



# THE DEBENHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

THE DEBENHAM ARCHIVE COLLECTION POLICY

## Table of Contents

1. ARCHIVE OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	3
2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE DEBENHAM ARCHIVE	3
3. MATERIALS ALREADY IN THE COLLECTION	3
4. ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED	3
5. ITEMS ACCEPTED BUT NOT DISPLAYED	3
6. COPYRIGHT	4
7. SERVICES NOT OFFERED	4
8. PURCHASES, DONATIONS AND LOANS	4
9. FORMAT	4
10. STORAGE AND SAFEKEEPING	5
11. DISCARDING MATERIALS	5
12. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS	5
13. DATA PROTECTION	5
14. FREQUENCY OF COLLECTION & COLLECTION POLICY REVIEW	6
15. INCOME FROM SALE OF ARTEFACTS	6
APPENDIX 1 - ITEM APPRAISAL - DOES THIS MATERIAL FIT WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE COLLECTING POLICY?	7
APPENDIX 2 - ACQUISITION - TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP	9
APPENDIX 3 – GLOSSARY	10

## Version History

Date	Version	Detail	Status
01.09.2020	Final	Final Version	Published
17.02.2021	Revisions	To include new data protection and copyright policies	Final

## 1. Archive Ownership and Management

The Debenham Archive is owned by the Debenham History Society and is managed by the elected Society committee in place at the time of any interaction.

## 2. Purpose and Scope of The Debenham Archive

The purpose of the Debenham Archive is to digitally preserve materials that specifically document the history of the village and people of Debenham in Suffolk and to make these materials available to researchers and the general public. There may be instances where material overlaps to surrounding geographical areas.

The collection contains digitised versions of a variety of formats including, but not limited to: pamphlets, posters, documents, maps, photographs, audio and video recordings.

## 3. Materials Already In The Collection

Items that were in the possession of the Debenham History Society prior to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and not covered by a Deed of Gift have been catalogued and deemed to be in the unchallenged ownership of the Society for several years.

Items received for inclusion in the Archive after 31st December 2019 and prior to the introduction of this policy have been or will be returned to the donor after digitising.

## 4. Items Not Accepted

The Archive will not accept items that are already stored or held in other archives, items whose condition makes them impossible to digitise or with other restrictions that prevent them from being used in the Archive, items with data protection issues, drafts of documents that do not contain anything different from the final version or three dimensional artefacts. Photographs may be taken of three dimensional items for historical recording purposes.

Where duplicate records are offered, whichever one is in the best condition (a better print quality, higher digital resolution, and not scratched, bent, torn or dirtied) will be accepted.

The Debenham History Society will assist donors to find a suitable solution for any materials it is unable to accept e.g. diaries, books.

## 5. Items Accepted But Not Displayed

The Archive reserves the right to accept but not to fully display items that although meet the criteria of the Collecting Policy, are considered to be inappropriate for public display in all or in part, due for example, but not limited to, political, privacy, data protection, racial or sexist sensitivities. These will be catalogued and noted as such.

## 6. Copyright

In all cases, the Archive will display the name of the donator, the content creator and copyright symbol and owner where these are known.

If a copyright owner makes a donation to Debenham History Society and assigns the copyright to the Society it will be recorded on the Deed of Gift Form and then be displayed on the Archive as ©Debenham History Society.

It will be the donor's responsibility to advise of any known copyrights at the time of making the item available to The Debenham History Society. In investigating any complaint received in respect to breach of copyright, the donor will be expected to provide evidence on any accepting or refuting of the complaint.

Any claims in respect to copyright should be made following the Take Down process published on the Archive website.

## 7. Services Not Offered

The Debenham History Society will only digitise items that meet the Archive Collection Policy and that it intends to accept. It does not offer digitising or scanning services for any other purposes.

## 8. Purchases, Donations and Loans

Items offered for purchase will be considered by the Debenham History Society in consultation with the Friends of the Suffolk Records Office. All purchases made with Debenham History Society funds must be approved by the Debenham History Society Committee in place at the time of the considered purchase.

