

Greater Manchester Archives and Local Studies Partnership Access Policy

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the ways in which access is provided and enhanced to archives and local studies collections for all stakeholders.

This policy and strategy covers the archive and local studies services for the following local authority archive services in Greater Manchester:

- Bolton Archives and Local Studies
- Bury Archives and Local & Family History Service
- Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives*
- Oldham Local Studies and Archives
- Stockport Local Heritage Library
- Tameside Local Studies and Archives
- Trafford Local Studies
- Rochdale Local Studies and Archives
- Salford City Archives and Local History Library
- Wigan Archives and Local Studies

*County Record Office, City Archives, Local Studies, Rare Books and Special Collections.

The services aims to locate, collect, preserve and make as widely available as possible archive and local studies collections for the benefit of present and future generations. All services contribute to the aims and objectives of their parent organisations.

2. Methods of Access

Customers can access the collections in the following ways:

- In person.
- On-line access (certain collections).
- Social media.
- Outreach and learning activities.

- Exhibitions and interpretation.
- Research services (usually paid).
- Volunteering.

2. Customer Profiles

Services are committed to making their collections available to all sections of society.

Traditionally services have attracted a narrow audience in person. It is over-representative of the over 55 age group, predominantly white, loyal, regular users who tend to spend between 2-5 hours per visit.

Services are now committed to providing access to the following audiences through a variety of methods including digitisation, outreach, community engagement, volunteering, social media and learning:

- Young People
- Schools
- Families
- Communities

Digital use of archives and heritage in digital format is increasing. Since 2005/06, the proportion of people in England who have visited heritage websites significantly increased from 18 per cent to 31 per cent.

3. Customer Care

All services are committed to providing outstanding customer care – in person, on the telephone, by email/letter and on-line/social media. Each service will adhere to its parent authority's customer care standards and charters.

4. Legislation and Standards

In terms of access services will comply with the following legislation and standards:

- Local Government (Records) Act, 1962.

- Local Government Act 1972 (s.224).
- Public Records Acts, 1958 and 1967 (for those services that hold public records).
- Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 as amended 1992 (for those services that holds parish & diocesan records).
- PSQG Access to Archives Standard.
- The National Archives Accreditation Standard.
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Data Protection Act 1998.
- Freedom of Information Act 2001.
- Representation of the People Act 2000.

5. Customer Consultation

Services will regularly seek the views of its customers by using a combination of some of the following tools:

- Customer surveys e.g. Library Plus, Archives PSQG, Museum audience surveys.
- Customer / stakeholder groups.
- Customer comment / complaint forms.
- Standpoint survey (where available).
- Social media.

In most cases these tools will be part of the wider library / museum service.

6. Access Information

Access information for collections will be published on the web site of the service and where appropriate in hardcopy (e.g. leaflets, flyers). This will include:

- How to access digital collections and finding aids on-line.
- Details of events, activities and exhibitions.
- Research policy for remote enquiries.
- Fees and charges.
- Opening hours.

- Identification required for access in person and booking arrangements.
- If advance notice is required for any collections.
- Details of any temporary closures.

7. Access Restrictions

Conservation and Handling

Information will be provided to customers on how to correctly handle archives and rare items.

Some collections may not be able to be viewed because they are too fragile or require conservation.

Surrogates

Where a surrogate (microform or digital) is available the original will not be used unless staff deem the surrogate is unusable. The availability of surrogate should be clearly marked in finding aids.

Uncatalogued Collections

Services will do their best to give access to uncatalogued collections but in some cases access may have to be restricted.

Electoral Registers

For those services that hold full versions of the electoral registers from 2003 onwards they can only be consulted under supervision and copied solely by means of hand-written notes. No form of photographic, mechanical or electronic copying is permitted by law. The law also prohibits the Library from disclosing any information from these full versions over the phone or in writing until 10 years after their publication.

Copying of pre 2003 electoral registers is permissible - subject to preservation (see section 8). Customers should also understand their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act (see below)

Restricted Access and Data Protection

Some collections may have access restriction due to the wish of depositors, Data Protection, commercially sensitive material, or Freedom of Information exemptions.

A summary of closures can be found in Appendix 1. This should be used as a guide by services, but some series may have different circumstances.

Services will ensure that customers understand their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. Customer's research should not be used to support measures or decisions with respect individuals and will not cause or likely to cause substantial damage or distress to any person who is a subject of those data.

