

# OXFORDSHIRE HISTORY CENTRE

## POLICY DOCUMENT PD029

### Local Studies Acquisition Policy

#### Objective

- The objective of this policy is to define what material Oxfordshire History Centre (OHC) is prepared to accept for its Local Studies collections. On a day-to-day basis the Local Studies Librarian will administer the policy and take responsibility for the acceptance or procurement of new items or collections. Any cases of doubt, where an item is particularly costly or lies on the margins of our normal collecting activity, should be referred to the History Centre Manager (Local Studies).
- Fundamentally, the service aims to collect, conserve, organise and exploit non-archival documentation in all forms and on all aspects of the county or region to facilitate study and research at all levels. The breadth of this aim is tempered by the real constraints of budget, storage and scope.

#### Statutory basis

- Oxfordshire County Council, under the terms of the Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964), has a duty to provide and comprehensive and efficient library service. Oxfordshire History Centre, in conjunction with complementary collections and services operated by Oxfordshire Library Service, contributes to this end in the provision of a full range of 'printed' or published local studies reference material, whether in hard copy, microform or electronic format.

#### Distinction between Archival and Local Studies material

- There are certain categories of material which arguably straddle the boundary between Archival and Local Studies treatment. Before accepting an item for Local Studies collections, it may be necessary to determine not only its suitability for OHC collections, but the method and purpose for which an item of printed material was produced. This may have implications for whether an item is accessioned and catalogued archivally or by library methods.
- Definition of printed material. Printed items may be stored in the medium of hard copy, microform or electronic file. It isn't possible to provide an exclusive definition but, broadly speaking ...
  - A Local Studies item may be distinguished through being a mass-printed item for wide or general use and distribution.
  - An Archival item may be distinguished through being a single (or very limited) printed item for internal distribution.

- Potential areas of conflict between LS or Archival treatment include Church (parish or diocesan) publications and local authority council minutes and reports. These are discussed further below.

## Criteria for selection

- The fundamental principle underlying the acquisition of local studies stock is the significance of items for documenting the local or regional heritage. Thus the primary criterion for selection is local content, regardless of format or accuracy. 'Publications' may be sourced from hard copy, from microform, electronic media or computer networks.
- The service has a conservation role at local level with respect to Oxfordshire 'publications', which parallels the British Library at national level. This role implies exhaustive coverage within adopted criteria and the permanent retention of at least one copy of each item acquired. Unlike general (non-local) publications, which are disseminated more widely, there is a danger of long-term public unavailability if local items are not acquired when they first appear.
- **Electronic resources** - the service should continue to benefit from Oxfordshire County Council subscriptions to commercial online services such as Ancestry Library, Find My Past, British Newspaper Archive, The Times Digital Archive, etc., which have a significant attraction for local and family history users. Such electronic resources are likely to be shared across Oxfordshire History Service, Oxfordshire Libraries and The Oxfordshire Museum. Similarly, any electronic content provided by Oxfordshire Family History Society can be hosted on public computers available in OHC, Oxford Central Library and the Oxfordshire Museum (Woodstock).

## Constraints on selection

- **Establishment of Oxfordshire History Centre** – following the 2011 merger of Oxfordshire Studies with the Oxfordshire Record Office at St Luke's Church, Cowley, the breadth of collecting activity should be tempered by the physical limitations of the new location, and the character of the newly merged service.
- **Accommodation** - selection must take into account the current and likely use of materials, need for duplication, limited storage space, durability of materials and opportunities for microform and digital technologies to save space.
- **Budget** - some evaluation of material will be necessary to keep within budgetary constraints. Despite the ideal of comprehensive coverage, cost should be weighed against potential use, or the extent to which subject matter is covered by existing stock (e.g. see comment below on *Walkers' and general tourist guides*). Items of value up to £100 may be ordered by the Local Studies Librarian. Items above this value may only be approved by the History Centre Manager (Local Studies).

