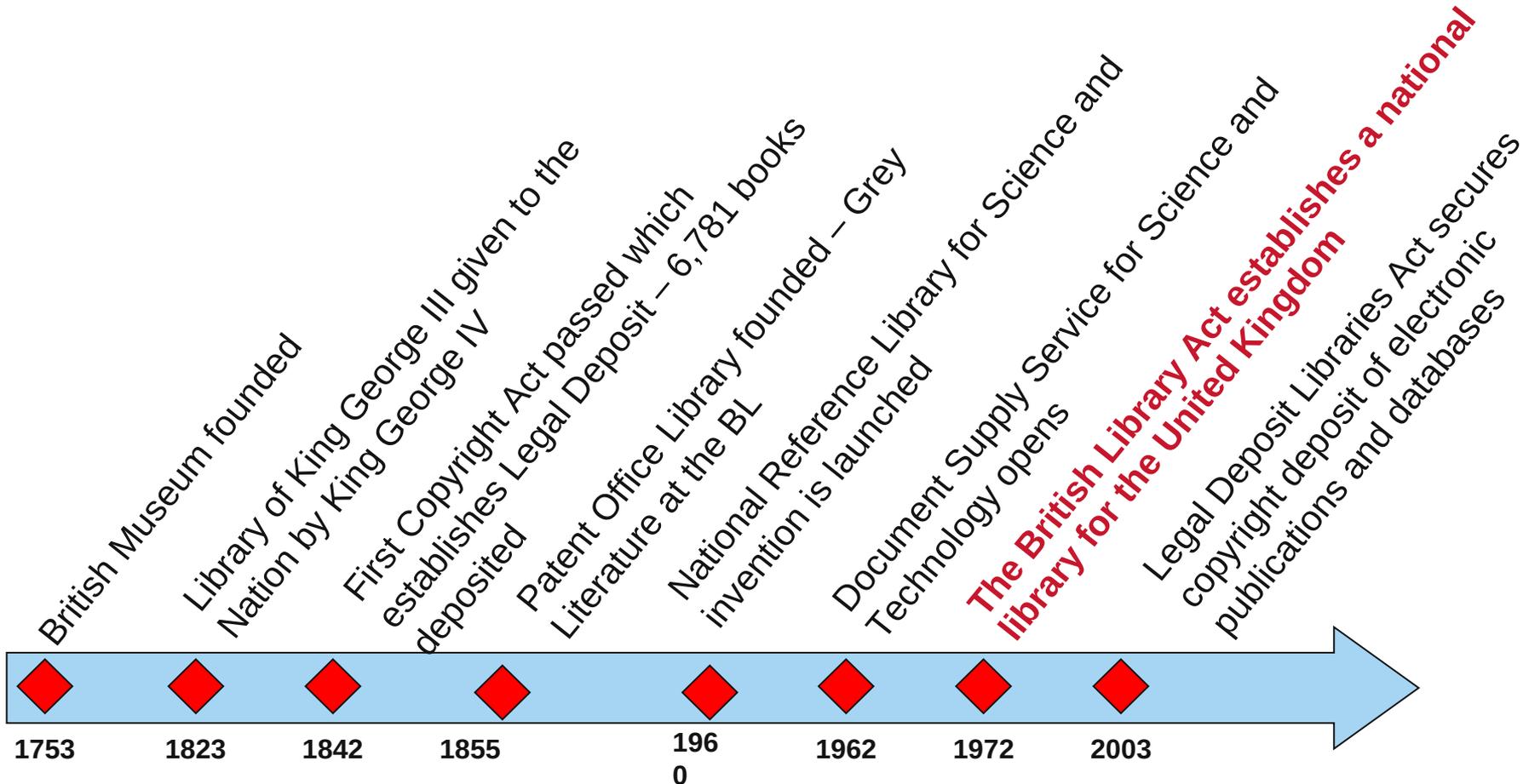


# **Past, present and future: the evolution of a collection – Grey Literature at the British Library**

Elizabeth Newbold and Samantha Tillett

GL8 New Orleans, December 2006

# The British Library - timeline

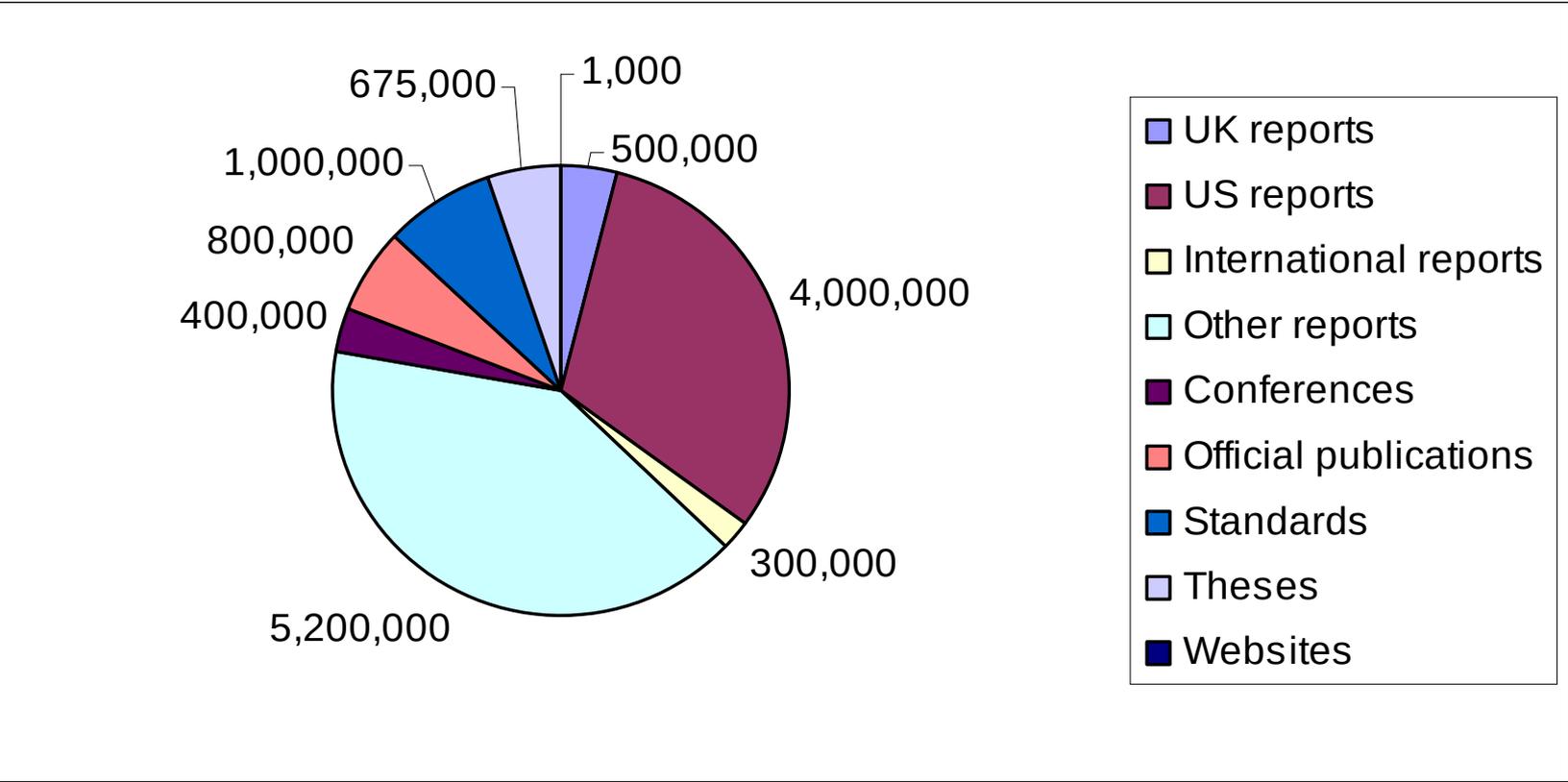


# About The British Library

**The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest libraries.**

- We receive a copy of every publication produced in the UK and Ireland (Legal Deposit)
