

Collections Management Policy

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Author(s):	Adrian Wilkinson
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Adrian Wilkinson, Sue Wells, Claire Fraser, Tracey Townsend.

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North East Lincolnshire Archives

Collections Management Policy

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1. Introduction

Legislative background

North East Lincolnshire Council and North Lincolnshire Council have 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 (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 Ltd operates the archive service on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council under a 25-year contract (commencing May 2015).

Ownership of the holdings rests either with North East Lincolnshire Council or with individual depositors. None of the holdings are owned by Lincs Inspire Ltd.

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.
- General Data Protection Regulation (2018).
- Freedom of Information Act (2000).
- Environmental Information Regulations (2004).

Official external recognition

- 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.

Standards

NELA aims to conform to the standards set out in BS 4971:2017; and in the Archive Service Accreditation Standard (2018).

2. Our mission statement and its concomitant objectives

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.

In order to adhere to this statement NELA's main objectives are:

The collection of archives

We seek to acquire archives that are of historical significance to North and North East Lincolnshire.

The preservation and safe storage of archival collections

We seek to safeguard our collections by providing suitable storage and professional management.

The production of comprehensive finding aids

We seek to catalogue and index collections to make their contents as accessible as possible.

The provision and promotion of access to archival collections

We seek to promote the use of our collections via the public Search Room and by offering a range of outreach activities and exhibitions. We will also promote remote access through our website and social media presence.

3. Policy aims

The main objective of this policy, and its associated suite of collections policies, is to formally state NELA's coordinated and over-arching approach to collections management.

The policy aims to communicate our strategic approach to the four core areas of collections management: collections development, collections information, collections care/conservation and collections access.

4. Collections Management in Practice

NELA's collections are managed in accordance with its own approved policies and our work is underpinned by the professional standards described in the Archives and Records Association's Code of Conduct. Our collections management work covers four principal strands of activity: 1) collecting, 2) creation of finding aids, 3) care and conservation, and 4) access.

Collecting

We appraise and acquire archival material of historical significance in accordance with our Collections Development Policy and our Procedures Manual. We accept transfers of material from our principal funding bodies: North and North East Lincolnshire Councils. We also accept donations or deposits of records from individuals, businesses and organisations to ensure their long-term preservation and ensure their accessibility for future research. Our Collections Development Plan aims to ensure that our archival collections continue to reflect the communities we serve.

Creation of findings aids

We arrange, catalogue and index records in accordance with our Collections Information Policy and our Procedures Manual. The production of our finding aids is carried out by trained and qualified staff, under the direction of the archivist. We produce all of our finding aids in accordance with appropriate professional standards and aim to ensure that our catalogue entries are compatible with the Council on Archives General International Standard of Archival Description [ISAD(G)].

Care and conservation

We preserve, care for and undertake archive conservation work on our collections in accordance with our Collections Care and Conservation Policy. We have an on-site professional conservator who undertakes all conservation work to the highest standards using conservation-grade materials. We strive to achieve the storage standards set out in BS 4971:2017, within the constraints imposed by our current buildings.

Access

We provide access to our collections in accordance with the standards and aims outlined in our Access Policy. Access to our collections is also governed by the terms of the Equality Act, the Freedom of Information Act, the General Data Protection Regulation and relevant Copyright legislation.

5. Collections Management Priorities

The two principal collections management challenges that face NELA at the present time are a shortage of storage space and environmental conditions that fall some way short of BS 4971:2017. Our approach to solving these problems is outlined in our Forward Plan.

Analysis of our catalogued and uncatalogued records has highlighted significant gaps in our collections, as identified in our Collections Development Plan. In future we plan to actively collect to address these weaknesses.

In common with all local records offices, NELA has a substantial cataloguing backlog. This backlog is actively managed and in future we will seek to reduce the volume of uncatalogued material by examining opportunities for drawing down external funding and by providing work experience for volunteers.

We have a small amount of digital material in our collections. We have a Digital Preservation Policy which outlines how we acquire and manage digital records.

NELA maintains an Emergency Plan, which is updated annually. The plan provides a strategy and procedures to enable NELA's staff to respond to any incident that could put our collections at risk.

6. Associated policies, plans and manuals

Access Policy

Collections Policy

Collections Development Policy

Collections Information Position Statement

Collections Care and Conservation Policy

Digital Preservation Policy

Emergency Manual

Forward Plan

Procedures Manual