# TheHive

# Worcestershire Archive Service

## Collections Information Plan 2013-2018

# Contents

## 1.0 Introduction

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service's (WAAS) priority is to ensure the proper management of Worcestershire's heritage for current and future generations.   We protect, preserve, manage, record, interpret, share and promote the history and historic environment of Worcestershire. We help the modern county of Worcestershire to achieve its priorities as identified in the Corporate Plan, especially sustainable development, a strong economy, better education and skills and independent healthy living.  We are developing a sustainable model for the continuance and growth of the Archive and Archaeology Service in the current financial climate.

## 2.0 Aims

This plan outlines the steps Worcestershire Archive Service needs to take to fulfil the aims outlined in our *Collections Information Policy*, particularly to achieve a reduction in our cataloguing backlog and make our collections fully discoverable to our stakeholders. It is broken down into:
- Short term objectives, which we aim to achieve within one year.  This includes steps which we are already implementing.
- Medium term objectives, which we aim to achieve within two to three years
- Long term objectives, which we aim to achieve within four to five years

The objectives in each section are listed in order of priority.

## 3.0 Short Term Objectives

- Publish links to the National Register of Archives and The National Archives' annual 'Accessions to Repositories' returns on the WAAS website and on our CalmView online catalogue.  This will ensure that searchers have access to basic information about our recent accessions while we work to publish collection level descriptions of all our holdings.

- The list of collections on the cataloguing backlog currently exists as a Word Document.  This will be converted to a spreadsheet in order to enable easier sorting by priority score, depositor, etc.

- In 2012, Worcestershire Archives began to involve all members of staff in cataloguing.  A next step is to develop flexible cataloguing targets in order to aid in project managing the cataloguing of individual collections.  An approximate timescale for cataloguing each collection, based on its size, complexity and type (e.g. parish deposit, family or estate collection, business archives) will be developed, either at the time of accessioning or when the collection is allocated for cataloguing.  Progress reports submitted by the cataloguer to the Collections Team may result in revisions to the cataloguing timetable.

- Worcestershire Archives has for several years been identifying collections that are high priority for cataloguing and also compatible with the skills and experience of the workforce. A short term objective is to develop phased timescales for achieving that cataloguing of these priority collections.
  - A 2002 Historic Manuscripts Commission Survey of Cataloguing Problems identified particular collections with heritage significance. Some of these have been catalogued in the intervening years, but others remain uncatalogued and still remain a priority. Examples include deposits relating to Frances Ridley Havergal and the architect Freddie Charles. See the Appendix for a more comprehensive list.
  - The Archive have begun to identify 'quick wins' (high priority, smaller collections) which may achieve a significant reduction in the backlog in a relatively short amount of time. Examples include World War I diaries, parish collections and electoral registers.
  - In 2012, we began refining lists of large priority collections by targeting particular areas for more detailed survey. This work prioritises collections which we know will require appraisal, and therefore simultaneously save space and streamline our collections. This includes large district council and solicitors' collections, and accumulations from Worcester City Library.
  - Prioritise collections of Public Records and local authority records in preparation for the transition to the 20 Year Rule.

- Every deposit on the backlog already has priority scores attached. Worcestershire Archives actively use these scores when allocating collections to staff for cataloguing. A short term goal is to investigate ways in which we can use these scores in a more strategic and consistent way.

- Draw up plan to determine which collections or themed groups of collections have the potential to attract grants and funding for cataloguing.

- Upgrade all staff computers to most up-to-date version of CALM and CalmView and arrange for any necessary training in the same.

- In 2012, Worcestershire Archives began to capture more information and do more processing at the accessioning stage, very shortly after the point of deposit. The Service aims to convert these recent accession records to a collection level catalogue record available to search online. New, smaller accessions will be catalogued immediately rather than joining the backlog queue.
  - In terms of digital archives, the Service has begun to record metadata at the accessioning stage.

- Since the move to The Hive in 2012, the Archive Collections Team has begun the process of 'clearing the decks' by investigating outstanding queries to do with specific catalogue entries, both pre-CALM and CALM, and by completing and publishing online catalogues which are currently in 'Draft' format in CALM.

- In 2012, Worcestershire Archives began incorporating user input into its cataloguing decisions by collating all requests to view items from the backlog. Worcestershire Archives will, as a next step, investigate how best to feed this information back into our cataloguing prioritisation scheme; one possibility would be to add an abbreviation to the priority score to represent collections that have been requested.

