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1	Mar 2018	New document
2	June 2024	Revised document
3	May 2025	Revised document

North East Lincolnshire Archives

Collection Policy

INTRODUCTION

North East Lincolnshire Archives exists to ensure the acquisition and preservation of historically important documents relating to the region and to allow public access to the archival collections of North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council.

The purpose of this policy is to state formally what is collected by the North East Lincolnshire Archives and what is more appropriately housed at other locations. This is to ensure that our holdings primarily relate to the local area and reflect the research interests of our residents and visitors.

This policy broadly follows the format set out in "Archive Collection Policy Statements: Checklist of Suggested Contents", produced by The National Archives in 2004.

The conditions under which archives are stored and made accessible are overseen by The National Archives (recognised places of deposit for public records, manorial and tithe records) and by the Archive Service Accreditation Scheme.

1. INFORMATION WHICH IDENTIFIES THE REPOSITORY AND THE GOVERNING BODY

1.1. Name of the repository

North East Lincolnshire Archives

1.2. Address

Town Hall Square, Grimsby North East Lincolnshire, DN31 1HX.

1.3. Identity of the governing body/authority

The Archives is governed by the Board of Lincs Inspire Limited, on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council, the commissioning local authority.

2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE REPOSITORY OR OTHER SOURCE OF ITS AUTHORITY TO COLLECT

2.1. Statutory position/obligations

- North East Lincolnshire Council has a responsibility under the Local Government Acts to make proper arrangements for the care of their own administrative records. This is the primary function of the North East Lincolnshire Archives (henceforth abbreviated to NELA), but it also has legislative discretion to provide facilities for the safe custody and use of the records of other local authorities, organisations, businesses and individuals.
- Lincs Inspire Limited operates the archive service on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council under a 25-year contract.
- Ownership of the holdings rest either with North East Lincolnshire Council or with individual depositors. None of the holdings are owned by Lincs Inspire Limited.
- The Archives will seek to abide by all current archive legislation, including:
 - Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967.
 - Local Government (Records) Act, 1962.
 - Local Government Act 1972 (Sections 224 -229).
 - The Law of Property Act, 1922, Manorial Documents Rules 1959 and Manorial Documents (Amendment) Rules 1963 and 1967.
 - Data Protection Act, 2018.
 - Freedom of Information Act, 2000.
 - Environmental Information Regulations, 2004.

2.2. Official external recognition of the repository

- North East Lincolnshire Archives is recognised by the Lord Chancellor as a repository for Public Records under the Public Records Act 1958.
- The classes of Public Records held at the Archives include: Quarter Sessions, Magistrates' Courts, Coroners, Hospitals and Registers of Ships.

2.3. Standards

- The Council aims for the Archives to conform to the standards set out in BS 4971:2017 - Conservation and care of archive and library collections (2017).

3. INFORMATION ABOUT SCOPE OF, OR LIMITATIONS TO, POLICY

3.1. Overall mission statement

- *North East Lincolnshire Archives collects, preserves, and makes available archive materials relating to the northern Lincolnshire area to help our communities understand the past, live the present, and shape the future.*

3.2. Definition of Archives

- Archives are manuscripts, printed works, newspapers, typescripts, maps, plans, photographs, postcards, computer generated records, sound and digital archives and any other formats that form an integral and organic part of the records of an organisation or individual.

3.3. Collecting remit

- NELA is the recognised archive repository for the geographical area covered by the post-1996 unitary authorities of North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire.
- The office was founded in 1951 to collect the permanent records of Grimsby Borough Council, but in 1976 it became the South Humberside Area Archive Office, collecting the records of the post-1974 County of Humberside, and its predecessor authorities, south of the River Humber and east of the River Trent. The core holdings were centred on the historic records of the Borough of Great Grimsby.
- Subject to the overriding principle that the integrity of archival groups should normally be preserved as far as possible and practicable, the Archives will not acquire records relating to places outside this core geographical area unless individual items relate in part to our geographical area, or unless they form part of a collection which predominantly relates to our area, and retaining them adds informational value and context to the collection.
- Where it is possible to separate out records relating to other geographical areas, they will be returned to the depositor, or offered to other Archive Offices or Local Studies Libraries.
- Joint collecting strategies will be developed with neighbouring authorities in relation to specific record types, as detailed below in section **3.5**.
- NELA will collect records of:
 - Local government in North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire. This includes:
 - The current North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council.
 - District Councils (1974-1996): Grimsby Borough, Scunthorpe Borough, Cleethorpes Borough, Gt. Grimsby and Brigg District Council.
 - Humberside County Council functions south of the Humber (1974-1996).
 - Pre-1974 Boroughs, Urban District Councils and Rural District Councils
 - Parish Councils.
 - Official bodies, such as Hospitals, Coroners, Magistrates Courts.
 - Local organisations, including clubs, societies and charities.
 - Local businesses, including the fishing industry, manufacturing, and solicitors.
 - Landed estates and farms.
 - Individual's resident in, or with a strong connection to, the area.
- NELA will particularly seek to acquire material which is of historical interest but is in danger of neglect or destruction.

- There is no restriction on the dates of records accepted by NELA provided that they meet the other criteria of this Collection Policy. They can range in date from the medieval period to the present day.
- NELA will accession records regardless of their subject area, and will not seek to represent any particular historical, sectarian or other viewpoint in the acquisition of records, but to reflect as objectively as possible all aspects of northern Lincolnshire's past and present.
- However, it is recognised that there are some specialist collections which may be more appropriately housed in a repository with a national remit, and in such cases we will refer potential donors/depositors to the appropriate archive.