Donations will only be accepted provided that (a) there is a signed Deed of Gift form that either legally transfers ownership of the materials to the Debenham History Society or specifies the use of the item, and (b) the donor does not require excessive restrictions on use. Items will not be accepted by the Debenham History Society on deposit. The Deed of Gift form is available from the Debenham Archive website.

It is preferred that all items are offered with as much supporting information as possible.

Loans will be accepted for exhibit only.

## 9. Format

Original film or reel to reel tape will not be accepted.

## 10. Storage and Safekeeping

After being signed over, the donor accepts that once digitised, the original item may be offered to the Suffolk Archive for safekeeping to be held on deposit as part of the Debenham History Society Collection, where they can be examined according to Suffolk Archive controls in place at the time of access.

If the Suffolk Archive will not accept the original and suitable storage facilities are not available to the Debenham History Society, the item will be returned to the Donor.

## 11. Discarding Materials

Debenham History Society reserves the right to dispose of materials inappropriate to our Collection Policy and also detailed in the Items Not Accepted or Items Accepted But Not Displayed sections. Options include returning materials to donors and offering collections to other institutions (where feasible).

Items can only be removed following Debenham History Society Committee approval and a record will be created for each item or group of items removed. The removal record will include a brief description of the material, the reasons for removal, and information on its new location (if applicable).

## 12. Cooperative Agreements

Occasionally, the Debenham History Society may enter into cooperative arrangements with other organisations in order to preserve historical materials and / or to make them more widely available. These arrangements will be formally documented and signed by all parties.

## 13. Data Protection

Archiving purposes includes the selection of records/data for permanent preservation. The activities are considered to be:

- acquisition and selection
- accessioning
- storage and preservation
- arrangement and description
- provision of access for all types of research through inspection and publication.

The provision distinguishes the activities involved in archiving from the use of the data by the public or others for research and other purposes involving freedom of expression and information in the future. This might include activities such as historical research, journalism, academic, artistic and literary purposes.

The above guidance was taken <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/legislation/archives-data-protection-law-uk/overview/>

## 14. Frequency of Collection & Collection Policy Review

A review of the collection will be carried out on an annual basis to ensure that it does not contain items that are outside the parameters of the existing collection policy. Once the review has been completed, it will be decided whether the collection policy is revised to reflect the new areas, or the collection is brought back to the original policy and the items are removed. Where possible, items to be removed will be offered to other collections.

## 15. Income From Sale Of Artefacts

The Debenham History Society is a non-profit organisation. In the event of any income being generated from the sale of archived artefacts (copies or removed items), will be used for the ongoing maintenance of the Archive, recorded as such in the Debenham History Society accounts and held in the general Debenham History Society bank account.

## Appendix 1 - Item Appraisal - Does this material fit within the scope of the collecting policy?

### Appraisal Questions

1. Did the donor create the materials?
2. If not, does the donor own the materials?
3. If yes, is the donor willing to sign a deed of gift that transfers ownership to the Debenham History Society?
4. If not, is the donor willing to lend the materials for digitising and return?
5. Is there any information that is restricted by data protection or copyright laws? Do the materials fall within our collecting policy?
6. Who created the records?
7. Did this person or group play an important role in the community? Was this person or group representative of the community as a whole, or representative of a group within the community?
8. Why were the records created? Do the records provide information beyond this initial purpose?
9. Does a diary record just the weather, or does it also detail community events and people?
10. Is this information available somewhere else?
11. A little research can go a long way in answering this question. Examine the published histories in the collection. Think about what other area repositories have, especially the Suffolk Archive. Issues to think about include
  - AGE: the older an item is, the less likely it is to be duplicated somewhere else
  - SCARCITY: how often do you see items like this? You may want to contact other repositories to discuss.
12. Do we have similar materials already?
13. You can decide to keep or not to keep with either a yes or a no answer.
14. If yes, then the follow-up question is, "Does it duplicate what we already have, or does it add depth to our collection in this area?" If the answer is no, then the follow-up question is, "Does it fill in a gap, or is it outside of our collecting policy?"
15. How complete are the records?
16. Do they document a short period of time, a lifetime, or something in between? Are there gaps in the dates that would make research difficult? Unidentified photographs are another example of an incomplete record.
17. How large is the collection?
18. What is the proportion of useful material to the overall size? Size will play a factor in the amount of storage required.
19. Are the records in a discernible order, or are they in chaos?  
The time needed to arrange a collection for use should be a factor in your appraisal decision.
20. What kind of physical condition are the materials in?
21. What are the preservation needs? Will you need to impose strict handling procedures?
22. Will the format cause problems in the future?



