



**Flintshire Record Office**

**COLLECTIONS  
DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

**2014-2019**



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## 1. Introduction

1.1 The **Definition and Role of Archives** was given by *Archives for the 21st century*, (The National Archives, 2009) as follows: “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 future”.

1.2 Archives are our collective memory and heritage. They are for everyone to use - including professional researchers, family historians, school groups, students, legal investigators and council officers. They are especially important for learning: they inspire young people and help those of all ages develop new research skills. They also provide authoritative evidence to help solve problems and defend rights, and encourage pride in individual and community identities.

1.3 Archives begin life as documents that are created during the course of everyday activities. Over time, these records acquire a historical perspective, offering us a personal connection with past events and previous generations. The archives (paper, parchment, maps, plans, photographs, films and electronic media) give an unrivalled insight into the historical development of places and people’s daily lives.

1.4 Since 1956 Flintshire Record Office has ensured the protection of Flintshire's archival heritage, in order to safeguard these irreplaceable assets for current and future use by means of correct management of the archives to professional standards. We protect, preserve, manage, share and promote the archival legacy of the ancient county of Flintshire, which dates from the 13th century to the present day for the use of current and future generations. We also help the modern county of Flintshire and its successors to achieve their priorities as identified in the Corporate Plan, especially with regard to sustainable development, a strong economy, better education and skills and independent healthy living; and we act as part of the corporate memory to enable the councils to carry out their functions.

1.5 Statutory framework for the archive service is provided under:  
- the Local Government Act 1972 and Local Government (Records) Act 1962;  
- the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978;  
- the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967;  
- the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

Access to collections complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and Environmental Information Regulations 2005.

## 2. Mission Statement

**Overarching Aim: To provide an archive service for Flintshire based on current national standards, guidelines and best practice:**

- A** To identify and collect archive material relating to the current and historic counties of Flintshire;
- B** To preserve this material by storing and conserving it;
- C** To make this material accessible by organising, cataloguing and indexing it;
- D** To provide a supervised search-room open to the public where this material may be used;
- E** To provide services to remote users;
- F** To provide professional advice to owners and custodians of archive material;
- G** To raise awareness of the Record Office both within and beyond the county boundary
- H** We seek continuous improvement by applying excellence to all that we do.
- J** We strive to deliver excellence by working within Flintshire County Council's core values.

## 3. Policy Aim

3.1 This document sets out the Collections Development Policy for Flintshire Record Office (hereafter "FRO") and explains how we aim to ensure inclusive coverage of all aspects of the county's history. It supports our Mission Statement as set out above and should be seen in conjunction with FRO's Forward Plan, Collection Information Policy, Depositors' Agreements and other relevant policy documents.

#### **4. Statutory Position**

4.1 Flintshire County Council is a local government authority which administers an area consisting of part of the former county of Flintshire and which came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1996. It is the sole local government authority in the present county of Flintshire charged with exercising archive powers.

4.2 According to the scheme for the provision of FRO under the requirements of Section 60 of the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994, Flintshire County Council agrees to administer FRO and be responsible for the custody of its existing collections.

4.3 The Local Government Act 1972, Section 224 places statutory obligations on Flintshire County Council to “make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council or any of its officers”. This includes:

- Records created by the County Council and its predecessors in the course of its business - current and semi-current.
- Records held on behalf of central government and subject to the Public Records Act 1958.
- Records given to or purchased by the authority or deposited with the authority on long term loan by authority of the Local Government (Records) Act 1962.

4.4 Under the Local Government Acts 1962 and 1972 the County Council, through its archive service, is the appointed archive authority for all local government districts within Flintshire and is responsible for ensuring the proper care of the records of all parish councils.

4.5 FRO is appointed as a repository for locally deposited public records under section 4(1) of the Public Records Act 1958. Under the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967 FRO has been appointed to look after designated public records such as those of Quarter Sessions, Magistrates’ Courts, Coroners, County Courts, National Coal Board etc. as scheduled in the Public Records (Places of Deposit) Instrument 1991. 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 FRO.

4.6 FRO abides by current archives legislation including the Local Government (Records) Act 1962, the Local Government Act 1972, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. It aims to meet the requirements of the Archive Service Accreditation Standard and to achieve/maintain Accredited status

## **5. Scope of Collecting**

5.1 FRO seeks to collect and preserve material relating to the present county of Flintshire that is deemed unique and of long term historical value as determined by qualified archive staff.

