

Guidance for Record Depositors

Warwickshire County Record Office collects records of historical value that will be of interest and use to present and future generations of researchers.

Members of the public have often helped us save records of outstanding historic interest.

If you believe you have records of interest suitable for permanent preservation, please contact our accessioning archivist by emailing Warwickshire County Record Office.



First steps

If you are uncertain whether your records should come to us, you can refer to our *Collections Policy*. You can find a link to this on our website, or we can send you a copy. This gives basic information about what we collect, but the key thing to remember is that we seek to preserve:

‘records of significance to the study of Warwickshire and its people’.

We are interested in documents that contain a lot of broad information about the record creator. This might be evidence of a life led and/or the nature of a business or organisation and how that business or organisation operated. Examples of material which we will preserve include: diaries, letters, minutes, reports, accounts, maps and plans, diagrams and photographs.

We are also happy to advise you further.

Before bringing us your records

Accessioning and cataloguing archival material can be time consuming and resource intensive. Anything you can do to assist beforehand will aid us with the cataloguing. Here are some tasks that can be completed before bringing your records to us:

- ✓ **Decide whether you would like to gift (donate) or loan (deposit) your records**
We prefer that some collections of records are donated as a ‘gift’, although we will accept records on a long-term loan basis. We can give you further information about this when you contact us.
- ✓ **Provide us with a list of documents that you are donating or depositing**
- ✓ **Provide us with notes on the history of the organisation or individual**

✓ **If you are a business or organisation, consider consulting a retention schedule**

This will guide you on how to manage your records and should contain any legislation governing record retention and disposal. Check within your organisation whether a retention schedule exists and if the answer is no, we can advise you of online retention schedules for organisations or records similar to yours.

✓ **Weed out duplicate and unrelated records**

Archive collections, by definition, are made up of unique records. We ask that you remove duplicates and publications that are likely to exist elsewhere. This advice is very brief, and weeding can be a daunting task, so please do contact us for advice if you are uncertain.

✓ **Remove/replace unsuitable packaging**

To preserve space and protect documents from unsuitable materials, we require all donations or deposits to be free from ring-binder folders and plastic wallets. Please remove the pages from ring-binder folders and either package up the papers like a parcel with string, or thread string through any existing punch holes, so that the order is maintained. Please replace plastic wallets with paper envelopes where appropriate. We will replace string etc. with archival quality materials.

You might also need to remove rusty pins and paperclips, blu tack etc. Do not force the removal of these, but if you do remove them, clip whatever was held together with paperclips, so that we are aware of what should remain grouped together.

✓ **Consider Data Protection implications (if any)**

Records held here will be made available to researchers, unless an exemption under Freedom of Information applies. If records are likely to contain sensitive personal information, we need to know about it to ensure records are not consulted inappropriately. You can help us by highlighting any potential concerns when you bring your collection to us. Guidance about Data Protection and Freedom of Information can be found on the Information Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

✓ **Consider copyright (if any)**

We will ask you at the time of deposit whether copyright, particularly with regard to photographs, is being assigned to us. If you know who the copyright owner is, please bring a note of their name. If you are acting on behalf of a large company or organisation, speak to your legal team (if you have one). We can offer guidance, however we cannot give you legal advice.

✓ **Provide us with information about the media and file types of digital records**

Please get in touch if you have digital records and we will be able to give specific advice (for example, on file naming, sorting, encryption, storage, etc.).

Depositing the records

When you are ready to bring your records to us, please arrange an appointment with the accessioning archivist. The easiest way to do this is by email.

Please note, we do not provide a records collection service, however, if you are unable to bring in your records, please contact the accessioning archivist to discuss possible alternative arrangements.

At your appointment we will complete the Agreement paperwork with you. You can request a copy of the Agreement in advance. It includes a number of 'tick-box' questions concerning the terms under which we will look after the records. The Agreement is a legally binding document requiring a signature. We store this document securely in keeping with GDPR legislation.

What happens next?

We will provide you with a copy of the Agreement, which will now also include the collection 'accession number' (collection reference). You can use this number if you need to speak to someone about the records.

If you have requested a copy of the catalogue once the cataloguing has been completed, we will either email or post a copy to you. You will also be able to find the catalogue online through *Warwickshire's Past Unlocked* using the Accession Number given on the Agreement.

Contact details

Email: recordoffice@warwickshire.gov.uk

Phone: 01926 738959

Address: Warwickshire County Record Office, Priory Park, Cape Road, Warwick, CV34 4JS