

Collections Information Policy

1. Introduction

It is vital that adequate accurate information about collections is collected, recorded, preserved, and made available, ensuring a high level of transparency and accountability, standards of collections management are improved, and the integrity of the Archive is maintained.

St Helens Archive Service currently use a collection management database (Axiell/Calm) which is available to search online via a Calmview site (www.sthelens.gov.uk/history).

2. Principles

St Helens Archive Service captures information at various stages during the processing of a collection or item, from its point of entry through to appraisal, accessioning, cataloguing, and indexing, location and movement control and withdrawal or disposal if necessary.

Newly created collections information meets common international standards and principles governing the creation of catalogues for archives.

A professionally qualified archivist, committed to the Code of Ethics of the Archives and Records Association UK and Ireland, is responsible for the quality of the information about the newly created collections of St Helens Archive Service.

3. Receiving material

As much information as possible is recorded about the item or collection at the point of entry to maintain its integrity and to ensure its provenance is fully understood. This determines ownership and legal status, along with any intellectual property rights, as well as preserving its administrative and custodial history.

All depositors are required to fill out a deposit/provenance form. One copy of this form is returned to the depositor as a receipt and the other is retained by the Archive Service. The deposit form is digitised, and the physical copy remains with the deposited material until it is catalogued.

4. Accessioning deposits

Each individual deposit is given a unique accession number, which is recorded on the deposit/provenance form. All relevant information is then added to an accession spreadsheet.

St Helens Archive Service have a large historic accumulation of material which is not accessioned. This is not easily accessible and may include material more suitable for transfer or disposal. Accessioning and assessing the cataloguing priorities of this material is a priority.

Information about new accessions is supplied to The National Archives (as part of Annual

Accessions to Repositories). This information is also made available via the St Helens Archive Service website (www.sthelens.gov.uk/archives).

5. Cataloguing collections

New deposits, as well as the historic backlog are viewed alongside our 'Cataloguing Priorities Plan' and are actioned according to this.

All cataloguing conforms to professional standards including principle and mandatory elements of the General International Standard of Archival Description ISAD(G).

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