- Investigate ways to streamline processes of editing and printing catalogues. This may include editing directly in CALM rather than exporting to print in the first instance.

- Worcestershire Archives has begun to investigate 'More Product Less Process' (MPLP) in order to determine which aspects of this methodology would be appropriate and useful to adopt into its appraisal, accessioning, cataloguing, preservation and conservation decisions and procedures.
  - In particular the Archive Service will investigate and adopt processes that will enable us to be more responsive and flexible: where possible, this could include elements of processing on demand, that is, when a user requests to view an unprocessed collection from the backlog.

- Develop plans and procedures to conduct an audit of all existing collections and streamline annual review and analysis of new accessions, based on Worcestershire's returns for The National Archives Accessions to Repositories surveys. See also the *Collection Development Plan*.

- Rework out-of-date policies and procedures to reflect the circumstances of The Hive and current staff structure. Focus on the Terms of Deposit Policy, the General Regulations and Searchroom Rules with a view to combining and condensing the two documents into a single Terms of Deposit Policy.


## 4.0 Medium Term Objectives

- Prepare funding bids for appropriate collections, ensuring existing and external resources.

- Liaise with Worcestershire County Council ICT department (Systems & Customer Access) to develop policies and plans for digital repository.

- Develop our accession forms and processes to fit the needs of digital archives.

- Recommence survey of digital, audio-visual and other specialist media holdings. This survey should record appropriate metadata (see *Digital Preservation and Digitisation Strategy*).

- Organise strongroom dedicated to backlog.

- o Separate out and catalogue collections treated as *continuations* (records which were accessioned when first deposited and to which subsequent records accrued without being separately accessioned).
- o Separate out un-accessioned deposits and involve staff in investigating these to determine whether we need to keep them, whether they duplicate current holdings, etc.
- o Accession large district council deposits which were accepted on a temporary basis in past decades.

- Revise the spreadsheet displaying the shelf location of each parcel in each collection in order to maximise consistency and ease of use.

- Record accurate locations of every item on the backlog in the CALM Accessions Database as well as on the locations spreadsheet.

- Conduct detailed survey and appraisal of previously identified larger collections on the backlog.  It is intended that this activity will involve many staff, resulting in a workforce with a more comprehensive knowledge of our collections. It will also achieve a greater level of organisation in the strongroom dedicated to storing material on the backlog.

- Conduct audit of all holdings.  Based on this work, develop programme of de-accessioning in order to consolidate and ensure holdings reflect the *Acquisition and Collection Policy* and *Collection Development Plan* and simultaneously achieve a reduction in the backlog of uncatalogued collections, one of the primary aims of the *Collections Information Policy*.

- Recommence programme of retroconversion of older paper catalogues.

- Recommence inputting, updating and correcting of depositor information (including issues of ownership and intellectual property rights).

- Implement relevant aspects of MPLP.

- Develop more efficient policies, plans and procedures for the cataloguing and indexing of images in the Worcestershire Photographic Survey.

- Publish collection level descriptions of everything on the backlog (not just recent accessions) on CalmView.

- Update in-house *General Manual for Cataloguing in CALM*.

- Devise and implement training for authority indexing in CALM.

# The Hive

## 5.0 Long Term Objectives

- Continue to seek and acquire external funding for cataloguing.

- Implement policies and plans for digital repository.

- Implement improved procedures for processing images in the Worcestershire Photographic Survey.

- Publish collection level descriptions of all collections (not just backlog) on CalmView.

- Implement full cataloguing of large collections.


This plan was written in August 2013 and will be reviewed in 2018, or earlier if circumstances dictate.

## Appendix: List of Uncatalogued Material with Heritage Significance

The following list is derived from Worcestershire's return to the Historical Manuscript Commission's Survey of Cataloguing Problems, 2002. Those followed by an asterisk have since been either partially or fully processed.

Worcester Corporation records*

Hopcraft photograph collection*

Redditch District Council wartime records*

J Homery Folkes deposit

3 deposits from Walter Stranz (local politician)

Powick Hospital records

Freddie Charles, architect, plans and drawings

Hornyold family papers*

Worcester Labour Party papers

English Partnerships deposit (Redditch Development Corporation)

Bill Gwillam papers (local historian)

2 deposits relating to Frances Ridley Havergal

4 deposits of DERA records*