

Shropshire Archives  
Collections Management Policy  
November 2015



Gateway to  
the history of  
Shropshire  
and Telford



## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview and history

#### 1.1.1 History of the Service

Shrewsbury Corporation established a borough library and museum in 1885, largely through the efforts of the Shropshire Archaeological Society. In 1898 a Records Committee was set up by Salop County Council, initially to report on the records of the clerk of the peace, but an honorary archivist was appointed only in 1934. In 1947, Salop County Council created a Record Office to organise their Quarter Session records and large estate, parish and other official collections, and this appeared to duplicate some of the work of the Shrewsbury Borough Library and Museum. A guide to these holdings was produced in 1952.

The Borough Library became part of the County Library Service in 1974 and its extensive collections formed the basis of a local studies library with a county-wide role. The County Record Office continued to be organised independently but became the principal repository for the vast collection of manuscript material deposited with the County Council. The re-organisation of County Council services in 1988 led to the creation of the Leisure Services Department and the County Record Office and Local Studies Library were finally administratively united as the Records and Research Unit.

#### 1.1.2 Shropshire Archives and the Records Management Service

Further re-organisation in 1995 led to the creation of Shropshire County Council's Information and Community Services Department which funded the £1.8 million project to build the Records and Research Centre. Located in Castle Gates, Shrewsbury, the purpose-built centre has four levels with a total floor space of 1,500 square metres. At the same time a Records Management service was established at Shirehall to manage the records and information created by Shropshire County Council. Following local government reorganisation in 1997, an agreement between Shropshire County Council and Telford and Wrekin Council secured funding to maintain the Service's remit over the historic county.

In 2004 following public consultation, the service was renamed Shropshire Archives, gateway to the history of Shropshire and Telford. In 2009 Shropshire became a unitary council and inherited large quantities of archives and records from the former Borough and District Councils. This meant that additional storage space was required and an out store was established to house both records and archives in 2012.

### 1.2 Mission Statements

Shropshire Archives will take the lead in preserving and improving access to Shropshire's archives and local history collections in order that individuals and communities can better understand, research and appreciate their heritage.

The Records Management Service will work to ensure that Shropshire Council manages its information and records sources in an appropriate, efficient and economic manner.

### 1.3 Service Objectives

#### 1.3.1 Objectives –Shropshire Archives

- To fulfil a custodial role in the preservation, acquisition and cataloguing of Shropshire's archives and local history collections

- To promote and provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to use Shropshire's archives and local history collections to better understand, and appreciate their heritage
- To develop and to promote best practice in the preservation, enhancement and use of Shropshire's archives and local history collections
- To develop and to support sustainable partnerships and to enable communities and people to engage, explore, conserve and enjoy their own heritage

### 1.3.2 Objectives – The Records Management Service

- To ensure that information and records sources are retained only for as long as is necessary for legal compliance and administrative need.
- To develop and promote best practice and legal compliance in the creation, use, maintenance and disposal of information and records sources.
- To co-ordinate the selection and offering of records and material to Shropshire Archives, thereby contributing to the corporate memory of Shropshire Council.
- To work with the Information Governance team and the Information Governance Group to ensure Shropshire Council's compliance with legislation relating to information and record keeping.

### 1.5 Statutory and legal status.

Shropshire Archives is a recognised place of deposit for public records, and a diocesan record office for records from the Shropshire parishes of the dioceses of Hereford and Lichfield. It is also licensed to hold Manorial and Tithe records, and records of local government and other public and statutory bodies. The service provides local studies library service under the Public Libraries Act 1964.

The services work to ensure that Shropshire Council complies with the following legislation:

- The Local Government Act 1972 (s.224) which states the Local Authority needs to 'make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to, or are in the custody of the council of any of their officers'.
- The Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967. These relate to those records created by central government and designated as 'public records' which may be held locally. These Acts place an obligation upon services to 'permanently preserve' the original records.
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2005.

## 2 Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to show the overall approach taken by Shropshire Archives towards Archive and Library Collection Management, including acquisition, cataloguing, preservation, conservation and reprographics services. Staff and volunteers working in these areas all have specific responsibilities within the services. Lead staff report to the Team Leader Archives. The policies, plans and procedures covering these areas are closely connected, and all include the aim of making collections as accessible as possible.

## 3 Collection Management

The Collection management policy brings together the following elements reflected in the Mission Statement and Service Objectives.

- Acquisition, preservation, cataloguing and managing archive and printed Shropshire material including the corporate memory of Shropshire Council.
- Developing the access and use of collections to support Shropshire Council's priorities.
- Providing opportunities for volunteers and work placements.
- Developing commercial services to support the overall service.

#### 4 Standards

The following standards are relevant to this policy:

- PD5454:2012 Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials
- PAS 198:2012 Specification for Managing Environmental Conditions for Cultural Collections
- PAS 197:2009 Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management
- BS4971:2002 Repair and Allied Processes for the Conservation of Documents.
- ISAD(G) General International Standard of Archival Description

#### 5 Inter-relationships

The inter relationships between the different elements of Collections Management reflect the overall approach taken by Shropshire Archives.

- New archive accessions are regularly received passively through routine accrual and by legal requirement. Printed works are acquired in cooperation with Shropshire Library Service as well as independently. Following surveys the service is working to identify gaps in the collection and to target collecting around these.
- On receipt all accessions are assessed for preservation and conservation need, and are repackaged in archive quality materials.
- All accessions are recorded on CALM.
- All digital assets are actively managed according to the digital preservation policy.
- Funding for cataloguing, conservation and digitisation work is actively sought from record owners, the Friends of Shropshire Archives, and from external grant giving bodies.
- Volunteers are involved in many aspects of cataloguing, conservation and digitisation work, and targeted projects are developed to meet their needs.
- All catalogues are added to the online catalogue at [www.shropshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.shropshirehistory.org.uk) on completion.

#### 6 Links

*Collections Development Policy*  
*Collections Information Policy*  
*Preservation and Conservation Policy*  
*Interim Digital Preservation Policy*  
*Digitization Policy*

This policy was written in November 2015 and will be reviewed in November 2020 or sooner if circumstances dictate.