

Scope of the Policy

This document sets out the Collections Development Policy for the Highland Archive Service (HAS) and aims to ensure that all areas of the Highlands and its communities are reflected by increasing the range and depth of the collections which are collected, preserved, publicised and made accessible by the service. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Collections Management Policy which sets out the Vision, Mission Statement and Service Objectives as well as with the Collections Information Policy, Collections Development Plan, Deposit Agreement Form and other relevant policy documents.

Statutory and Legal Status

The Highland Archive Service operates under:

- Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994
- The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011(s.1)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Environmental Information Regulations 2005

HAS is empowered to acquire archives by deposit, gift or purchase and to preserve them and make them available under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994, s.54 (1)-(4)

Three of the four Archive Centres (Highland, Nucleus and Lochaber) hold records under Charge and Superintendence Agreements with the Keeper of the Records of Scotland and Nucleus also hold a collection under a similar agreement with Historic Environment Scotland.

Acquisition

The core collections which HAS will acquire are as follows:

- records of The Highland Council (THC) and its predecessor authorities which relate to its core functions and statutory duties
- records of High Life Highland (HLH) which relate to its core functions
- records entrusted to the appropriate Archive Centre by National Records of Scotland under Charge and Superintendence
- records of individuals, families, estates, societies, businesses, organisations, institutions and religious establishments

Before acquiring records, HAS requires that:

- all records be non-current and no longer required for business purposes
- the material has a connection to the Highlands
- the depositor has authority to transfer the material and signs a deposit agreement form confirming that they have agreed to the terms and conditions of the transfer
- the material is unique or deemed to be of archival value
- the records be free of legal or excessive access restrictions

Geographical considerations

- HAS will not spilt collections which overlap the catchment areas of the four Archive Centres. The main geographical source of origin will determine which Centre is chosen as the place of deposit.
- HAS will not collect records which relate to areas which lie outside the agreed Highland boundaries and instead depositors will be referred to the appropriate record office.

- If, in certain circumstances, such records form an integral part of a collection which has a Highland connection, they will be kept together, and catalogue information shared with the appropriate record office.¹
- When advising potential depositors, HAS will draw attention to the existence of other repositories with similar or overlapping interest, to ensure that material is offered to the most appropriate institution.

Limitations of the collecting policy

- HAS will not routinely collect artefacts, three dimensional objects or works of art. Only where these items are integral to the archive collection will we seek to keep the collection together. Artefacts will usually be directed to the appropriate museum or gallery.
- HAS will not routinely collect printed or published material. Only where these items are integral to the archive collection, contain significant manuscript annotations or is of value as an aid to researchers will we seek to keep the collection together. Printed or published works will usually be directed to HLH Library Service.

Collection Development

- HAS will review the strengths and weaknesses of its present holdings, seeking to target areas of the collections which may be underrepresented and adding to the collections to reflect all aspects of life in the Highlands.
- Particular priority in acquiring records will be given to archives at risk of loss, destruction or damage.

Deaccessioning and Disposal

- HAS reserves the right to conduct periodic reviews of the collections to reassess their historic value.
- Where records are identified as no longer worthy of permanent preservation they will be returned to the depositor, or disposed of confidentially following the written agreement of the depositor and subject to the terms of any statutory or other regulatory measure.

Access

- HAS will make the records in its care accessible to the public as soon as priorities and resources allow and subject to any restrictions required by statute, owner/depositor conditions, confidentiality, security or conservation need.
- There is a presumption that depositors are willing for records to be made available for public consultation (within the context of relevant legislation) and so depositors are encouraged at the point of deposit that any additional access restrictions should be kept to a minimum.

Policy Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed at least once every 3 years, or earlier if a response is needed to any changes in legislation.

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¹ HAS follows the Local Authority Archives Collecting Policies Agreement Guidelines which have been agreed by the Archivists in Scottish Local Authorities Working Group (ASLAWG), which set out guidelines for local authorities when collecting records which relate to two or more local authority areas.