



CULTURAL SERVICES

SOUTHAMPTON ARCHIVES

Access policy

Introduction

Southampton Archives is committed to the principle of providing maximum access and to making research materials available to users on equal and fair terms either through the facilities in the Reading Room or limited materials available through online resources. It is the responsibility of Southampton Archives to balance the researcher's need for access with the needs for confidentiality of persons and institutions whose activities are reflected in the materials. Consequently, the use of some materials in Southampton Archives, especially those of recent date, may be subject to restrictions.

This policy outlines how access to the collection is managed, and should be read in conjunction with other policies.

The Community

Southampton Archives service serves several communities, including:

1. The people of Southampton and environs
2. Researchers (local, national and international)
3. Local universities, schools etc.
4. Museum and exhibition visitors.
5. Special interest groups.

The Collection

Southampton Archives, based in the Civic Centre, looks after the historic records either owned by the Council or held by them on behalf of the public. These records date from 1199 onwards and are held for the geographic area of Southampton with two exceptions:

1. The Church of England records are for Southampton Deanery
2. The Central Index of Merchant Seamen 1918-1941 which covers all merchant seamen serving on British registered ships during that period

The archive collections are generally for the geographic area of Southampton, with its various boundary changes, whilst respecting the archival principle for the deposit of documents where the landowner's main seat is outside Southampton. This means that records for significant amounts of property lie outside our care e.g. the major land owners; Barker Mill, Bishop of Winchester, Queens College etc. The collections held amount to some two linear miles of records. Some records generated by Southampton City Council are selected immediately for long term preservation, for example Council and Cabinet Minutes; other materials are deposited with Records Management.

Southampton Archives curates and holds Southampton City Council's Oral History Archive. Transcripts, summaries and audio recordings are available to use in the Reading Room. There may be charges or permissions required for copies or use of material, and Specific Restrictions may apply. Copy tapes are available for public listening but names and personal data are not usually made available to those listening to tapes.

Principles and definitions

All records of Southampton Archives, in any format, that have been appraised as permanent, may be released for public access unless the records contain information that falls within one or more of the General Restriction categories in this policy or are governed by a Specific Restriction. To be clear, General Restrictions apply to particular kinds of information or designated classes of materials wherever they may be found among the holdings of Southampton Archives. Specific Restrictions are identified by the transferring agency or donor and apply to a specific body of material, sometimes for a specific length of time.

General Restrictions:

- Records exempted under Freedom of Information are restricted.
- Where access would damage documents then access is denied or may be allowed under very stringent conditions, alternatively a surrogate may be provided if available.
- Although items are archived 'in the public interest', restrictions around the principles of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) will be in place were release of information is likely to cause substantial damage or distress to a data subject.

Specific Restrictions:

- Materials deemed confidential until the passage of time is such that, in the judgment of the Archivist of Southampton Archives or other competent authority, the interests in favour of access outweigh those in favour of confidentiality, within the terms of the other restrictions mentioned within this policy.
- Where the depositor has requested restriction for a specific period of time or purpose.

These restrictions do not apply to regular employees of Southampton Archives in the performance of normal archival work on such materials.

Using collections

Any individual who abides by the rules and procedures of Southampton Archives is welcome to view the records held, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religious or political affiliation or any other differentiation described by Southampton City Council's Equality Policy.

https://www.southampton.gov.uk/images/new%20equality%20policy_tcm63-365206.pdf

For identification purposes, users will need to bring a Southampton City Library Card, a SmartCities Card or can be issued with a County Archive Research Network (CARN) ticket. Alternatively, if only visiting once, users can be issued a day ticket, although photo ID will need to be provided before this can be issued.

Bags are not permitted in the Reading Room and lockers are provided.

Research Service

If you are unable to visit the archives in person, or require help finding a particular record or research area, a range of services are available. Charges may apply and are available on request.

Access in person via the Reading Room

The Reading Room of Southampton Archives is open:

- Tuesday, 10am – 4pm
- Wednesday, 10am – 4pm

Southampton Archives is based in the lower ground floor of Southampton Civic Centre. A lift is available but users with additional requirements may find it useful to call in advance for guidance/assistance.

Access to the Reading Room is via the main reception of the Civic Centre and is signposted.

Access via the web

A portion of Southampton Archives' catalogues are available online.

The National Archives website: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Southampton Archives contributes to the Local History & Maritime Archive of over 10,000 photographs, maps, sound clips and documents. This archive is searchable here:

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/arts-heritage/southampton-archives/plimsoll.aspx>

Volumes of the Southampton Record Series can be purchased online here:

https://www.southampton.ac.uk/history/research/projects/southampton_records_series.page

A list of Southampton Mayors from 1217 – 2017 can be found here:

https://www.southampton.gov.uk/images/list-of-current-mayors_tcm63-363508.pdf

We will continue to develop the availability of the collection via the web and social media through our own web pages and in partnership with other organisations.

Access via exhibitions and outreach

From time to time items from the collection may be used in SeaCity Museum and Tudor House Museum, as well as in display areas around Southampton Civic Centre. Additionally, they may be used to support outreach and learning opportunities via our Cultural Services Learning Team.

Access for the media

Southampton Archives welcomes interest from the media in our work and collections. Initial enquiries should be made via the Archivist.

Commitment

Southampton Archives is committed to assisting users in accessing the holdings and responding to their needs. We will continue to develop policies to improve and enable this, whilst protecting the rights of copyright owners and data subjects. We will engage with stakeholders to ensure that we continue to understand the needs and interests of the communities that Southampton Archives has been established to serve and will actively seek to represent the diversity of that community.

Southampton Archives and Southampton City Council are committed to:

- treating all service users in a courteous and helpful manner and will continue to promote a culture of customer care, inclusion and equality.
- providing services fairly to all sections of the community; reducing any adverse differential impact that services may have on different communities.
- identifying groups or communities whose needs or requirements are less well met by council services than others and to address gaps in service provision.

To demonstrate compliance with the public sector Equality Duty (PSED), which is part of the Equality Act 2010, if there are any proposed changes to Southampton Archives services or its location, an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) will be completed as part of the public consultation, to assess and mitigate the negative impact on any individuals or groups with protected characteristics. Guidance on the public sector Equality Duty can be found online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-quick-start-guide-to-the-public-sector-equality-duty>

Southampton City Council's approach to equalities and how our services meet legal requirements under the Equality Act 2010 are explained in the Council's Equality Policy which is available online:

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/council-plans/equalities/>

Contact us

Email: archives@southampton.gov.uk

Telephone: 023 8083 2251

Address: Southampton Archives, Civic Centre, Civic Centre Road, Southampton, SO14 7LY

Further information about the services and collections available at Southampton Archives can be found at the following website: www.southampton.gov.uk/archives

Enquiries about our collections are welcome and we aim to reply with working 20 days.

Document control

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