## Topographical scope

- In maintaining and adding to the Local Studies collections, the service aims at:
  - Comprehensive coverage of the county of Oxfordshire as constituted in April 1974.

- Selective or judicious coverage only of material relating to peripheral areas – namely the ancient county of Berkshire, the Cotswolds, the Chilterns and the river Thames.
- Photographic collections should observe the same topography, but may need to include the non-local work of some Oxfordshire photographers to preserve the integrity of significant collections.

## Numbers of copies

- The assumption is made that at only one reference copy of each newly published item should be acquired, and this should be the norm. With legacy holdings from Oxfordshire Studies and Davenport Library, two copies should be retained unless very obscure or peripheral.
- Where a working copy of an item is to be made available on open shelves, and is considered to be a key popular text – e.g. *Encyclopaedia of Oxford*, *Victoria history of the county of Oxford* – the purchase of a 2<sup>nd</sup> copy / retention of a 2<sup>nd</sup> legacy copy for stack storage (*or in extremis a 3<sup>rd</sup> copy*) (and thereby providing for future use) may be justified, but this decision should also respect the availability of copies within Oxfordshire Library Service and the availability of electronic surrogates.

## Material types

### 1. Books and pamphlets

- Local guidebooks, topical works, town and village histories should be acquired comprehensively.
- Walkers' and general tourist guides which do not deal with Oxfordshire alone, but with the wider regions of the Cotswolds, Chilterns or Thames Valley should be acquired selectively.
- Guides to the sources and methodology of local studies and family history research should be acquired selectively, but taking account of the increasing availability of guidance on the Internet. Without good justification, there should be no attempt to retain superseded editions of such general guides.
- In the special circumstances of Oxford and Oxfordshire, and the popular attention they receive, works of fiction and poetry by local authors and locally printed items are **not generally collected** unless they also have a substantial local setting. The service should not aim at exhaustive collection of multiple editions of local fiction. It may be justifiable to collect sample works of small-scale local printers, where their output is craft binding and printing and distinctive from the mass-produced norm.
- Oxford University is a dominant feature in the history of Oxford. Works on the history of the university, its colleges and constituent institutions should be collected comprehensively, particularly popular histories and guides (but see below for Ashmolean and Bodleian); also registers of their members and works on their libraries and archives.
- Course prospectuses for the university, faculties and colleges should be treated as ephemera and merely sampled rather than collected annually.

- Oxford University's Ashmolean Museum and Bodleian Library present a particular challenge due to the amount of publications they are likely to produce. Works on the history of those institutions and their administration should be collected comprehensively, but academic catalogues of their contents and collections should not be collected unless there is significant local content in them - e.g. *Catalogue of drawings in the Ashmolean. Volume IV, the earlier British drawings* (1982); or *Summary catalogue of post-Medieval western manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (1991). Exhibition catalogues from the Ashmolean and Bodleian should only be collected selectively.
- Biographical works and works on local celebrities may be collected, where they contain substantial information of local interest, but exhaustive collection of biographies with only an Oxford University connection is inappropriate and a sample only is sufficient for the service.
- Discretion should be exercised over reprints and re-issues in paperback, and over new editions with little or no revision.

## 2. Official publications

- These include the published output – in printed or electronic form – of central government, government agencies, local authorities, police forces, health care trusts, housing associations, and public utilities.
- Official publications, with their ever changing sources and content, and the fugitive nature of their web-based carriers, present one of the greatest challenges for bibliographic control. Where material from these bodies contains significant information relating to local communities, the county or region, it should be acquired for the collection.
- Key categories of official publications include:
  - Local authority publications, and minutes and reports of council meetings (for all tiers of government in Oxfordshire)
  - Central government publications
  - Legislative publications (local acts, statutory instruments)
  - Ofsted school inspection reports (periodic samples only)
  - Parish and community plans, appraisals or surveys
  - Plans and strategies in response to government initiatives
  - NHS publications - annual reports and accounts, performance reports, plans for reform or reorganisation, periodicals, statistics.
  - Government agency publications – e.g. Air Accident Investigation Branch, Natural England
  - UK Statistics Authority and the Office for National Statistics (see also Neighbourhood Statistics below)
  - Online collections of local statistical data, particularly where mapping or downloading of data tables and reports is possible – inc. Neighbourhood Statistics, Oxfordshire Insight, the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory, and the South East Public Health Observatory.
- **Public consultation documents.** The Local Studies element of OHC is no longer able to fulfil a substantial role in hosting published documents for public consultation, issued by official bodies, planning applicants, et al. Central and branch libraries will fulfil this role, with superseded publications being passed to OHC for its permanent reference

