ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES

Barnsley MBC Growth and Sustainability Directorate

Regeneration and Culture

Culture and Visitor Economy Service

Barnsley Museums

Barnsley Archives

and

Local Studies

Collections Information Policy

November 2023

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1.   Introduction

1.1   Barnsley Archives and Local Studies (hereinafter referred to as Barnsley Archives) is part of Barnsley Museums, within the Culture and Visitor Economy Service of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (hereinafter referred to as Barnsley MBC).

1.2   This policy sets out the principles for acquiring records – the geographical coverage, the legal basis, type of organisation and the format of the records. It should be read in conjunction with the service's Collecting Policy.

1.3   Barnsley Archives was established in 1987, following the cessation of South Yorkshire County Council. Prior to that, records relating to Barnsley were collected by the South Yorkshire County Record Office. Barnsley Libraries have collected secondary material of local interest since the 1890s. Barnsley Archives merged with the local studies library in 1998 to create Barnsley Archives and Local Studies.

1.4   Barnsley Archives and Local Studies acquire records in any format by:

- Gift (otherwise known as donation) - where items are privately owned but that ownership is transferred to Barnsley MBC.

- Deposit (otherwise known as loan) - where items are privately owned and continue to be privately owned, but are placed in the custody of Barnsley MBC.

- Transfer – where items are in common ownership, i.e. Barnsley MBC or its predecessors.

- Purchase – where items are bought by Barnsley MBC (usually at auction or from private dealers) to add to the collections.

- Held on behalf of central government under the Public Records Acts.

1.5   Accessions are received under a variety of legislation and measures. They include:

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- Local Government Act 1972 (for local authority records)

- Public Records Acts

- Manorial Documents Rules

- Acceptance in Lieu of Inheritance tax scheme (AIL)

1.6   The ownership of records in the service's care differs for each collection. For that reason, it is vital that we fully document the ownership, provenance and legal status of records accepted. Other key information such as title, covering dates, extent and any copyright implications are also documented. This data is known as 'collections information'.

1.7   Collections information is primarily recorded during the accessioning process. The service's printed accession forms are designed to capture the key information and this information is transferred into the service's collections management database (Calm by Axiell). The printed accession forms are stored securely and kept permanently. Further information about collections is gathered during the later cataloguing phase, after which a detailed list of the items in a collection is made publically available.

2.   <u>Accessions</u>

2.1   We endeavour to confirm the legal status of records offered to the service. Information on the provenance is required during that process. We would also seek to record the basis on which the records are being passed to us, i.e. gift, deposit or transfer. The integrity of the information held within the records is also extremely important, so we would seek to record information about the donor/depositor.

2.2   Information about accessions and donors is not publically available and is exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (section 41).

2.3   When material is offered to the service, signed receipts are retained by the service and a carbon copy given to the

donor/depositor. The signed receipts are retained permanently and kept with any related correspondence. Individuals or organisations depositing material are given a copy of our 'Terms of deposit' form.

2.4   Incoming accessions are assigned a unique accession number (the format is year/running number i.e. 2016/4). The accession is also assigned a Collection Reference Number. This may be a new number or that of an earlier related deposit (with the same provenance). It is the Collection Reference Number which is the main finding number for the public and staff. Prior to 2014, incoming accessions were not given unique accessions numbers, only Collection Reference Numbers. Additions to earlier collections were labelled as 'Additional' or 'Add'. The new numbering system was introduced due to the installation of Axiell Calm software.

2.5   The key accession data recorded is:

- Accession number

- Collection number

- Accession category (Gift, deposit etc.)

- Title

- Covering dates

- Brief description

- Extent

- Access status

- Access conditions

- Copyright

- Custodial history

- Date received

- Name and address of donor or depositor

2.6 Accessions are then boxed and shelved in one of our strongrooms, according to the record type, i.e. school, group, parish council etc. Smaller collections are generally catalogued on receipt (prior to boxing).

2.7 Information about new accessions is supplied annually to the National Archives as part of our annual return. In addition, most new accessions are highlighted via the service's social media presence.

3. <u>Catalogues</u>

3.1 Cataloguing incoming records is essential if access by researchers is to be managed effectively. Priority collections for cataloguing are identified in the annual team plan, along with the resources required to undertake the work. Those collections with the highest research value and/or relating to a planned Barnsley Museums exhibition are prioritised for cataloguing.

3.2 Where possible, cataloguing is undertaken to international standards: General International Standard of Archival Description (ISAD(G)).

3.3 The key catalogue data recorded in Calm is:

- Repository

- Level (collection, series, item, etc.)

- Reference number

- Title

- Date

- Extent

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- Administrative history

- Description

- Access conditions

- Copyright

- Custodial history

- Related material

3.4   Publically accessible catalogue data is available via the service's online catalogue at www.explorebarnsleycollections.com, which was launched in 2016. It is updated on a regular basis on currently contains over 32,000 entries (November 2023).

4.   <u>Review</u>

4.1   This policy will be made publicly available in Barnsley Archives' searchroom, and on the service's website. A copy will also be sent to the National Archives.

4.2   This policy will be reviewed after a period of 5 years, or earlier if legislation and guidance necessitates it.