

Lancashire Archives

inspiring people and communities to explore their heritage; promoting and continuing to collect Lancashire's archives while preserving them for everyone to use and enjoy, now and in the future

Collections Management Policy

1 Our service function

Lancashire Archives exists to collect and preserve Lancashire's archival heritage, making it accessible to everyone, now and in the future.

2 Purpose of this Policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy, and the suite of related collections policies, is to define why and how Lancashire Archives acquires, preserves, develops and facilitates access to the archive and printed book collections in its care.
- 2.2 The policy serves as a guide for archive service staff and demonstrates to external organisations and individuals that Lancashire Archives has adopted recognised professional standards and aims to follow good practice.
- 2.3 The policy is underpinned by the British Standards Institution *Code of practice for cultural collections management* PAS 197:2009, the requirements of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard, 2013, and the current government policy on archives, *Archives for the 21st century*, 2009.
- 2.4 This policy and the suite of related policies replace the following service policies:
 - Collecting Policy*, formally adopted 9 Jul 2007
 - Preservation Policy*, formally adopted 31 Jan 2007
 - Media Use of Archives Policy*

3 Definition and value of archives

'Archives are the record of the everyday activities of governments, organisations, businesses and individuals. They are central to the record of our national and local stories and are vital in creating cultural heritage and supporting public policy objectives. Their preservation ensures that future generations will be able to learn from the experiences of the past to make decisions about the present and the future'¹

¹ *Archives for the 21st century*, 2009

4 Statutory and legal basis for Lancashire Archives

- 4.1 Lancashire Archives is not a statutory service but is the sole provider of archive services to Lancashire County Council and its constituent authorities under sections 224 and 226(5) of the Local Government Act 1972. This requires councils to make proper arrangements for any documents which belong to them, or are in their custody, and applies to records which are still in active use, as well as to those which are now inactive.
- 4.2 Lancashire Archives exercises the county council's powers in respect of historical, private and business records under the terms of the Local Government (Records) Act, 1962, as amended by the Local Government Act 1985. This empowers authorities to incur expenditure on facilities for the preservation, promotion of use, and public access to records of general or local interest, acquired by purchase, gift or deposit.
- 4.3 Since local government reorganisation in 1998 Lancashire Archives has also provided archive services to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and to Blackpool Council under joint arrangements. A new tripartite joint service agreement was negotiated in 2012 and formally agreed by the Lancashire County Council Cabinet Member for Adult and Community Services on 26 March 2013.
- 4.4 Lancashire Archives has been appointed by the Lord Chancellor as a place of deposit for local public records under the Public Records Act 1958 as amended 1967 (especially in respect of s3(6) and s4(1)).
- 4.5 Lancashire Archives has been designated by the Master of the Rolls as a repository approved for the custody of manorial records under the Law of Property Act 1922 and the Law of Property (Amendment) Act, 1924 and the Manorial Document Rules 1959 and 1967; and for the deposit of tithe documents under the Tithes (Copies of Instruments of Apportionment) Rules, 1960 and 1963.
- 4.6 Lancashire Archives functions as a diocesan record office in respect of Anglican parishes within Lancashire and the dioceses of Blackburn, Liverpool, and Bradford, under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 (No 2) as amended by the Church of England's (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992 (No 1). It also serves as diocesan record office for the Roman Catholic dioceses of Lancaster and Salford and the Archdiocese of Liverpool.

5 Scope of the collections

- 5.1 The geographical area served by Lancashire Archives is the present administrative county of Lancashire and the unitary authorities of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. The archive service also retains responsibility for archives created by the administration of the county of Lancashire before 1974, which relate to the whole of the historic county.
- 5.2 The archive collections include material covering the historic County Palatine of Lancaster - from South Lakeland to Merseyside, Manchester and Warrington – and are of national and international importance as well as regional and local significance.
- 5.3 Lancashire Archives collections are the largest in the NorthWest² covering almost 9 miles of shelving – about 1800 cubic metres in volume and comprising more than 4,400 separate collections. The archives are in a variety of formats - parchment or vellum, paper, linen, volumes, microfilm and photographic material and electronic media - and range in size from tiny documents, a couple of inches square, to rolled parchments or maps which may be more than 20 feet long. They document the county's diverse history and culture from the mid-twelfth century to the present day and include the archives of people, organisations and businesses in Lancashire, reflecting the changing landscape, communities and economy over nine centuries.
- 5.4 Lancashire Archives also manages a significant collection of books and printed material relating to people and places in the former County Palatine – the Lancashire Printed Collection. This supports the archive collections and provides a countywide local studies resource.

6 Management of the archive collections

- 6.1 Lancashire's archive collections are managed in accordance with its own approved policies, within The National Archives framework of standards and best practice guidance, and following the International Council on Archives Code of Ethics as expressed through the Code of Conduct of the Archive and Records Association.
- 6.2 We select and acquire unique and irreplaceable archive material of enduring historical significance to the county of Lancashire, and the unitary authorities of Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, in accordance with our ***Collections Development Policy*** and plans. We accept transfers of material from the Records Management service of Lancashire County Council and offer

² Lancashire Record Office Logjam Audit Report NWMLAC, 2003

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.

- 6.3 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 Archive Collections Manager. We document our collections in accordance with appropriate professional standards and make collection level entries available online for all archive collections following the International Council on Archives *General International Standard of Archival Description* [ISAD(G)].
- 6.4 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. Storage in purpose-built, climatically-controlled strongrooms, supervised use of the collections and an ongoing programme of condition surveys and assessment followed by appropriate remedial action, ensure that the archives are preserved to the best current professional standards.

Conservation is essential to the long-term survival and accessibility of the archive collections. It is carried out by trained and qualified staff, and by trainees, under the direction of the Archive Conservation Manager, and undertaken in accordance with health and safety requirements and nationally recognised ethical and technical standards - especially BS 4971:2002 *Repair and allied processes for the conservation of documents-Recommendations*, and the European Confederation of Conservators-Restorers Organisations (ECCO) *Professional Guidelines and Code of Ethics*, 2002-2004

- 6.5 We provide access to Lancashire'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 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. We aim to meet The National Council on Archives PSQG *Access Standard* 2006 and 'we

recognise our statutory duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination of all kinds and are committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all aspects of the service³

We recognise the value of displaying archives as well as the risks of exhibiting original archival material. We aim to fulfil the requirements of PD 5454:2012 *Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials*. Any individual or organisation seeking to exhibit Lancashire archives must comply with our terms and conditions for loan and sign the ***Exhibition Loan Agreement***.

7 Management of the Lancashire Printed Collection

- 7.1 The Lancashire Printed Collection housed by Lancashire Archives is managed, developed and preserved in accordance with the ***Lancashire Printed Collection Policy*** and the ***Lancashire Printed Collection Procedures***.
- 7.2 Professional advice and support in developing, classifying and cataloguing the collections is provided by qualified Librarians who are members of CILIP (The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals).

8 People and Training

- 8.1 We manage, preserve and conserve our archive and printed book collections effectively by providing an adequate level of staffing and ensuring that the people who work here understand the value and significance of the collections and are appropriately skilled and trained. Our ***Training and Development Policy*** aims to ensure that all staff and volunteers have the necessary skills to carry out their defined roles in supporting the preservation of our archive collections. We do this in accordance with Lancashire County Council's *Employee Development Policy*.
- 8.2 We manage the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff and volunteers working with the archive collections, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 2002 and Lancashire County Council's Health and Safety Policy and our own ***Record Office premises Arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing***. And we provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe environment for visitors to the record office building.
- 8.3 Professional archivists and archive conservators are encouraged to become registered members of the Archives and Records Association. They are

³ Lancashire Archives Access Policy Statement

expected to subscribe to its code of conduct and to continue to develop their professional knowledge and skills. Accredited archive conservators also subscribe to the ICON (Institute of Conservation) code of conduct. Librarians subscribe to the CILIP set of ethical principles and code of professional practice for library, information and knowledge professionals.

9 Monitoring and Review

- 9.1 The strategic aims for managing Lancashire's archive collections have been incorporated into a 5-year Forward plan which forms the basis of the annual service delivery plan for Lancashire Archives to ensure that the aims are met. The Forward Plan is reviewed annually and the annual plan regularly by the Lancashire Archives Management Team.
- 9.2 The strategy for managing the printed local studies collection is being developed by a working group directed by the Cultural Services Leadership Team.
- 9.3 Lancashire Archives is committed to reviewing and improving its collections management framework and will establish a system of internal audit and management review.

10 Policy Approval and Communication

- 10.1 This Collections Management policy will be approved by Lancashire County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Cultural Services or by a senior officer under delegated powers.
- 10.2 The policy will be reviewed no later than 5 years after the date of approval.
- 10.3 The policy will be communicated to all interested parties and made available to the public on Lancashire County Council's website.