8. Reprographics and Reproduction.

All copying is subject to preservation, copyright and size/format. Some items may not be able to be copied for preservation reasons.

All services provide photocopying facilities (at a charge).

Customers are welcome to use a camera to photograph collections (at a charge) subject to guidance. Scanning of collections by customers is not permitted.

Digital copies of items can be provided to customers by staff (at a charge).

Copies are for private use only – permission should be sought from the service for publication or commercial use.

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Appendix 1

Record type	Closure	Reason	Decision making body	Notes for archive staff:
COURT: adult and juvenile court registers less than 30 years old	Closed	FOI s32 – absolute exemption for court records	Archive service	
COURT: Adult court registers more than 30 years old	Restricted for 100 years if victims of sexual offences identified	FOI s44 – breach another enactment (Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2003)	Archive service	Be alert for details of children in neglect/abuse/divorce cases etc.
COURT: Juvenile court registers (including adoptions) more than 30 years old	Restricted for 100 years	FOI s44 – breach another enactment (Children’s Act 2004)	Archive service	
COURT: Adoption records	Restricted for 100 years	FOI s44 – breach another enactment (Adoption Agencies Regulations 1983 regulation 14)	Archive service	
COURT: Licensing registers	Closed for 30 years	FOI s32 – absolute exemption for court records	Archive service	

<p>COURT: any records other than registers</p>	<p>Restricted for 100 years</p>	<p>FOI s40 – personal information FOI s44 – breach another enactment (Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2003 or Adoption Agencies Regulations 1983 regulation 14)</p>	<p>Archive service</p>	<p>Be alert for details or photographs of children in neglect/ abuse/divorce cases etc.</p>
<p>CORONER'S COURT: Inquest files, Post Mortem files</p>	<p>There is a 75 year closure period on Coroners' records, taken from the final date of a file. Anyone wishing to view records less than 75 years old should obtain written permission from the relevant Coroner. Permission is usually only granted to close relatives of the deceased, or academic researchers who will publish their findings without naming subjects.</p>	<p>Public Records Act 1958 as amended by Public Records Act 1967, s44 and Coroners' Rules (1984) Rule 57.</p>	<p>Relevant Coroner</p>	<p>Be aware that the contents of coroner's court files can prove to be distressing, particularly photographs of the deceased. It may not be suitable for a researcher (who has been granted access permission) to consult this material near other members of the public in the general searchroom.</p>
<p>SCHOOL: Admission registers</p>	<p>Restricted for 30 years</p>	<p>Child Protection, while a child may reasonably still reside at the specified address.</p>	<p>Archive service</p>	<p>Be alert to registers that record or indicate more than simply name, age and address. For example, registers which record of indicate (even if only by the address) that a child was in care must be considered</p>

				as sensitive personal data and restricted for 96 years (Primary school) or 89 years (Secondary school).
SCHOOL: Log books	<p>Restricted for 30 years</p> <p>(Note that log books containing sensitive personal data about staff or pupils will be subject to longer restrictions).</p>	Child Protection	Archive service	Be alert to log books that record sensitive personal data on named staff (e.g. health information, or dismissal information) and pupils (health information, punishment, or suspected neglect cases referred to Social Services). Any such log books should be restricted for 96 years (Primary school), 89 years (Secondary school), or 75 years (if only staff, not pupils, are identified by name).
SCHOOL: Punishment books, pupil records/cards, accident books, contagious illness records	<p>Primary school: Restricted for 96 years</p> <p>Secondary school: restricted for 89 years</p>	<p>Data Protection Act 1998 (if living)</p> <p>FOI s40 – personal information</p>	Archive service	
SCHOOL: Staff records	Restricted for 75 years	<p>Data Protection Act 1998 (if living)</p> <p>FOI s40 – personal information</p>	Archive service	

HOSPITAL: Patient records containing clinical information	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Relevant NHS Trust	
HOSPITAL: Death/Mortuary registers	No restriction if information is the same as recorded on the death certificate (e.g. name, age, place of death, cause of death) If any other medical information is given, 100 year restriction applies.	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Relevant NHS Trust	
HOSPITAL: Maternity registers	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Relevant NHS Trust	Be aware that the maternity register is the patient record of the mother, not of the baby, and so the child does not have automatic right of access to the record as a data subject under the Data Protection Act.
HOSPITAL: Staff records	Restricted for 75 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – personal information	Relevant NHS Trust	

