

DENBIGHSHIRE ARCHIVE SERVICE

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Denbighshire County Council is a local government authority which administers an area consisting of parts of the former counties of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merioneth and which came into being on 1 April 1996. As a consequence of their former collecting policies, some records relating to the present county are lodged with neighbouring archive services.
- 1.2 According to the scheme for the provision of the Denbighshire Archives Service under the requirements of Section 60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994, Denbighshire County Council agrees to administer Denbighshire Archives and be responsible for the custody of its existing collections. Denbighshire Archives (previously known as Denbighshire Record Office) has been in existence since 1972.
- 1.3 Denbighshire Archives Service is appointed by the Lord Chancellor as a repository for locally deposited public records under section 4(1) of the Public Records Act 1958. It is recognised by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales as a repository for parochial records within the area defined by its agreement with the Denbighshire Archive Service.
- 1.4 Denbighshire Archives Service abides by current archives legislation including;
 - Public Records Act 1958
 - Local Government Records Act, 1962
 - Local Government Act (Wales) 1994
 - Data Protection Act, 1998
 - Freedom of Information Act, 2000.
 - Environmental Information Regulations, 2004

2. Mission statement

- 2.1 The principal duty of Denbighshire Archive Service (hereafter DAS) is to preserve the documentary heritage of the County for future generations whilst enabling and promoting access by the public.
- 2.2 In pursuing this end our main objectives are;
 - A. To collect archive collections.
Locating and accruing archives which are of historical significance to Denbighshire.
 - B. To preserve and store archive collections.
Safeguarding unique and irreplaceable collections by providing suitable storage and professional management.
 - C. To catalogue and index collections to make content accessible.
Organising and arranging collections into a way which enables researchers to find what they are looking for with ease.

D. To provide and promote access to archive collections.

Supervising and encouraging the use of a free to use public search room whilst providing alternative services to remote researchers

3. Collections development policy aims

- 3.1 The objective of the policy is to outline how we aim to ensure that we meet our overarching service aims, specifically;

A. To collect archive collections.

Locating and accruing archives which are of historical significance to Denbighshire.

B. To preserve and store archive collections.

Safeguarding unique and irreplaceable collections by providing suitable storage and professional management.

- 3.2 The policy should also be seen in conjunction with the Service's depositor's agreement and other relevant policy documents. This policy supports our mission statement as set out above and should be used in conjunction with the DAS Forward Plan which documents plans for the years ahead and previous key achievements.

4. Scope of collections policy

- 4.1 It is the Archive Service's policy not to solicit or receive material relating to areas outside the present authority's boundaries, with the following exceptions;

- a. Where the archive relates mainly to Denbighshire and the integrity of an archive group prevents its division. In such a case other relevant repositories will be consulted.
- b. In exceptional circumstances such material may be accepted on the insistence of the owner, and in consultation with any other relevant repository or repositories.
- c. The archives service will accept material which adds to specific existing collections already in its care.

- 4.2 The following material will be collected:

- a. Public Records under the terms of the Public Records Act 1958; including records from the court service, coroner, the National Health Service and other bodies identified as producers of public records.
- b. Records of predecessor local government authorities of the present Denbighshire County Council under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972.
- c. Records of Town and Community Councils within the collecting area.
- d. Parish records relating to the area defined by the current agreement between the Representative Body of the Church of Wales and Welsh local authorities.
- e. Records of other religious denominations.
- f. Private collections of individuals, estates, or businesses.

- 4.3 We accept archival collections that contain a very broad range of formats and material types including, but not limited to, paper documents, photographs, slides, film,

computer files, and sound recordings. Audio and film material will be referred to the National Screen and Sound Archive for Wales where appropriate.

