

# Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence

How to expand access to published  
research findings

Presentation by Dame Janet Finch at the  
The Foundation for Science and Technology debate on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

What challenges were we set?

## Remit of the Working Group

The peer-reviewed, published outcomes of research: how to make them accessible.....

- To more people/organisations
- Immediately
- Free
- With the ability to re-use the material

.....Whilst avoiding potential pitfalls

## Potential pitfalls

Potential for damage to.....

- The high standards of the peer review process
- The quality of UK research
- Successful commercial publishing industry
- Learned societies, in their role as publishers

## Context: International

### Research context

- UK excellence
- But 6% of publications globally

### Internet revolution

- By 2020, 99% UK journals published digitally
- 2 million articles p.a. published globally, increasing by 4% p.a.
- 25,000 journals worldwide, of which 8,000 OA

## Context: Wider access

### Expanding access outside the research community

- Benefits to economy and quality of life
- Moral case for access to taxpayer funded research
- UK Government transparency agenda
- Wide acceptance of principle: challenge of *how*

## Context: Differing Interests

### Different parties have differing interests

- *Universities* .... maximise research performance, control costs
- *Researchers* ..... publish in the best journals
- *Funders* .....maximum impact, control costs
- *Libraries* .....maximise services to readers, control costs
- *Publishers*.....revenues to secure profitability and high quality services/products

How did we develop our approach?

## Establishment of working group

- Commissioned by government, but to be independent
- Composed of senior representatives of key parties
- Drew on wide range of available information
- Regular referral back to each constituency
- Took less than a year

## How we worked

- Recognised that different parties have different interests – not easy to reconcile
- Developed Success Criteria, against which options assessed
- Sought the “best fit” solution for these criteria
- Accepted that the outcome would not be perfect for anyone....but aimed for outcome that all could live with

## What does success look like?

- More people, getting quicker and better **access** to published outcomes of global research
- Financial **sustainability** for publishers, including learned societies
- **Affordable** for funders, universities and libraries
- Sustaining high **quality** research, and high quality services to researchers and authors

## What did we recommend?

## Main recommendations

- Change is inevitable: recognise, embrace and manage it
- Mixed economy for foreseeable future in journal publishing
- Policy direction set towards open access
- Identified actions needed to implement this
- Estimated costs of transition period

## Business models

### Two models co-existing:

- **Subscription model**....costs covered by/on behalf of the reader.....journals purchased at the end of the publication process
- **Open access model**.....costs covered by/on behalf of the author.....at the beginning of the publications process

## Transitional arrangements

- Clearly policy direction towards Open Access model
- Funders' requirements to be fulfilled by *either* OA publication *or* subscription journal with short embargos (but not so short as to put journal at risk)
- Extended licences for subscription journals
- Improved use of Repositories

## Implementing the Open Access model

- **Research funders**.....accept publication as part of research costs.....pay those costs in appropriate way.....require publication in OA format
- **Universities**.....establish publication funds.....develop way of paying authors' costs....work together to negotiate charges (APCs)
- **Publishers**.....develop more OA publications.....negotiate APCs

Why did we make these recommendations?

## Adapting the subscription model

- Limiting restrictions on access to minimum
- Repositories - archiving pre-publication versions for immediate access
- Extension of licences to cover more journals, more libraries

**All helps but it is not enough to meet the success criteria....business model requires restrictions**

## Adopting the Open Access model

- The “best fit” with success criteria
- Feasible: 10% articles already published OA, and rising fast...Wellcome Trust experience
- But.....requires change in funding flows
- Increased costs in transition – need to purchase non-UK research
- Must be introduced gradually to avoid destabilising eco-system

What has been the response?

## Policy Developments in UK

- Government response to report
- Funders consultations and development of policy (RCUK, HEFCE)
- Academic response especially via Learned Societies
- Parliamentary enquiries: House of Lords S+T Committee; House of Commons BIS Committee

## International Policy Developments

- *European Commission*: announcement of requirements for Horizon 2020
- *European Commission*: recommendation for member states to develop policy on expanding access
- *United States*: White House (OSTP) requirements for federal funding agencies to develop policies on expanding access

## Focus for debate

### A selection of current issues:

- Why do anything proactive? Why not let the market take its course?
- Shouldn't the policy apply to STEM subjects only? Is it appropriate for HSS?
- Why give Universities responsibility for author payments? Won't it just create new layers of bureaucracy?

## **Accessibility, Sustainability, Excellence:**

**Achieved through a mixed  
economy, supported by  
collaboration**