HOSPITAL: Administrative records	Restrictions may apply if stipulated by the depositing NHS Trust	Terms of deposit	Relevant NHS Trust	If the Trust has not specified a restriction, be aware that administrative records may include personal data relating to patients or staff.
MIDWIFE: Midwife's registers or case books	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Relevant NHS Trust	Be aware that the maternity register is the patient record of the <i>mother</i> , not of the baby, and so the child does not have automatic right of access to the record as a data subject under the Data Protection Act.
POOR LAW UNION: records showing people receiving Indoor or Outdoor relief, Admission & Discharge registers, bastardy orders,	Restricted for 100 years	FOI s40 – personal information	Caldicott Guardian for Adult Social Care & Caldicott Guardian for Children	
POOR LAW UNION: Death/Mortuary registers, Notices of Death	No restriction if information is the same as recorded on the death certificate (e.g. name,	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in	Caldicott Guardian for Adult Social	

	age, place of death, cause of death) If any other medical information is given, 100 year restriction applies.	confidence	Care & Caldicott Guardian for Children	
POOR LAW UNION: Creed registers	Restricted for 100 years.	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living)	Caldicott Guardian for Adult Social Care & Caldicott Guardian for Children	Be aware that a person's religion is classed as sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act. This may need to be balanced with the usefulness of creed registers as indexes to other workhouse records.
POOR LAW UNION: Ward registers, nursing staff ward reports, treatment books, accident registers, Asylum Reception Orders, Maintenance of Lunatic Paupers records	Restricted for 100 years if contain or imply medical information about named individuals.	Data Protection Act 1998 FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Caldicott Guardian for Adult Social Care & Caldicott Guardian for Children	Be aware records that simply state whether an individual was transferred to an asylum will confirm a mental health condition, and this medical information is extremely sensitive.
POOR LAW UNION: Attendant books, staff records	Restricted for 75 years	Data Protection Act 1998	Relevant NHS Trust	

POOR LAW UNION: Guardian minutes	No restriction unless sensitive personal data about named children or adults (including staff) is included. If such data is contained, restricted for 100 years.	Data Protection Act 1998 FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Caldicott Guardian for Adult Social Care & Caldicott Guardian for Children	
ASYLUM: patient records, death registers, mortuary registers, reception orders	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – information provided in confidence	Relevant NHS Trust	It may be possible to make a distinction between personal and clinical information in patient records: personal information can be released once the patient is deceased, while the restriction on clinical information continues. Be aware that, even by confirming a person was a patient in an asylum, you would be disclosing a mental health condition.
ASYLUM: staff records	Restricted for 75 years	Data Protection Act 1998	Relevant NHS Trust	
LOCAL AUTHORITY CHILDREN'S	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living)	Relevant local authority	

HOME/ORPHANAGE		FOI s40 – personal information	Children's Services department	
PRISON	Restricted for 75 years (adults) or 90 years (juvenile)	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – personal information	Archive service	
BORSTAL/INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL	Restricted for 100 years	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – personal information	Relevant Education/Children's Services department	
PHOTOGRAPHS: Children	Restricted until the child/children reach the age of 18	Child Protection	Archive Service	
CLUB/SOCIETY: Membership records	Restricted for 30 years unless otherwise stipulated by the depositing organisation	Data Protection Act 1998	Archive Service or Depositing Body	<p>The depositing organisation (as Data Controller) may stipulate a longer restriction. If your service is the owner of the records (i.e. they are not deposited records) then the Archive service must act as Data Controller.</p> <p>Be aware that the nature of some organisations will justify a longer restriction</p>

				period for the safety of the data subjects (e.g. Zionist Society).
LOCAL AUTHORITY: Committee minutes for Education, Childrens' Homes, Social Services, Personnel, Adult Social Care or similar committees	Restricted for 75 years (if the committee relates to, and the minutes name, adults) or 100 years (if the committee relates to, and the minutes name, children)	Data Protection Act 1998 (if living) FOI s40 – personal information	Relevant local authority Children's Services, Education, Adult Social Care or similar department	Be aware that committees relating to these issues (children in education or care, adults in care, and local authority staff) may be called by a range of names and the committee name may change over time.
LOCAL AUTHORITY: Other committee minutes	No restriction unless volume of minutes contains sensitive personal data	Information has already been in the public domain	Archive service	Be aware that committee minutes may sensitive personal data relating to named individuals (particularly staff).