- 4.4 Published works which complement the manuscript collections will also be collected, as will copies and catalogues of relevant material stored elsewhere. The service will liaise with the local studies service of the Denbighshire Library and Information Service to avoid unnecessary duplication of published material.
- 4.5 We will liaise with other repositories and archive services to ensure no conflict of collecting interests.
- 4.6 Denbighshire Archives Service will not collect:
 - a. Material not deemed to be of long term historical interest or significance, as determined by qualified archive staff.
 - b. Three-dimensional artefacts, unless they are integral to the documentary collection to which they are attached, in which case they will be stored and conserved appropriately in consultation with the Heritage Service of Denbighshire County Council.
 - c. Duplicates of material already held or held by another collecting body.
 - d. Any material which it is not within the resources of the service to catalogue, preserve and store.

5. Collections development

- 5.1 Denbighshire Archive Service regularly assess our existing collections and recent acquisitions to determine our strengths and weaknesses in relation to documenting the history of Denbighshire. We seek to maintain our strengths and acquire more records for areas we consider under-represented. The following areas have been identified as weaknesses in our holdings, and we are therefore keen to receive materials in the following categories:
 - a. Political papers – of parties, societies and politicians
 - b. Records of minority groups
 - c. Local industry and business archives
 - d. Records of pressure groups, including trade unions
 - e. Records of voluntary services
 - f. Clubs and societies' archives
 - g. Town & Community Councils
 - h. School records

The Archive Service will aim will continue to prioritise these areas through a Collection Development Plan.

6. Acquisition

- 6.1 Internal transfers are made from Denbighshire County Council, and its predecessors. Records are transferred from the council at the end of their retention period if they are

known to have, or are considered to have the potential for, long-term historical or legal value. This appraisal and selection process is directed by the Lead Archivist.

- 6.2 Retention periods are based on the Local Government Classification Retention Schedule with local adaptations approved by Denbighshire County Council. Records may also be transferred directly to the archives from the originating department on an annual programme. The majority of these records are in hard copy.
- 6.3 Denbighshire Archives Service will acquire documentary material by donation, deposit or purchase in furtherance of its aims (see also conditions of deposit).
- 6.4 External bodies or individuals are encouraged to deposit records as a gift but DAS will accept records deposited on long-term loan. The terms which govern the different types of acquisition are described in our Deposit Agreement documentation. In certain circumstances the service will acquire collections by purchase where the purchase price is deemed to be an appropriate investment of public funds for the public good.
- 6.5 We seek to maintain strong relationships with our depositors, and this is outlined in our advice for Depositors. Depositors are encouraged to provide finding aids where bulk is likely to render the records otherwise inaccessible until processed.

7. Access

- 7.1 Archives are accepted on the presumption that the depositor is willing for them to be made available for public consultation within a reasonable period of time (within the context of relevant legislation).
- 7.2 We will establish, as far as is possible, the title to, and provenance of, any documentary material transferred into Denbighshire Archives Service's custody.
- 7.3 DAS will publicise every new acquisition, once catalogued, and advise on any restrictions to access. Catalogues will be made available on line and supplied to depositors and the National Register of Archives. Further information can be found in our Access Policy.
- 7.4 Apart from statute-barred documents, the service will make material available for public use as soon as possible after deposit.

8. Disposal

- 8.1 DAS will agree appropriate disposal options with the owners as early as possible, preferably at the point of receipt. The options are as follows:
 - a. Return unwanted records to the owner (depositor) or donor. DAS will ask owners to collect or arrange the return of such material.
 - b. Transfer records to a more appropriate archive, library or museum. DAS may recommend this option to the owner if an item is more relevant or appropriate to an alternative public repository, or if we already hold a copy. Wherever possible we expect the owner to make these arrangements.
 - c. Physically destroy records as waste. DAS use a County Council approved waste paper removal service to destroy unwanted paper records. Such material is pulped and recycled to be as environmentally friendly as possible. Where appropriate, records (paper and electronic) are destroyed as confidential waste.

d. DAS will not sell any archival material.

- 8.2 DAS reserve the right to conduct a periodic review of the records held, in light of research use of the records, and where necessary, to recommend their disposal, destruction or transfer to a more appropriate repository in consultation with the depositor/donor where possible.

9. Review and revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but at least every 5 years.

10. Next review date

March 2022