

Wexford County Archive

Acquisition Policy

Wexford County Archive (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Archive’) aims to collect, preserve and provide access to Co. Wexford’s past through the exploitation of public and private records in its custody in an attempt to inform the present and future. Such research will be undertaken within the confines of a preservation programme.

The service also aims to build up its holdings to achieve a balanced documentation of the development of the county in terms of historical, architectural, economic, social, industrial, maritime and educational content.

Legislation

Under Section 65 of the Local Government Act (since superseded by Section 80 of the Local Government Act, 2001), local authorities are required to provide for the management, care and conservation of their archives and records and to arrange for public access to their archives.

Sub-section (3) of the latter Act states that:

A local authority may acquire, by purchase, donation, bequest or loan, and undertake the care and conservation of, archival material of local interest which is in the possession of any other person or body (including another local authority).

This indicates that local authorities are obliged to provide the same degree of protection and care to private archives they acquire, as are required for their own archival collections.

Acquisition methodology

Decisions on the acquisition of public archival material are taken in accordance with the *National Retention Policy for Local Authority Records* (LGMSB, 2001). This policy document outlines the recommended retention periods for local authority

records and specifies whether, on expiration of those retention periods, the records should be destroyed or transferred to a local authority archive.

Decisions on the acquisition of private archival material are carried out according to the Acquisition Policy of the archive service, under which the archivist is selective in acquiring material by assessing the 'public value' of such material. Usually manuscript materials warrant precedence over printed collections (printed materials are actively acquired by the Local Studies section of Wexford County Library Service).

The collections in Wexford County Archive can be identified as a range of the following:

- Public records (i.e. records of each local authority body in the county) in all media formats

- Private collections (papers of individuals and organisations revealing the growth and development of the county) in all media formats, including:

 - Estate papers

 - Business records

 - Maritime records

 - Solicitors' collections

 - Primary school records

 - Records of clubs and societies

Our aim is to create a county collection that holds a continuing interest and relevance for researchers as a research and teaching tool.

Jurisdiction

Wexford County Archive intends only to acquire archival material relevant to its jurisdiction. Where collections fall outside the scope of this jurisdiction, the potential donor will be directed to a more appropriate archive service/repository. Similarly, the county archive is cognisant of the existence of other collecting bodies in the county, e.g. Enniscorthy Castle; National 1798 Rebellion Centre, Enniscorthy; Irish Agricultural Museum, Johnstown; and Duncannon Fort, and steps will be taken as far as possible not to duplicate collections in their custody. An exchange of information about collections should be actively undertaken, where appropriate.

Acquisition of collections of private origin

Where private archives are acquired, the depositor is requested to sign a deposit agreement that highlights the responsibilities of both parties and serves to protect their interests.

In the case of collections that have been identified as existing in private hands, but which have not been deposited in the Archive, it may be part of negotiations with the owner(s) to obtain a duplicate of key/relevant items in the collection through the means of reprography or through microfilm.

It is the policy of Wexford County Archive not to acquire collections by purchase **unless** they constitute key documents that would have a significant bearing on the history of the county and which might otherwise be lost to the county. Where documents are offered for sale that complement or add to a collection presently in the custody of the archive service, attempts will be made to purchase those items, where resources permit.

How to donate

If you are interested in donating material to the Archive, you should contact the Archivist at Wexford County Archive, 6A Ardavan Business Park, Ardavan, Co. Wexford. Telephone 053-9196572 or Email: archivist@wexfordcoco.ie

Please note that donations to the Archive will normally involve the full transfer of ownership, including copyright, where possible. We will accept material on a loan basis only in exceptional circumstances.

Unless otherwise specified by the donor, material deposited with the Archive will normally be made available for public access or research as soon as it has been processed.

Wexford County Archive wishes to thank all those who have left materials in trust with us for the people of Wexford. Your generosity makes available unique and valuable research materials for the study of County Wexford's heritage.