3.4. Genre or media of records held

- NELA will not normally accept motion film, as we do not have the specialist equipment required to view the many different formats. We recommend that films relating to our geographical area are offered to the Media Archive for Central England [MACE]
- NELA will not normally accept printed books, newspapers and periodicals. In most cases the appropriate homes for these are the Local Studies Libraries at Grimsby or Scunthorpe.

3.5. Cooperation/demarcation with other repositories whose collection policy overlaps

- NELA does not seek to compete for papers with other repositories and will seek to avoid competition, conflict and duplication of effort. When advising potential donors/depositors, NELA will draw attention to the existence of the other repositories at Beverley and Lincoln with overlapping geographical interests, to ensure that material is offered to the most appropriate institution.
- As such, we do not collect:
 - Records of the pre-1974 Lindsey County Council, which covered all of our geographical area except the historic borough of Great Grimsby. The recognised place of deposit for these records is Lincolnshire Archives at Lincoln.
 - Records relating to the central administration of Humberside County Council (1974-1996), the pre-1974 Isle of Axholme Rural District Council and its successor, Boothferry Borough Council (1974-1996). The recognised place of deposit for these records is the East Riding Archives and Local Studies Service at Beverley.
 - Records of Church of England parishes or Methodist churches. The recognised place of deposit for these records is Lincolnshire Archives at Lincoln, which covers the whole historic county for these denominations.
 - Records relating to the Roman Catholic Church. The recognised place of deposit for these records is the Diocesan Archives at Nottingham.
- In cases where previously accessioned items are identified as being more appropriately housed at Beverley or Lincoln, we will contact the depositors and, once their consent has been obtained, arrange for these items to be transferred to the most appropriate institution. Likewise, we will accession items transferred from these institutions which fall within this Collection Policy.

4. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROCESS OF COLLECTION

4.1. Methods of acquisition

Records are normally accepted as either gifts or deposits:

- A gift means that ownership of the item is transferred to North East Lincolnshire Council. Copyright ownership may be separate, but where it is owned by the donor of the item, it would normally be expected that copyright would be transferred at the same time.
- A deposit means that ownership is retained by the depositor, whether an individual, organisation or business. Lincs Inspire, on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council, will normally seek permission to use images of the item for promotional purposes at the time of deposit. Requests to reproduce images in publications, to transfer items to more appropriate repositories, or to lend items for display away from the Archives, will be referred back to the depositor for permission. It will, therefore, be requested that depositors inform the Archives of any change of address or ownership. Records from official bodies can only be accepted as deposits.
- Lincs Inspire will not normally purchase items, but if funds are available, it may purchase an item of outstanding importance to our geographical area on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council, should such an item be in danger of leaving the area or becoming inaccessible to the public.

4.2. Conditions associated with accessions

- It is normally expected that, subject to their physical condition, items accessioned by the Archives will be made available to the public for research purposes once they have been sorted and catalogued. However, some items will have to be closed for a period of years because of Data Protection issues, and national guidelines will be followed in these circumstances. It is also recognised that some documents will contain information which is personally sensitive to the depositor/donor, and in such cases a suitable closure period may be agreed between the depositor/donor and the archivist in charge.
- Only documents which in the judgement of the archivist in charge are of sufficient quality for permanent preservation will be accepted. Items not selected for permanent preservation will be returned to the depositor/donor, offered to other more suitable repositories, or confidentially destroyed with the consent of the owner/depositor.
- All donors/depositors will be issued with a receipt as soon as possible after the items are brought to the Archives.

4.3. Selection/deaccessioning policy

- North East Lincolnshire Council accepts the principle that there should be a strong presumption against the disposal by sale of any documents in their ownership.
- Lincs Inspire on behalf of NELC shall have authority to transfer donated records to a more suitable repository if it is considered that the documents would benefit from relocation. For deposited records, this will only take place with the consent of the depositor.

- Lincs Inspire on behalf of NELC shall, in accordance with the wishes and requirements of depositors, evaluate and select for destruction those documents deemed not to be worthy of permanent preservation, and the intention shall be made clear at the time of deposit.
- Lincs Inspire on behalf of NELC reserves the right to conduct a periodic review of the records held, considering factors such as usage, informational content, physical condition and conformance to this Collection Policy, and where necessary to recommend their disposal or destruction. This will only take place with the consent of depositors.

5. INFORMATION CONCERNING ACCESS

5.1. Public availability

- Notice of every new acquisition and of any restrictions on its access or use will be made public at the earliest opportunity. This will usually be by means of hard-copy catalogues of items filed in the Search Room, and the online catalogue hosted by Axiell.
- Collection Level Descriptions will be added to the online catalogue at the earliest opportunity for all collections which cannot be catalogued in the short-term. These Collection Level Descriptions will summarise the main elements of the Collection to give an indication of its creator(s), geographical coverage, date range, and subject matter.
- Annual Returns of Accessions will be submitted to The National Archives, for inclusion in the National Register of Archives.
- Documents will not normally be issued to users in the Search Room unless they have been catalogued and numbered. However, this may be waived at the discretion of the Archivist if the relevant item is easily locatable and identifiable.

6. DATING THE STATEMENT

Date of this issue of the policy statement and date for its next formal review:

Dated: 28th May 2025. This policy will be revised every five years or when there are significant local or national developments.

Date of next revision: May 2030.