- The collection includes 150 million items, in most known languages and across all subjects
- 3 million new items are incorporated every year – mostly books and journals - purchased, deposit arrangements, donations and exchange services
- We house manuscripts, maps, newspapers, magazines, prints and drawings, music scores, and patents
- These require over 625 km of shelves, and grow 12km every year
- If you see 5 items each day, it would take you 80,000 years to see the whole of the collection
- Over 16,000 people use the collections each day
- We operate the world's largest document delivery service providing millions of items a year to customers all over the world

# Grey Literature Holdings at The British Library

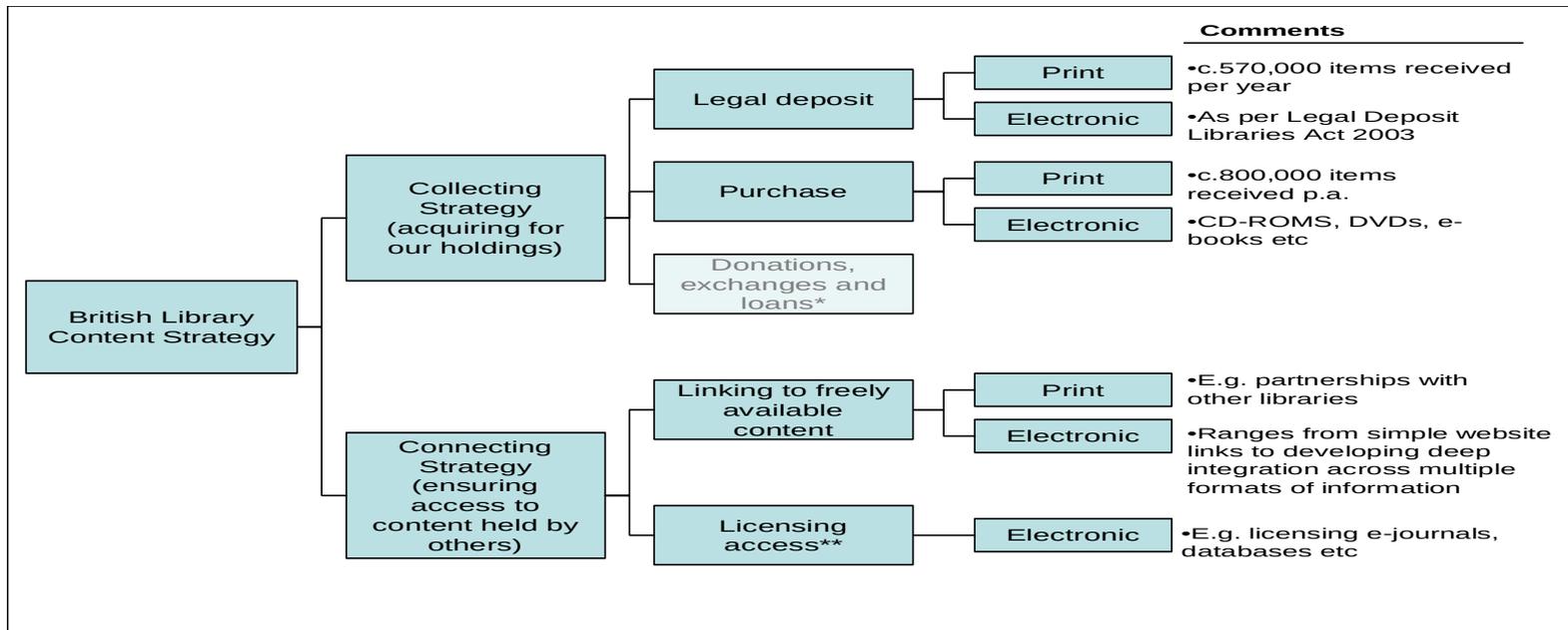


# Challenges

- **“Flight to the web” – print to digital transition**
  - predicted that 40% of UK research data will only be available in electronic form by 2020
  
