



## **IP Minister visits the BFI National Archive**

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The Minister for Intellectual Property Baroness Wilcox visited the BFI National Archive this week for a first-hand insight into how IP reform can benefit the keepers of huge national collections, as well as a broader view of the treasures looked after by the BFI.

The BFI has the largest and most culturally valuable film and television archive in the world with more than 120,000 films and 750,000 television programmes, millions of stills, and thousands of posters, scripts, designs and other extraordinary ephemera from the world of film and television.

It has ambitious digitisation and modernisation plans to increase public access to this immensely valuable resource including the potential but controlled use of orphan works – creative content where the rights holder cannot be identified and is therefore not available for reuse.

The visit yesterday of Baroness Wilcox is timely in the light of the recently published findings of the independent Hargreaves Review which examined how the Intellectual Property framework supports growth and innovation. It made ten recommendations and proposed a clear change in the strategic direction of IP policy to give the UK an IP framework best suited to supporting innovation and promoting economic growth in the digital age.

The BFI has consistently made the case for changes to the copyright laws over a number of years, arguing that amendments would help it to be a more effective custodian of the nation's film and television heritage and also assist the work of the UK's other national and regional film archives. All these improvements are central to the development of the UK's film culture

The BFI strongly welcomed the Hargreaves proposals which would allow it and other organisations to make the orphan works which they hold legally available.

Baroness Wilcox said: 'The BFI has a wonderful archive of collections which is an extremely useful resource. It has been good to meet with staff and discuss how the Government can work alongside the industry to overcome issues affecting them, such as orphan works.'

'It is clear that the BFI can play a positive role in the economic growth of the film and television industries and support the overall growth of the UK economy. The Government is currently carefully considering the recommendations made in the Hargreaves review of intellectual property and we hope to publish a response soon.'

BFI Chief Executive Amanda Nevill said: 'It was a pleasure to host Lady Wilcox's visit as there is nothing quite like seeing unique material such as the annotated Star Wars continuity scripts or correspondence between David Lean and Alec Guinness.'

'We also clearly have a strong interest in the IP debate particularly as it applies to the area of copyright. We would like a copyright system that puts economic growth, competitive markets and creative, commercial and social innovation at its heart,

which protects the right of creators and investors to fair reward, and allows people to have easy access to information relevant to their lives.'

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**Notes to Editors**

**About the BFI**

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences