
Guidelines Governing Gifts, Bequests and Deposits

NOTE

This document sets out the standard terms on which records are held. Any owner or depositor wishing to vary particular clauses is invited to contact the Archivist.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Suffolk Record Office accepts records of public and local interest for care and preservation and for the use of the public. Any records, regardless of age, condition or extent, which contain useful information relating to all aspects of past or present life, particularly though not exclusively in the county, are always welcome. Sources of such records may include local authorities, institutions and societies, churches, schools, large estates, industrial or commercial firms, solicitors, land agents, private families or individuals.

STATUTORY POWERS

2. Suffolk Record Office is:
 - 2.1. the authorised repository for the official records of the county and its various local authorities under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972;
 - 2.2. designated by the Lord Chancellor as a local repository for certain classes of public records (ie the records of central government and its local agencies) under the terms of the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967;
 - 2.3. approved by the Master of the Rolls for the deposit of manorial and tithe records under the terms of the Law of Property Act 1922 and the Tithe Act 1936, as amended by the Local Government (Records) Act 1962;
 - 2.4. designated by the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich as diocesan record office for diocesan and parish records under the terms of the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 – amended in 1992 in the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure;
 - 2.5. empowered under the terms of the Local Government (Records) Act 1962 to purchase records, to accept gifts or bequests of records, or to accept records on deposit or loan, from any sources not covered by sections 2(1) – (4) above.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

3. Records may be given or bequeathed to the Suffolk Record Office, the ownership of the records thereby being transferred from the donor to Suffolk County Council. Gifts or bequests constitute the most satisfactory method of preserving records for posterity and making them available for consultation and research.

DEPOSIT

4. Records may be deposited in the Suffolk Record Office, ownership being thereby retained by the depositor(s) and his/her/their heirs at law, under the following conditions:
 - 4.1 Records should normally be so deposited for a period of not less than twenty years, except that they may be withdrawn temporarily within that period as specified in clause 21 below.
 - 4.2 The Archivist reserves the right to return to the depositor(s) any documents deemed to be of no historical interest, or to destroy the same with the written consent of the depositor(s).
5. It shall be possible at any time to convert a deposit into a gift or bequest at the discretion of the depositor(s).
6. In certain circumstances records may be temporarily deposited in the Suffolk Record Office for a period of less than twenty years, but such deposits shall be at the absolute discretion of the Archivist and according to such arrangements as shall be individually determined between the Archivist and the depositor(s).

PRESERVATION

7. The conditions under which all records shall be stored in the Suffolk Record Office shall not be less than those considered acceptable for the storage of Suffolk County Council's own records. As far as is possible, adequate precautions are taken against damp, fire, vermin and illegal access.
8. All records may be photographed or microfilmed for security. Copyright and ownership of such photographs or microfilms shall remain vested in Suffolk County Council at all times. In order to protect original records members of the public may be required to study available photographic or microfilm copies.
9. All records may be marked with a finding reference for their own safety and identification.
- 10. Suffolk County Council effects a Public Liability Insurance Policy which indemnifies the authority in respect of damage to archive collections arising from the negligence of Suffolk County Council or its employees. All depositors are advised to read the attached Notice of Insurance. Any depositor requiring further insurance coverage may make their own arrangements for insurance of their records, but Suffolk Record Office will not be liable for any costs so incurred.**
11. Necessary conservation work on records may be undertaken when considered appropriate and practical by the Conservation Manager. The Archivist shall have the right to withhold public access to records which are in a fragile condition until such time as the necessary conservation work on these records has been completed.

LISTING

12. All records placed in the Suffolk Record Office will be listed from time to time according to the practices then current in the office, and copies of all such lists will be provided free of charge to depositors and to other appropriate individuals and organisations. In addition to such lists, which may take some time to prepare, depositors will automatically be given a receipt for their deposit(s) which will include a brief description of the records deposited.
13. In the preparation of lists, calendars, indexes and other finding aids the degree of such work to be undertaken shall be at the discretion of the Archivist. The copyright in all such lists, calendars, indexes or other finding aids, made, commissioned or undertaken by Suffolk County Council in respect of any records, including records deposited under the provisions of section 4 above shall be vested absolutely in Suffolk County Council, which is free to publish such works.

