Chair's report for the year ending 31 December 2024

2024 was a year of re-building and consolidation for the Friends of the National Archives (FTNA). We have gradually built up our membership numbers to over 700 and have held our subscription fees at 2023 levels. We said goodbye to some long standing and experienced trustees, but have been able to fill the vacancies on the Board of Trustees with some excellent individuals who have already made an impact.

FTNA has continued to support the work of The National Archives (TNA) including providing the funding for the annual film making venture by young people which took its theme from the successful Great Escape Exhibition. FTNA also supported the exhibition 'Spirit of Invention' which went on tour to Newcastle with great success.

During 2024 we began overhauling the FTNA Website and giving attention to the management of our members accounts. Both endeavours have continued into 2025 and owe much to the hard work of some of our trustees and volunteers.

In September, we produced a 94 page edition of Magna which was packed with historical articles from a wide range of contributors. This edition, as with previous others, owed much to the dedication and commitment of volunteers and a member of the Council of Trustees. The quarterly newsletter, which is also produced by a volunteer, continued to keep members informed of events and developments throughout 2024.

During the latter part of the year, we began discussions with the other charity associated with TNA, the National Archives Trust, about closer cooperation and a potential merger between it and FTNA. These discussions have continued throughout 2025. The Chief Executive of TNA is supportive of the idea of bringing the two charities together. The FTNA Council of Trustees is planning to hold a special meeting of members to vote on the proposal to merge with NAT in September 2025. More details of the arrangements of this will be sent out in due course.

I want to pay tribute to the work of the members of the Council of Trustees and the volunteers who support them who give their time freely and without payment to keep the FTNA going. Without them, the profile and efforts of TNA would be diminished.

And, finally, I would like to thank you all, as members, for your continued support. All the money from your membership fees goes towards supporting TNA and through it to help preserve and make accessible documents and papers which are such an important part of our cultural heritage.

Charles Waddicor
Chair of the Friends of the National Archives