5.2 FRO will collect Public Records under the terms of the Public Records Act 1958; manorial and tithe records under the relevant measures; records of predecessor local-government authorities of the present Flintshire County Council under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972; and parish records relating to the area specified in the current agreement between the Representative Body of the Church of Wales and Welsh local authorities.

5.3 The 1996 Local Government Reorganisation abolished the two-tier system of government in Wales. The modern county of Flintshire was created in 1996 from that north-eastern part of the existing county of Clwyd that had incorporated the areas of the District Councils of Delyn and Alyn & Deeside. This is the area now covered by our collecting policy. FRO will therefore collect records relating to the history of the area of the present county only (except in the circumstances outlined below) under the terms of the Local Government (Records) Act 1962 and the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964.

5.4 Archives relevant to people and places outside this area fall outside our collecting policy and if such deposits are offered they would usually be directed to the appropriate place of deposit e.g. a neighbouring County Record Office (see also "Limitations of Collecting Policy" below).

5.5 Prior to 1996 our collecting policy included the wider area of the old county of Flintshire which also included the area of the old Rhuddlan District Council, part of Llandegla parish and the "detached" part of Flintshire, Flintshire Maelor. Archives from these areas are still held by FRO as it was agreed that existing holdings would not be transferred after the 1996 boundary changes came into effect. However, we do not seek to collect further material relating to these areas that are not part of modern Flintshire.

5.6 Geographically we seek to collect material from every area of the present county of Flintshire and from every size of community, both urban and rural.

5.7 Thematically we seek to document all activities and aspects of life within Flintshire, whether official (including but not limited to local government, other statutory bodies and schools), business, social (including but not limited to clubs, societies and sporting activities) and religious (all denominations) and private/personal (including families and estate papers, and personal papers). The following points describe this in more detail:

5.7.1 In terms of our parent body and its predecessors in Local Government, we seek to collect a comprehensive archive documenting the decision-

making process and most significant activities of Flintshire County Council and its predecessors, Clwyd County Council and the original Flintshire County Council (pre-1974), as well as those District Authorities and District Councils (Urban and Rural) that operated beneath these County Councils.

- 5.7.2 In terms of religious archives, in addition to the parish records of the Church in Wales collected under the terms of the Parochial Records Agreement held with that body, we seek to collect the records of all other religious denominations including all Nonconformist churches and chapels (including but not limited to Methodist, Quaker and Congregational), Roman Catholic and records of other faiths.
- 5.7.3 We seek to collect archives from individuals and organisations active in both the public and private sectors, in civic and business life. These include businesses, clubs and societies, political parties, trade unions, pressure groups, local campaigns, families and individuals. We aim to collect records representing all interests and opinions.
- 5.7.4 We seek to include records that represent all social sections and groupings in Flintshire including different ethnic minority and gender-based groups and those based around different economic levels or “classes” of society.

## **6. Format and Media**

6.1 FRO accepts the deposit of archives, irrespective of age, in all formats including but not limited to paper, parchment, audio and video cassette, film, microfilm/fiche, photographs, glass plate negatives and lantern slides and digital formats including but not limited to the carrier media of DVD/CD Rom, floppy disk, email, and memory sticks.

6.2 Appropriate measures will be taken by FRO to ensure, as far as possible, the permanent preservation of material that was created in digital form including robust capture, storage, backup and maintenance of such material, in order to ensure its continued availability while ensuring personal details are safeguarded.

6.3 Published works which complement the manuscript collections will be collected, as will copies and catalogues of relevant material stored elsewhere. FRO will liaise with the local studies service of the Flintshire Library Service to avoid unnecessary duplication of published material.

## **7. Limitations of Collecting Policy**

7.1 FRO will only collect and preserve material that is deemed unique and of long term historical value as determined by qualified archive staff and by reference to our Appraisal Guidelines.

7.2 FRO will not collect material falling outside its geographical collecting area as defined in "Scope of Collecting" above, except where the material adds to specific existing collections already in FRO's custody or in exceptional circumstances including upon the express wishes of the owner and in consultation with any other relevant repository.

7.3 FRO will not split collections which overlap catchment areas (particularly with regard to the historic boundary changes that have taken place in north-east Wales). The main geographical source of origin will normally determine which archive service is the place of deposit.

7.4 Although FRO does not seek to acquire records which relate to geographical areas outside the modern county of Flintshire, such records may sometimes form an integral part of a collection which is primarily focused on Flintshire and/or may relate to persons who originate in or are closely associated with Flintshire. In these cases the collection will usually be kept intact and information will be supplied to other localities as appropriate.