ACCESS

14. Records more than thirty years old, except where there is statutory provision to the contrary, are generally available to the public in the Suffolk Record Office, under supervision, during advertised opening hours and in accordance with the searchroom regulations. In some cases, access may be granted to records less than thirty years old, either as a result of statutory provision or at the discretion of the depositor(s). Depositor(s) may also, in consultation with the Archivist, require additional restrictions to be placed on access to records deposited in the Suffolk Record Office.
15. Records are available for consultation by the public free of charge.
16. Subject to the requirements of the Copyright Acts, 1911-1988, and the Copyright and Related Rights Regulations, 2003 together with any subordinate instruments, regulations or orders made in pursuance of them, including any statute or statutory instrument amending, consolidating or replacing them from time to time and for the time being in force, and at the discretion of the Archivist, users can be provided with, or make copies of, records for non-commercial research and private study only. Further reproduction must not be made without application to the Archivist.
17. Requests to publish records or substantial extracts from records in the custody of the Suffolk Record Office will only be granted in the case of deposited records on condition that due acknowledgement is made to the depositor(s); the person(s) intending to publish the same will be advised that it is his/her/their responsibility to comply with the provisions of the Copyright Acts.
18. Records may be removed from the Suffolk Record Office and moved between the branches of the Suffolk Record Office for the purposes of exhibitions, lectures or other appropriate uses, at the discretion of the Archivist and with proper provision for their security. Where a long-term removal from the direct custody of the Suffolk Record Office is contemplated the Archivist shall, in the case of deposited records, seek the written consent of the depositor(s) to the arrangements proposed.
19. Records may be transferred to another recognised repository for the purposes of study at the discretion of the Archivist.
20. Records may be used for official or legal purposes by any user of the Suffolk Record Office.

WITHDRAWAL

21. Records in the Suffolk Record Office deposited under the provisions of section 4 above may be withdrawn temporarily for any reason, at the discretion of the depositor(s), for a period not exceeding three months, thereafter renewable for further periods not exceeding three months at the discretion of the Archivist. Such withdrawal shall require a minimum period of notice of five working days.
22. Records in the Suffolk Record Office deposited under the provisions of section 4 above may be withdrawn permanently from the custody of Suffolk County Council, under the following conditions, to be operated by Suffolk County Council at its discretion and in negotiation with the depositor(s).
 - 22.1 Any request for such withdrawal shall be submitted to the Archivist in writing. Suffolk County Council will require a formal period of notice of one calendar month, or such longer period as may be required by specific statutory provision.
 - 22.2 Suffolk County Council may arrange for the preparation of a microfilm or photographic copy of approved standard of the records to be withdrawn, to be retained by Suffolk County Council and made available to the public after the withdrawal of the records.
 - 22.3 Suffolk County Council reserves the right to require the depositor(s) to make payment of a sum equivalent to the cost of labour and materials expended on conservation of the records while in the custody of Suffolk County Council.

OWNERSHIP

23. It is the responsibility of the depositor(s) to notify the Suffolk Record Office of any change of address or any change in title to the records. Communications relating to deposited records will be sent to the depositor(s) or his/her/their duly appointed agent(s) at his/her/their last known address. In the event of these being returned or unacknowledged and following a lapse of ten years thereafter the liability of the Suffolk Record Office to communicate with the depositor(s) will be deemed to have been discharged.
24. Where requests are made for the withdrawal of deposited records under the provisions of sections 21 and 22 above it will be necessary for the person(s) requesting withdrawal to be able to prove title to those records, or where withdrawal is requested by an agent or agents for the same to be duly authorised by a person or person(s) able to prove title to those records.
25. **Under no circumstances will Suffolk County Council be liable for damaged, lost or stolen records.**

Bury Record Office, 77 Raingate Street, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 2AR

Telephone: 01284 741212

Email: bury.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Ipswich Record Office, Gatacre Road, Ipswich, IP1 2LQ

Telephone: 01473 584541

Fax: 01473 584533

Email: ipswich.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Lowestoft Record Office, Clapham Road, Lowestoft, NR32 1DR

Telephone: 01502 405357

Fax: 01502 405350

Email: lowestoft.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

Suffolk Record Office web site: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sro>

Suffolk Heritage Direct website: <http://www.suffolkheritagedirect.org.uk>