collections. The *Librarian, Reader and Information Services: Local and Family History* in Oxfordshire Library Service will act as the conduit for all such transferred material, to ensure that unnecessary duplication is avoided.

- **Local planning / local development framework** published plans. Hard copy versions of all such documents should be acquired from all relevant local authorities, although – depending on individual circumstances – OHC may need to source these from Oxfordshire Library Service, where it has initially received public consultation copies.
- **County and district council agenda, minutes & reports**
  - Oxfordshire Studies ceased active collection of council minutes at the end of 2006, but opportunities should be taken to acquire appropriate back files of minutes for 2007 onwards, following the guidelines below, if and when they become available.
  - Oxfordshire County Council minutes are actively acquired for Archive collections at OHC. There should be no attempt to duplicate the Archive sequences of minutes through the acquisition of new OCC minutes for Local Studies.
  - Oxford City Council minutes – the existing Archive collection stops at 1974; the possibility of receiving further signed council minutes and electoral registers (but only these and no other category of City archives) is currently being investigated [Apr 2012]. Therefore there is no need to acquire ‘secondary’ copies of these minutes for Local Studies collections. The existing Local Studies sequence of City Council minutes and reports from 1920/21 to 2005/06 should be retained, but any duplicates discarded.
  - District council minutes. The first preference should be to seek the deposit into Archive collections of the signed copy of the minutes and reports of the other four post-1974 district councils (Cherwell, South, Vale and West). Where the ‘signed’ copies are not available for deposit, ‘secondary’ copies of the minutes should be acquired for Local Studies as a gift.
  - Town and parish council minutes. These are less easily accessible, via the Internet or otherwise, so the service should continue to collect secondary copies for Local Studies, but only passively, as they are sent in from branch libraries. Where signed copies of the minutes become available, these should be treated archivally, and any ‘secondary’ copies discarded.
  - Weeding of existing duplicate sequences of council minutes in LS collections should be achieved as and when possible. Likely targets are Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council, but one set of City Council minutes and reports from 1920/21 to 2005/06 should be retained as popular core research material.
  - Websites. Where hard-copy council minutes are not held in any OHC collections, later coverage may be provided through the dedicated



websites of individual councils. This should only be seen as an interim, and not a permanent, solution for public access.

- **Oxfordshire County Council publications.** As parent authority of the service, OHC should endeavour to collect a comprehensive set of Oxfordshire County Council publications. The Council increasingly relies on its web site for access to current information about its policies, services and activities. PDF and other electronic copies of published documents should be downloaded and formally added to stock.

### 3. Non-governmental organisation publications

- Although by their nature, NGOs can be difficult to identify and trace, effort should be made to collect a wide proportion of their published output.
- NGOs can include co-operative groups, community welfare associations, religious groups, professional and scientific associations, sports and recreational bodies, and organisations devoted to issues of peace, development, environment, health, women, and human rights.

### 4. Business publications

- Much of the output of businesses and business groups is likely to be in serial [periodical] format – e.g. journals, directories and annual reports. Monographic output is harder to identify, but is often reported in the local press and should be acquired where possible.