23. Oversize materials have special storage and preservation needs. Film and video are very fragile media that may need to be transferred in the future. Electronic text records will also need to be updated as word processing programs and operating systems change.

## Appendix 2 - Acquisition - Transfer of Ownership

Each transfer of private property will be clearly documented and in writing. This documentation serves several purposes. First, it begins the process of expressing the Society's thanks for the donation and demonstrates to the donor the Society's commitment to provide appropriate care and management for the materials received. Second, the written documentation records the particulars of the transaction such as the date of the gift and the donor's address for future reference. Finally, the documentation establishes that the Society has become the legal owner of the materials it has accepted.

There are three common instruments of gift: exchange of letters, wills, and deeds. Correspondence and wills can be adequate, the Society will always require a standard Deed of Gift form in addition to any other instruments of gift because:

A Deed of Gift can cover legal ground that is often left out of a letter or a will including:

- a) date of transfer
- b) name of donor (and contact information)
- c) signed statement that the property is his/hers to donate in the first place
- d) description of the materials being offered (a brief but important record)
- e) name of new owner (the Archive)
- f) signed statement acknowledging that the Archive will become the sole owner, and therefore
- g) can sell, donate, or discard unwanted items in the future
- h) an optional clause specifying that all unwanted items shall be returned to the donor
- i) an optional clause for restrictions on use

## Appendix 3 – Glossary

- Archival Appraisal

Appraisal is the process of determining the value and thus the disposition of records based upon the degree to which they fit into an institution's collecting policy. Appraisal also takes into account records' administrative, legal, and fiscal use; their historical value; their arrangement and condition; and their relationship to other records.

- Archives

In this instance, the term archive is used to refer to a collection of materials, such as written records or photographs.

- Accession

The term accession in this instance refers to the formal acceptance into custody of an acquired collection, both physically and intellectually, and the recording of such act.

- Collection policy

A collection policy is an official statement issued by an archive which identifies the kinds of materials it accepts and the conditions or terms which affect their acquisition. It serves as a basic document for the guidance of archival staff and organisations and persons interested in depositing their records or papers.

- Collections

The term collections is used very broadly. Collections include individual manuscripts, archival or manuscript collections, or other groups of historical documents found in repositories in any format.

- Deaccession

Deaccession refers to the process by which an archive formally removes material from its custody. An archival institution may deaccession material because the material has been found to be unsuitable for its holdings, the legal owner has requested permanent return of the materials, or the institution has agreed to transfer the materials to another repository.

- Deed of Gift

A Deed of Gift is a signed, written instrument containing a voluntary transfer of title of personal property without monetary consideration. Deeds of gift to archives frequently take the format of a contract establishing conditions governing the transfer of title to documents and specifying any restrictions on access or use. A deed of gift is also known as an instrument of gift.

- Donor

A donor is person or organisation who has given documentation to the Archive.

- Reappraisal

Reappraisal is the process of re-evaluating the holdings of an archive to determine which holdings should be retained and which should be removed. Reappraisal should be based on how the collection fits into the collecting policy.

- Record / Historical Record

A record can be any type of recorded information in any format. A record can be created or received by an individual or a group. Many types of historical records are created in our society: genealogical or family history records, business records, and government records. Records also come in a variety of formats including documents, photographs, films, audio tapes, and maps. Some examples of documents are letters, diaries, manuscripts, and meeting minutes.

Given the above definition, just about any item can be labelled an historical record. However, the term is most often used in a narrow sense to describe original published items with historical value. I.E A war diary is an historical record. Last week's best seller is not. The minutes of the first meeting of the village board is an historical record. The note the village board sent utility customers with their water bill is not.