

Wirral Archives Service
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Collections Policy – Wirral Archives Service

About the Service

Wirral Archives Service was established in 1974 following local government reorganisation and subsequent separation from the County of Cheshire. It is part of the Information Management Section of Wirral Council's Finance Department.

Wirral Archives Service holds an extensive collection of records relating to the history of Wirral, including local government records, business records, and records of organisations, clubs, societies and individuals.

Definition of an Archive

An archive is a collection of historical records which have been accumulated during the lifetime of an individual or organisation, and selected for permanent or long-term preservation owing to their enduring research value.

Aims of Service

Wirral Archives Service aims to collect, preserve and provide access to the historical archives of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.

The Archives Service also aims to increase participation and social inclusion, and to promote the historical archives of Wirral as a cultural, leisure and tourism asset, in accordance with the Corporate Plan of the Metropolitan Borough Council of Wirral.

The archives held by the Service consist of:

- records of local government of Wirral, i.e. the records of the Metropolitan Borough Council, of urban and rural district councils, of parish councils, and of predecessor local government bodies e.g. Quarter Sessions.
- records deposited with or gifted to Wirral Archives Service.

Legislation

Wirral Archives Service is

- the authorised archive service for the custody of the official records of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral and its predecessor authorities under the Local Government Act, 1972.
- approved by the Public Record Office as the agent of the Lord Chancellor for the deposit of specified classes of public records under the Public Records Acts, 1958 and 1967.
- empowered to acquire archives by deposit, gift or purchase and to preserve and make them available under the Local Government (Records) Act, 1962.

Details of Collection Policy

This statement of the Collection Policy of Wirral Archives Service shall be made publicly available by publication on the Council's web site <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

The Service collects all records of historical value concerning Wirral. Specifically, the Service collects records of any date concerning the history of the Wirral area, and the life and work of the people of Wirral.

In collecting archives priority will be given to archives of ethnic communities which are not well represented at present.

Types of record collected:

- official records of the Council
- public records under the Public Records Act, e.g. courts and hospitals
- records of societies, organisations and individuals

Records not generally accepted:

- records of national rather than local importance
- records which would fit more naturally into another repository (for example the Williamson Art Gallery, the North West Film Archive, or another more suitable local authority archive). Staff can offer advice to prospective donors as to where their records may best be deposited
- records of low informational value
- duplicates of existing holdings

How Records are Deposited

- by transfer from Council departments (via the council Records Management Service)
- by deposit or gift from external individuals, organisations or societies (a deposit is an indefinite long-term loan where the ownership remains with the depositor)

It is assumed that potential donors possess a clear and valid title of ownership to the collections which they intend to deposit.

A Conditions of Deposit form will be filled in by depositors in order to provide Wirral Archives Service with legal terms of deposit, and an accession receipt will be given to depositors.

The Service will try to avoid dividing or dispersing archives, seeks to avoid competition with other archive services, and will consult in cases where collecting services may overlap.

After cataloguing, documents will be made available for the public to consult in the search room, subject to relevant closure periods, unless their physical condition is too poor.

Wirral Archives Service will regularly supply copies of its catalogues to the National Register of Archives.

Review of Collections Policy

This Collections Policy will be reviewed every five years.

For further information e-mail archives@wirral.gov.uk

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