



Wirral Archives Service

COLLECTIONS POLICY

About the Service

Wirral Archives Service was established in 1974 following local government reorganisation and the creation of the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral. It holds an extensive collection of records relating to the history of the Wirral, comprising records of local government, official records, and private records deposited by businesses, societies and individuals.

Wirral Archives Service seeks to pursue an active rather than a passive Collections Policy. It aims to build up a range of collections which reflect all of the activities to be found on the Wirral, including local government, work, leisure and culture. In this way a balanced archive of historical documents will be made available to present and future researchers.

Definition of an Archive

An archive is a collection of records which have been accumulated by an organisation (in this case Wirral Council and its predecessors) and selected for permanent preservation as its structured memory, i.e. as a resource to be used by its officers for their ongoing work. As such an archive is also used by external researchers of various kinds.

Aims of Service

The Mission Statement of Wirral Archives is:

Wirral Archives Service collects, preserves and makes accessible the historical records of the Wirral to enable the work of Wirral Council, to ensure compliance with legal requirements, and to promote research, education and personal enrichment.

The archives held by the Service consist of:

- records of local government of the Wirral, i.e. of Wirral Borough Council and its predecessors
- official records pertaining to the Wirral, i.e. those of workhouses, hospitals, schools and courts
- records deposited with or gifted to Wirral Archives Service from external organisations, i.e. clubs, societies and individuals, and businesses

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 National Archives 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 shall be made publicly available by publication on the website of Wirral Archives Service.

Wirral Archives Service collects all records of historical value concerning the Wirral, i.e. records of any date and topic concerning the history of the Wirral area and of its people.

Types of record collected:

- local government records of Wirral Council (and its predecessors)
- public records under the Public Records Act, e.g. hospitals, schools and courts
- records of external organisations, i.e. clubs, societies and individuals, and businesses

Records not generally accepted:

- records of national rather than local importance
- records which would fit more naturally into another repository, e.g. Cheshire Archives, Liverpool Archives, the North West Film Archive, etc. (Staff can offer advice to prospective donors as to where their records may best be deposited.)
- records of no historical value
- duplicates of existing holdings

How Records are Deposited

- by internal Transfer from Council departments (via the Records Management Service of Wirral Council)
- by Deposit or Gift from external individuals or organisations (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 a copy of it will be given as a receipt 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 activities 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.

Responsibility and Review

The overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy rests with the Archivist.

This policy will be reviewed every two years, in order to take into consideration any changes in Service.

2018

Next review: 2020