- **E publishing – is grey still grey?**
  - what is the value of peer review over non-peer reviewed research
  - what does grey literature mean to researchers
  - presents new challenges for librarians
  
- **Collection development policies**
  - not just “literature” – data sets, evidence based research
  - connecting verses collecting

# Addressing the Challenges – Collection Development

- 2005/2006 content development strategy for the British Library developed
- Primary focus disciplined based approach but also looked at special formats including grey literature
- Shift from collection development to content strategy



# Addressing the Challenges – Collection Management Costs

The British Library and UCL investigated the life cycle of the collection and preservation of digital material

- established individual stages in the cycle
- costed individual stages
- financial commitment of collecting digital materials over the long term estimated
- Life Cycle Costing Model  $L_T = Aq + I_T + M_T + Ac_T + S_T + P_T$

Life Project 2 – the next stage is to test the model

- sensitivity analysis
- where are the costs incurred over time
- what are the financial risks over time

# Addressing the Challenges – Collection Management Storage

## The British Library Digital Object Management Programme

### Mission

The DOM Programme's mission is to enable the United Kingdom to preserve and use its digital output forever.

### Vision

Our vision is to create a management system for digital objects that will

- store and preserve any type of digital material in perpetuity
- provide access to this material to users with appropriate permissions
- ensure that the material is easy to find
- ensure that users can view the material with contemporary applications
- ensure that users can, where possible, experience material with the original look-and-feel

# Addressing the Challenges – Some Examples Websites

- **Web Archiving**
  - UK Web Archiving Consortium (UKWAC)
    - 6 UK institutions – British Library, National Archives, National Library of Scotland, National Library of Wales, JISC and The Wellcome Trust
  - Sites selected in line with content development policy
  - Searchable archive of websites
    - Over 1000 sites archived as of 2005
    - [www.webarchive.org.uk](http://www.webarchive.org.uk)
  - Ongoing challenges
    - Currently permissions based
    - Success rate running at ~ 30%
    - Intellectual property rights
    - Important to collect and preserve in own right but not necessarily a solution to web based published grey literature
    - UK domain only at present

# Addressing the Challenges – Some Examples

## Non-Print Materials

- **Voluntary Deposit of Electronic Publications (VDEP)** - non-print material
  - Offline (e.g. cd-rom, dvd) covered by voluntary code of practice
    - Catalogued on the BL Integrated catalogue
    - Access to the original for onsite reference
  - Online material
    - Currently opt-in by certain publishers
    - No formal understandings or agreements on access developed
  - Ongoing challenges
    - Only a tiny proportion of potential material is collected
    - Monograph titles 2005/06: 1500 online; 850 offline; 600 downloaded
    - Territoriality – only looking at UK but what does this mean in an electronic environment
    - Variable relevance and quality

# Addressing the Challenges – the Future

Is the world becoming more or less grey – is there a distinction, and if there is, does it matter?

If it does matter – who might it matter to:

- Librarians
- Researchers
- Producers
- Content users
- Search engines.....?

It is still early days - much of the work is theoretical – still to discover:

- Long term costs
- What content will have value in the future?
- What are the risks around obsolescence?
- What is the role of libraries?
- Who should be involved:
  - Producers?
  - Publishers?
  - Technical partners?
  - Researchers?
  - Others?

## For Further Information

- British Library website

<http://www.bl.uk>

- British Library Annual Report and Accounts 2005/06

<http://www.bl.uk/about/annual/2005to2006/introduction.html>

- Redefining the Library: The British Library's Strategy 2005 – 2008

<http://www.bl.uk/about/strategy.html>

- The British Library's Content Strategy

<http://www.bl.uk/contentstrategy>

- JISC/BL Life Cycle Information for E publishing

<http://eprints.ucl.ac.uk/archive/00001855/01/LifeProjSummary.pdf>

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