

DENBIGHSHIRE ARCHIVE SERVICE

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT 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. Policy aims

- 3.1 The main objective of this policy, and the suite of inter-related collections policies, is to outline and demonstrate the holistic and coordinated approach taken by DAS towards archive collections management.
- 3.2 The collections management policy aims to communicate our strategic and integrated approach to collections management through our policies, procedures and forwards plans, directing the services work on all aspects of collection development, conservation and preservation, collection information and access

4. Collections management

- 4.1 DAS's collections are managed in accordance with its own approved policies, within the Archive Service Accreditation Standard, and following the International Council on Archives Code of Ethics as expressed through the Code of Conduct of the Archive and Records Association.
- 4.2 We select and acquire unique and irreplaceable archive material of enduring historical significance in accordance with our Collections Development Policy and plans. We accept transfers of material from the Records Management service of Denbighshire County Council and offer facilities for organisations and individuals to deposit or donate archive collections for safekeeping and for the benefit of research. Our Collections Development Plan aims to ensure that our archive collections continue to reflect the community we serve.
- 4.3 We list, catalogue and record and provide information about the archive collections in accordance with our Collections Information Policy and plans. Cataloguing is carried out by trained and qualified staff, under the direction of the Lead Archivists. We document our collections in accordance with appropriate professional standards and it is our aim to make item level entries available online for all archive collections following the International Council on Archives General International Standard of Archival Description [ISAD(G)].
- 4.4 We preserve, care for and undertake archive conservation work on the archive collections in accordance with our Collections Care and Conservation Policy. We follow the guidance in PD5454: 2012, Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials and the Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections PAS198:2012. Conservation is essential to the long-term survival and accessibility of the archive collections. Although DAS does not have an in-house conservator it ensures that all conservation is carried out by trained and qualified conservators.
- 4.5 We provide access to Denbighshire's archival heritage in accordance with our Access Policy and Standards and with respect to the Equality Act 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and current and relevant Copyright legislation. We provide direct public access, free of charge, in our searchroom, which is staffed to assist visitors to find the information they need and to interpret the archive collections. We belong to

the County Archive Research Network (CARN) which operates a nationally recognised system of reader's tickets to support the security of collections in local authority record offices.

5. Standards

- 5.1 These policy statements refer to relevant legislation, professional standards and codes of practice for cultural collections where appropriate. In particular these policies have been written with reference to the principles and guidelines laid down in the following:

PD5454:2012 – Guidance for the storage and exhibition of archival materials

PAS197:2009 – Code of practice for cultural collections management

PAS198:2012 – Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections

BS4971:2002 - Repair and allied processes for the conservation of documents.

ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description

Data protection Act 1998

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

6. Inter-relationships

- 6.1 New deposits of records arrive through passive activity, routine accrual, and legal requirement. Analysis of catalogued and uncatalogued records has highlighted areas of weakness within the collection and it is planned to further identify gaps and as a result actively develop the collections in these specific areas.
- 6.2 All new accessions are assessed for preservation and conservation needs, and prioritised for cataloguing. The catalogue backlog is actively managed, seeking opportunities for external funding, learning opportunities for existing staff and work experience volunteers. Cataloguing and preparation of finding aids is a priority in order to sustain and improve accessibility to the range of our collections and surrogates. The provision of surrogates may be considered to enhance access to certain collections or parts of collections.
- 6.3 User demand and interest helps to drive cataloguing priorities. User demand, preservation assessments and cost-benefit analysis helps to drive conservation and digitisation priorities. Commercial opportunities for conservation, digitisation and optimum use of strongroom space contributes to the sustainability of the service.
- 6.4 DAS will take steps to record the information required to ensure digital materials are preserved and can be retrieved and used. A separate Digital Preservation and Digitisation Strategy will be developed as part of the Archives and Records Council Wales all-Wales Digital Preservation developments.
- 6.5 The service maintains a Disaster Plan which provides the strategy and procedures for dealing with the various risks associated with records storage, their rescue and preservation.

7. Related policies

Access Policy

Collections Development Policy

Collections Information Policy

Collections Care and Conservation Policy

Disaster Plan

Welsh Language Policy

8. Review and revision

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

9. Next review date

March 2022