

Carmarthenshire Archives

Collection Development Policy

2022 – 2026

Mission statement

Our mission is to identify, collect and preserve archive materials relating to the county of Carmarthenshire and its inhabitants and make them available to anyone who wishes to use them.

We are also committed to raising awareness about our work and demonstrating the many ways in which archives and records can be used by all members of the community.

Policy aims

This policy document sets out the Collection Development Policy for Carmarthenshire Archives and explains how we aim to ensure inclusive coverage of all aspects of the county's history.

It supports our Mission Statement as set out above and should be read in conjunction with our Forward Plan, Collection Management Policy, Collection Information Policy, Depositors' Agreements and other relevant policy documents.

Statutory and legal status

Carmarthenshire Archives is the authorised archive service for the custody of the official records of the Carmarthenshire County Council and its predecessor authorities under the Local Government Act, 1972 and Local Government (Wales) Act, 1994.

It is an approved 'Place of Deposit' under the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967 for a number of classes of Central Government records held locally (Public Records) e.g. the records of the Courts of Quarter Sessions, the Magistrates Court, the County Court and the Coroner.

It has been empowered to acquire archives by deposit, gift or purchase and to preserve and make them available under The Local Government (Records) Act, 1962 (c.56). Section 4 of this Act also permits the allocation of resources to persons looking after such archives.

It is recognised by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales as a repository for parochial records within the area defined by its agreement with the Carmarthenshire Archives.

It is recognised by the Master of the Rolls as an official repository for manorial and tithe records under the Law of Property Act, 1922, the Law of Property (Amendment) Act, 1924 and the Tithe Act, 1936.

Scope of collecting

Carmarthenshire Archives seeks to collect and preserve archival material relating to the county of Carmarthenshire that is deemed unique and of long-term historical value as determined by qualified archive staff. Suitable material for collection includes:

- Records of the Carmarthenshire County Council and its predecessor bodies
- Records of the Town and Community councils within the boundaries of Carmarthenshire
- Records of coroners, health bodies, courts of law and official agencies which create official public records
- Records of businesses, charities, organisations, societies, clubs, groups and private individuals whose activities are conducted on, or related or otherwise connected to the County
- Records of the Church in Wales collected under the terms of the Parochial Records Agreement
- Records of all other religious denominations including all Nonconformist churches and chapels (including but not limited to Methodist, Quaker and Congregational), Roman Catholic and records of other faiths whose activities are conducted on or relate to the county of Carmarthenshire
- Records created by all types of record-creating bodies within the boundaries of the county of Carmarthenshire

Format and media

Carmarthenshire Archives accepts the deposit of archives, irrespective of age, in all formats including but not limited to paper, parchment, audio and video cassette, microfilm / fiche, photographs, glass plate negatives and lantern slides and digital formats including but not limited to the carrier media of DVD/CD Rom, floppy disk, email, and memory sticks.

The acquisition of digital records is managed through an Interim Digital Preservation Policy.

Limitations of collecting policy

Carmarthenshire Archives will only collect and preserve material that is deemed unique and of long-term historical value as determined by its qualified archive staff and by reference to its Appraisal guidelines.

Carmarthenshire Archives will not collect material falling outside of its geographical collecting area as defined in "Scope of Collecting" above, except where the material adds to specific existing deposits already in its custody or in exceptional circumstances including upon the express wishes of the owner and in consultation with any other relevant repositories. In addition, Carmarthenshire Archives will not acquire:

- Records which relate to geographical areas outside the Carmarthenshire except where such records may sometimes form an integral part of a collection

- Duplicate material, unless holding spare copies of non-unique material is deemed advantageous in particular instances
- Photocopies and copy material
- Printed or published material, unless it forms an integral part of an archive or contains significant manuscript annotation(s)
- Artefacts, three-dimensional objects or works of art. Such material is instead usually directed to the museum service
- Film recordings. These are normally directed to the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales

Development

We will develop our collections in the following ways:

- Undertaking regular collections surveys to identify gaps in our holdings
- Making contacts with groups or organisations who are representative of areas of known collection weakness, or that are under-represented within our collections
- Maintaining contact with existing depositors
- Ensuring the continued deposit of public records, Council and parochial archives in accordance with our statutory obligations

Acquisition

Carmarthenshire Archives prefers to acquire collections as gifts (donations or bequests). Records will be accepted on loan, subject to agreement with the Terms of Deposit. Funds for purchase are limited and will be expended only on documents of outstanding importance for the history of the area and which would be otherwise lost to local researchers.

Records are also received by direct transfer from the Carmarthenshire County Council.

Access

Archives are accepted on the presumption that the depositor is willing for them to be made available for public consultation within a reasonable period of time (within the context of relevant legislation). Carmarthenshire Archives will publicise every new acquisition, once catalogued, and advise on any restrictions to access. Catalogues will be made available online and supplied to depositors and the National Register of Archives.

Disposal

Collections are selected for permanent preservation on the basis of thorough appraisal by qualified staff against the criteria of our Collections Policy. If Carmarthenshire Archives is not the most suitable repository for material offered to us, we will advise potential depositors of a more appropriate repository for the material they seek to deposit.

Material that is unwanted will be offered back to the depositor in the first instance, or disposed of in accordance with the terms of the Depositors Agreement.

Review

This policy was created in September 2022. It will be reviewed in 2026, or sooner if circumstances dictate.