

Appraisal Policy

Introduction.....	1
Scope	1
Records of our Authorities.....	2
Records of other organisations and individuals	2
Appraisal criteria	2
Roles and Responsibilities	3
Disposal of material	3
Related Policies	3
Review	3

Introduction

Gwent Archives collects, preserves and makes accessible archival records relating to the old administrative county of Gwent and its people. To ensure that the collections acquired meet the Archive Collections Policy criteria and that regular appraisal and review takes place. Archival Appraisal is the process of evaluating which records have an enduring historical value, not just to the creating organisation, family or individual, but also to the wider community.

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate and communicate consistent, well-informed and transparent appraisal decisions. The policy sets out the principles behind selection and explains Gwent Archives' procedures.

Scope

This policy applies to

- the non-current records of our 5 constituent Authorities (Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, Caerphilly County Borough Council, Monmouthshire County Council, Newport City Council and Torfaen County Borough Council)
- records offered to us by organisations and individuals
- analogue and digital records

Records of our Authorities

We will liaise closely with appropriate Information Management staff from our 5 Authorities to ensure:

- that digital and paper records appropriate for permanent preservation are deposited with us
- to appraise records following the expiration of their retention period.

Records of other organisations and individuals

This section refers to records and resources offered to Gwent Archives as long-term loans, gifts or to purchase. Depositors and potential depositors will be strongly encouraged to carry out appraisal prior to deposit, with guidance and advice from Gwent Archives staff.

Appraisal criteria

Basic appraisal will be undertaken during discussions with the depositor or potential depositor and guidance offered, covering:

- whether the material falls under our Collections Policies for archive and / or library resources
- identifying and removing items that do not fall under the Collections Policy
- the removal of blank/unused material
- duplicate items, and material that would also be held elsewhere

More detailed appraisal will take place in-situ at Gwent Archives during the cataloguing process, and the following criteria will be used:

- Emphasis will be on the selection of records which contain summary information, for example in the case of School records Admission Registers will be retained but Attendance Registers will be destroyed. Where no Admission Registers have survived, a sample of Attendance Registers may be retained
- Whether the items fill any identified gaps in our collections
- If any legislation is in place to guide on the appraisal of some classes of records
- The content of the documents, including whether they
 - contain significant information on notable events and persons
 - relate to major trends and developments in the political, legal, social, economic or cultural history of Gwent
 - contribute to significant scientific, technological, ecological or medical developments

Professional and legal guidelines will be followed, including guidance produced by:

- The National Archives guidance on appraising Public Records
- Archives and Records Association
- Information and Records Management Society
- The Methodist Church Retention Schedules
- The Church in Wales *Keep it or Bin it* guidelines
- Local Government Retention Schedules
- Legislation preventing the appraisal of certain types of records

Existing catalogues may be re-appraised as part of our collections review process, and all appraisal decisions will be recorded for new and existing collections as part of our documentation procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Appraisal will be carried out by qualified archivists as part of their usual collections activities. In some cases another member of archive staff may undertake basic appraisal under the supervision of an archivist.

Disposal of material

Only those records which have enduring research value will be selected for permanent preservation. Those that do not meet the appraisal criteria will be disposed of in accordance with the Terms of Acquisition, either by returning to the depositor, transfer to a more appropriate place or secure disposal.

Related Policies

The Appraisal Policy should be read in conjunction with the:

- [Archive Collections Policy](#)
- [Digital Preservation Policy](#)
- [Library Collecting Policy](#)

Review

This policy was approved by Gwent Archives Joint Committee in March 2022. It will be reviewed in April 2025 or sooner if circumstances dictate.