### 5. Newspapers

- Locally published newspapers, including free newspapers, should be acquired and preserved on a permanent basis in hard copy and / or in surrogate form. The traditional surrogate format is microfilm but, following the closure of the British Library microfilm unit in 2009, a switch to digital format may prove more practical and economic.
- **Newsquest coverage.** Most Oxfordshire newspapers are published by Newsquest (Oxfordshire & Wiltshire) Ltd. Permanent backfiles of Newsquest titles have traditionally been stored and consulted in the form of microfilm, but coverage in this medium ceased at various points between Dec 2002 and Dec 2003.
  - Agreement was reached between Oxfordshire County Council and Newsquest in 2008 to provide in electronic form for 10 years the full text of all Newsquest Oxfordshire newspaper titles, from 2002 onwards.
  - *[The contract with Newsquest officially expired on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2014, but the Oxford Mail editor has agreed by email to extend this indefinitely while the company investigates a technical replacement system, thus ensuring that public access is not interrupted].*
  - Public access is achieved through Oxfordshire County Council public PCs, to include the full finished colour newspaper layout in PDF format, navigable by date or by full text searching.
- Non-Newsquest group newspapers were microfilmed by the BL until their microfilming unit closed in 2009. Microfilms for the six affected titles have been produced up to June 2010, but no more will be produced beyond this date. OHC should continue to maintain

hard copy backfiles of these newspapers, and actively pursue a digital archiving solution to succeed the existing run of microfilms.

- *[Test scanning for digital archiving was done in April 2014 of surviving newsprint copies of Banbury Guardian and Henley Standard, covering July 2010 – March 2014, but this process has proved too expensive to sustain, so OHC will be keeping hard copy non-Newsquest papers only].*
- **Newscuttings.** Files of mounted or loose newscuttings were collected by the Local History library and latterly by Oxfordshire Studies, covering the 1970s up to 2006, and – alongside selective indexing – allowed subject access to the otherwise impenetrable content of newspapers. No new news-cutting or indexing should be done by OHC; instead analysis of newspaper content should be achieved in the short term through the search engine of the existing Newsquest website, and in the medium term through the availability of searchable PDF versions supplied by newspaper publishers.

Scrapbooks of historic newscuttings may be accepted where their compilation and selection has added value, or where they enhance access otherwise available in existing newspaper hard copy, microfilm, cuttings and indexes.

## 6. Periodicals

- Local periodicals of all types, and selected journals dealing with the techniques of local and family history and archaeology, should be collected and relevant articles should be identified and, where possible, copied from journals and newspapers not otherwise added to stock. However, consideration should be given to treating short-lived minor publications, even though issued in serial form, as ephemera, due to the service's limited resources to document and make them individually available.
- **Periodicals of corporate bodies** (but see below for Parish and Diocesan). The journals, directories and annual reports of local businesses and business groups should be collected, as well as those of the many and varied non-governmental organisations at both county and local community level.
- **Parish and diocesan periodicals.**
  - **The Oxford Diocesan magazine, *The Door***, should be treated as a Local Studies publication. Existing Archive sequences should be merged and the relevant Archive catalogue record should refer to the particular Local Studies location.
  - **Parish magazines** (i.e. church not civil) should be treated as Local Studies publications.
    - Existing sequences of parish magazines in Archive collections need not be disturbed, nor should any attempt be made retrospectively to unpick terms of deposit, unless an individual case is particularly worthwhile.
    - New acquisitions of parish magazines should be added to Local Studies collections, with appropriate references from the Archive catalogue record for that parish. *[See comment below re Periodicals accessioning backlog].*
  - **Deposit versus gift.** Local Studies collections and accessioning procedures must accommodate the status of **deposit** where required, if the acquisition of

a sequence of a particular parish magazine title is from the parish church authority itself and their preference is for deposit rather than gift. If a 'gifted' sequence of a particular parish magazine title is already held by OHC, then a subsequent offer of a deposit can reasonably be refused.

- **Record Society publications.** The published output of these active societies in Oxfordshire should be acquired: Banbury Historical Society, Berkshire Record Society, Oxford Historical Society, and Oxfordshire Record Society.

