



## Access Policy and Principles

### Introduction

The service aims of Glamorgan Archives as set out in the *Statement of Purpose* include making its collections accessible to the public and this is a central function of its entire staff. The access policy focuses on the underlying principles which will ensure all stakeholders in Glamorgan Archives are clear about their rights and responsibilities. The *stakeholders* are the community served by the office, its users both actual and potential, its researchers both on-site and remote, its depositors, staff and funders.

Legislation, government policies (UK, national and local) and priorities for the service's funding authorities have impact on various points relating to access. The Archives aims to meet all these in its services.

### General Principles

Glamorgan Archives subscribes to the principles of the *Standard for Access to Archives* (PSQG)<sup>1</sup>:

- To serve its community as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- To seek to serve **all** of its community, devising a range of services appropriate to the community's stated or implied needs.
- To aim to encourage as much access by users to primary source material as is compatible with the permanent preservation of unique and irreplaceable material. There should be a presumption of openness and any restrictions should conform to tightly defined criteria.
- To define the objectives it is seeking to achieve and consult with stakeholders to develop and review that definition. The satisfaction of users shall be amongst its primary objectives.
- To plan explicitly to achieve these objectives and consult with stakeholders in developing that plan.
- To have systems to measure its performance against its plans.
- To have user feedback mechanisms and complaints procedures and clear channels of communication to and from other stakeholders.

- To respond explicitly in its plans to over- and under-performance and to use stakeholder feedback to maintain an appropriate balance of resources over the full range of objectives.
- To communicate to stakeholders its definition of stakeholders, its objectives, its plans, its performance, the means of communicating with it, and its response to feedback.
- To function through processes in which the user is an active participant and in which the user has responsibilities as well as rights.

### **Principles of Good Practice**

- It is clear who the Archives is intended to serve and what it is intending to achieve in providing access to its collections.
- To achieve **equity** the Archives aims to satisfy users in its community and does not discriminate against any member of its community.
- The Archives has open, effective, two-way **communications** with its community and its policies are available for scrutiny and comment.
- The Archives is **responsive**, dealing effectively with comments and complaints from users, regularly reviews its performance and makes improvements and its policies reflect the views and interests of its stakeholders.
- The Archives is managed to meet its aims **effectively and efficiently**, innovates to deliver better services while actively managing risk and regularly reviews the effectiveness of its actions.
- It is clear who has **managerial responsibility** for the service and how they can be contacted.
- All **staff participation** in delivering the right service to users is guided by clear standards of service with most service delivery problems resolved by staff at the point of contact .
- All staff providing services are individually **identifiable** and are fully trained for their jobs, or are supervised trainees.
- **Users' responsibilities** in helping to ensure the preservation of archival materials, in their courteous treatment of staff and respect for other users are made clear.
- **Information on services** of the Archives is known by the community it serves, including those with a potential interest and also users are aware of their rights of access.
- Information on **practical arrangements** for access to services is available, that the services can be easily located and are available at times when the community requires them.

- Users have reasonable access for the **consultation of finding aids**, are able to find specific records and items of interest and where enquiries cannot be answered, staff do their best to refer them accurately to an appropriate source.
- Users have a **choice** of means of access through a range of services.
- **Restrictions** on access are clearly communicated to users.
- Users are able to obtain **copies** of relevant materials or given clear reasons where restrictions apply.
- The Archives allows **researchers** to make full use of its services with confidence and the minimum of formalities.
- Researchers are able to **access on-site services**, and are accommodated in an environment for consulting documents, appropriate to the nature of the material.
- **Service processes and standards** are clearly explained and understandable to the user.
- **Remote access** to services including information on content is provided and will continue to be developed to widen access and to establish new audiences.

## Related documents

<sup>1</sup>Public Services Quality Group: *Standard for Access to Archives*

The National Archives: *Archives in the 21st century*

The National Archives: *Archives in the 21st Century in action: refreshed 2012-15*

Glamorgan Archives: *Statement of Purpose*

Glamorgan Archives: *Access Strategy*

Glamorgan Archives: *Community Engagement Policy*

Glamorgan Archives: *Preservation Policy*

Glamorgan Archives: *Fees and Charges*

Glamorgan Archives: *Search Room Rules*

Glamorgan Archives: *Document Handling Guidelines*

Glamorgan Archives: *Terms of Deposit*

Cardiff County Council: *Strategic Equality Plan, 'Everyone Matters' 2012-16*

Cardiff County Council: *Training and Development Policy*

Cardiff County Council: *Welsh Language Scheme*