

## Glasgow Life

### City Archives: Collections, Acquisition and Disposal Policy

#### **1 Introduction**

Glasgow City Archives (GCA) is part of Culture and Sport Glasgow (CSG) which is a not-for-profit organisation, established in April 2007 to deliver cultural and sporting facilities and associated services to the City of Glasgow. It trades under the name Glasgow Life.

#### **2 Background**

The Archives Service is the designated place of deposit for the official records of Glasgow City Council (GCC), its partner services (ALEOS), and predecessor authorities, e.g. Glasgow Corporation, Strathclyde Regional Council.

#### **3 Legal status**

Under sections 53 and 54 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994, Glasgow City Council is empowered to make proper arrangements for the preservation and management of any records which have been transferred to them, created or acquired by them in the exercise of any of their functions or otherwise placed in their custody by way of gift, purchase, indefinite loan, or temporary deposit.

Under the terms of a joint agreement of 1974-1975 between the successor authorities to Strathclyde Regional Council, Glasgow City Archives is responsible for the corporate records of Strathclyde Regional Council.

Under the terms of the Collections Agreement between Glasgow City Council and Culture and Sport Glasgow, the Council owns the archives collections.

Under the terms of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011, The Keeper of the Records of Scotland (The Keeper) has agreed that Glasgow City Archives is an appropriate repository to hold GCC records.

Glasgow City Archives has been approved by The Keeper as a place of deposit for records under his charge and superintendence, including the records of:

- Church of Scotland , Glasgow Presbytery
- Customs and Excise, Strathclyde
- Justices of the Peace, Strathclyde
- Upper Clyde Shipbuilders
- Glasgow Burgh Register of Sasines, 1922-1927

## **4 The Collections**

Glasgow's archives are among the most important historical and cultural resources belonging to the people of Glasgow. These unique, irreplaceable records are essential to ensuring the rights of citizens. They offer insight into our diverse heritage and history. In its broadest sense, the purpose of the City Archives is to preserve and make available to the public the permanent historical public and private records of Glasgow in its custody.

**4.1** The official records of Glasgow City Council, its ALEOS and predecessor authorities are the core of the Archives' collections. These records document the activities of Glasgow City Council and its predecessors from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to date, providing a record of the wide range of functions and activities of local government in Glasgow and the west of Scotland.

**4.2** The archives also collects a wide-range of records of private individuals, families and estates, organisations, including but not restricted to churches, businesses, solicitors, societies, clubs and associations. These relate to Glasgow, the area of the former Strathclyde Region and in some cases are national collections.

**4.3** In acquiring new private material the office will concern itself with the geographical area of the former Strathclyde Region, but in practice is likely to exclude material wholly or predominantly relating to any part of that area served by an authority which provides an established and approved archives service. This exclusion will, however, be subject to the following exceptions:

- (a) collections may be accepted in cases where the owner or depositor has expressed a definite wish that they should be held in Glasgow;
- (b) collections may be accepted which add to existing collections or are an integral part of them;
- (c) collections of regional or national significance may be accepted if their coverage is such that Glasgow is at least as natural a location for them as any other.

**4.4** Collections which are of sufficient quality for permanent preservation will be accepted without restriction of date or format, except for film, which will be referred to the Scottish Screen Archive. The Service will not collect any three dimensional objects or original art work unless they are integral to the archive collection to which they are attached. In such cases, the archives will refer these objects to Glasgow Museums.

**4.5** Collections will normally be available for public access without restriction but where an owner or depositor wishes to impose restrictions on access which appear *ex facie* to be reasonable, records may be accepted subject to those conditions, which will be rigorously observed (See 4.6 below for restrictions).

### **4.6 Additional considerations**

The size, format and physical condition of archives will be considered when deciding whether to accept new acquisitions or not.

**Size versus intellectual value:** The space occupied by each archive collection must be justified in terms of its research value. Where its retention cannot be justified, the Archives may reject a collection, or may wish to select part of it for permanent preservation. This process of appraisal is common practice, based upon sound archival principals, informed judgement and knowledge of potential research interest.

**Physical condition:** Items will be rejected if their poor physical condition prohibits public access and if the cost of undertaking the necessary conservation treatment is disproportionate to their historical value

**Restrictions:** Consideration will be given before accepting collections with material that may have to be closed for long periods of time, e.g. because of the requirements of the *Data Protection Act 1998*. In these cases, the historical worth of the material must be sufficient to justify the expense of their storage while not being available to the public.

#### 4.7 Exemptions – what we will not collect

In assessing material for acquisition, a number of specific exemptions apply to our collecting policy:

- Archives that might be more appropriately deposited elsewhere (for instance, archives that are known to be collected by other, local, national, or specialist repositories). In such cases, we will advise potential depositors of the appropriate repository to contact;
- Archives whose contents duplicate current holdings, or which are so similar as to not justify their inclusion;
- Copies of archives held elsewhere – unless, there is an exceptional reason for keeping them (for instance, in support of an existing collection)

### 5 Methods of acquisition

**Transfer:** Institutional archives of Glasgow City Council will be acquired via internal transfer from originating departments, in line with the Council's Records Retention Schedule and with the criteria laid down in the Council's 'Appraisal and Disposal Policy: Preserving the Archival and Historic Memory of Glasgow'.

**Donation or bequest:** The donor or executor will be required to sign a deposit agreement and documents will not be accepted without evidence of clear and valid title of ownership.

**Deposit / Long-term loan:** The service prefers to obtain records by donation rather than deposit on loan. The Archives will henceforth only exceptionally accept material on deposit or long-term loan, and major acquisitions will normally only be accepted for periods of not less than twenty years.

**Purchase:** Purchases will be made only of archives that make a significant contribution to our existing collection strengths. Every attempt will be made to obtain financial assistance in purchasing records and any terms or conditions imposed by a grant-making body will be fulfilled.

## **6 Selection, de-accessioning and disposal**

Archives' staff will evaluate and select for disposal those records not deemed worthy of permanent preservation. They will alert the donor, executor or depositor to the fact that, after transfer, records donated may be subject to a review of their historical value. Any records received by donation or bequest, that are not considered worthy of retention will be disposed of or returned to the donor or executor. Any records received by deposit on loan that are not considered worthy of retention, will be either disposed of with the depositor's permission, or returned to the depositor.

The Archivist reserves the right to conduct a periodic reappraisal of official and private records where there is compelling evidence that earlier appraisal decisions require review.

Recommendations for disposition of accessioned public records may be made as a result of archival re-appraisal. Such disposition of public records will be made only after consultation with the relevant business area.

Glasgow Life accepts the principle that there should be a strong presumption against the disposal by sale of any documents in the Council's, and will not such documents

The Archives shall have authority to transfer records to a more suitable repository if it is considered that the documents would benefit from relocation.

## **7 Date of review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as required. The next review will be in 2019.