7.5 FRO does not generally accept duplicate material as this wastes storage space, unless holding spare copies of non-unique material is deemed advantageous in particular instances. Copy material is only accepted where the equivalent, original material is not already held in the collection.

7.6 FRO encourages the deposit of film archives and audio recordings but aims to transfer them to The National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, Aberystwyth, where more specialised storage and preservation facilities exist that we are unable to provide. Where such transfer takes place we will seek as part of the terms of deposit with NSSAW to enable copies to be made in an appropriate format for depositors and for local access at FRO.

7.7 FRO does not generally collect printed or published material unless it forms an integral part of an archive, contains significant manuscript annotation, or is of value as an aid to research. Other published material would normally be directed to Flintshire's Principal Librarian.

7.8 FRO does not generally collect artefacts, three-dimensional objects or works of art, unless they form an integral part of an associated archive. Such material would instead normally be directed to Flintshire's Museums Officer. We may offer a storage facility for such material, in partnership with the Flintshire Museums Service, though ownership would still usually reside with the Museums Service.



## **8. Developing the Collections**

8.1 FRO has built up an extensive record of life within Flintshire between the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the present day during its 50+ years of operation and seeks continually to strengthen the coverage of its collections. It will continue to assert its right to be the sole place of deposit for records protected by the legislation in Section 3. The Record Office will engage in constructive discussions and, if appropriate, will seek mediation from an appropriate organisation should any disagreements over the appropriate place of deposit arise.

8.2 FRO recognises that its collections are not comprehensive or exhaustive. Accordingly FRO will undertake examinations and surveys of its holdings to ascertain where gaps currently exist, both within existing collections and where certain classes of records and/or records that represent particular aspects of Flintshire's life and history may be partly lacking or entirely absent. These examinations and surveys should be appropriately resourced in terms of staff time and other costs (as far as resources allow) and will inform an active pursuit of gaps in Flintshire's archive collections.

8.3 As far as resources allow, with regard to limitations on storage and informed by examinations and surveys, FRO will actively encourage the further deposit of material from existing depositors (e.g. local estates) to ensure that existing collections continue to develop and provide as comprehensive as possible an account of the activities from which they have been created.

8.4 As far as resources allow, with regard to limitations on storage, and informed by examinations and surveys, FRO will actively encourage deposit of material from groups which are currently under-represented in our collections (for example minority ethnic groups).

8.5 FRO will continue to work in close co-operation with Flintshire County Council's Records Management Service to ensure the systematic transfer of appropriate records to its custody, ensuring a comprehensive record of the activities of local government in Flintshire continues to be collected and developed.

8.6 FRO acquires collections by means of:

- Gift (including bequest) – our preferred option
- Deposit on long term loan
- Transfer: from Flintshire County Council (see 8.5), as public records from The National Archives or from other archival institutions
- Purchase (only in exceptional cases)

8.7 We clarify ownership and provenance of collections before we acquire them and we prioritise collections at risk from damage or destruction. We may

seek financial contributions from owners of deposits towards the costs of preserving their archives.

8.8 Cataloguing is a core activity for FRO to ensure the widest possible access to information about our collections. Priorities for cataloguing new accessions and existing uncatalogued holdings are determined in line with identified priorities and available resources. FRO will explore opportunities to access new funding, including external funding streams, to support cataloguing work as appropriate and help alleviate constraints in the area of cataloguing backlogs.

## **9. Access**

9.1 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). FRO will publicise every new acquisition, once catalogued, and advise on any restrictions to access. Catalogues will be made available online and supplied to depositors and the National Register of Archives.

## **10. Disposal**

10.1 FRO reserves the right to dispose of material that does not meet the criteria for long-term preservation set out in the Collections Development Policy and Appraisal Guidelines.

10.2 FRO agrees appropriate disposal options with the depositor/donor at the time of deposit, which will in most cases be one of the following:

- Return to depositor/donor. We ask owners to collect and advise that any material not collected within an agreed time may be disposed of as waste;
- Transfer to a more appropriate repository. Wherever possible we expect the owner to make these arrangements;
- Destroy by appropriate methods depending on the material. Confidential material will be destroyed with other Flintshire County Council confidential waste which is cross-shredded to industry standards.

10.3 FRO does not sell archive material but may sell printed or published material where it is owned by Flintshire County Council and either duplicates our holdings or does not relate to Flintshire. Any income from such sales will be applied for the benefit of the collections.

## **11. Review of Policy**

11.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every five years. The policy was written in July 2014 and will be reviewed in July 2019 or sooner if circumstances dictate.