## 7. Printed Ephemera

- **Content.** Acquisitions should theoretically include such material as local trade and sale catalogues, event programmes, posters, timetables, election publicity and advertising matter.
- **Archival or Local Studies treatment.** In principle, printed ephemera should be accepted for Local Studies rather than Archive collections, but see below for special arrangements for Oxford Playhouse and New Theatre programmes.
- **Current collecting.** The collection of ephemera has been very active for the period 1970 – 2010, resulting in extensive collections of (largely) uncatalogued material. Future collecting activity at OHC should include both current material to reflect society today as well as the acquisition of older ephemera, but current collecting should be limited – for the foreseeable future – to:
  - Selective substantial and informative items worthy of individual accessioning and cataloguing
  - Political and election ephemera
  - Theatre programmes, to enhance and extend existing collections for the Oxford Playhouse and the New Theatre. Particular arrangements for these collections have been made:
    - Oxford Playhouse
      - The Archive collection of Playhouse records should be preferred as the focus for both historic and new programmes.
      - Any duplicates should be removed from the Local Studies collection and any unique programmes transferred to the Archive collection (noting where items have been gifted rather than deposited).
      - The existing Local Studies spreadsheet index up to June 2011 should be retained as a useful finding aid, but closed to any future addition of data.
    - New Theatre. The Local Studies collection of these programmes has no Archive equivalent, but we have not actively collected since 2013/14 because shows are generic across the country. The quarterly New Theatre “what’s on” guide should be collected to provide a sufficient record of theatrical events held in Oxford.
- **Older ephemera** – in the form of catalogues, tickets, posters, programmes, etc., is often advertised and available from dealers. The expense of second-hand material may be justified where a place, topic or property is otherwise poorly represented in the collections.



- **Sale catalogues** – historic and modern catalogues for the sale of property should be collected where they become available, although there is insufficient staff resource to undertake weekly trawls of the local press to acquire current catalogues. Existing sequences of historic sale catalogues in Archive and Local Studies collections need not be disturbed, and can be searched in parallel through online and manual catalogues. Any new accessions of historic sale catalogues should be added to Local Studies collections where they are isolated items, but should be added to Archive collections where they form a clear part of the archive of an organisation or individual.

## 8. Maps

- **Archival or Local Studies treatment.** Existing examples of historic printed mapping in Archive collections need not be disturbed, but action should be taken to eradicate duplicates of Ordnance Survey map sheets, thus establishing a single core collection in Local Studies. Any future unique accessions of printed maps should be added to Local Studies collections
- Local Ordnance Survey maps at all scales should be acquired in hard copy or in high quality digital format where available.

**Historic large and medium scale OS digital mapping.** Oxfordshire County Council already holds digital versions of OS large and medium scale mapping in *County Series* and *National Grid plans* series. 1:10,560 *County Series* maps have been digitised in a high quality format by the National Library of Scotland, and are accessible at: <http://maps.nls.uk>. OHC should endeavour to make digital mapping publicly accessible in the Searchroom.

- **Current or recent large and medium scale OS digital mapping.** *Landline* or equivalent seamless digital OS large scale mapping datasets have been archived by OCC for 1998, 2003, 2005, 2010 and 2011. These datasets are to be made available in addition to the current edition supplied by OS.
  - OHC should ensure the similar periodic 'archiving' of *Landline* datasets by OCC ICT service, once they become superseded.
  - OHC should pursue the provision of 'archived' *Landplan* medium scale digital datasets, in addition to the current one.
- **Small scale OS mapping.** OHC should aim to fill any gaps in coverage of superseded editions of imperial scale series of OS maps. Complete continuing coverage should be aimed for in the following current series of printed maps (some portions of smaller scale sheets may cover significant parts of neighbouring counties):
  - 1:250,000 *Travel Maps (Road)* series 2003-
  - 1:100,000 *Travel Maps (Tour)* series 2003-
  - 1:50,000 *Landranger*, 1974-
  - 1:25,000 *Explorer*, 1994-
- **Facsimile OS mapping.** With the particular aim of satisfying current public consultation, complete sets of facsimiles of historic OS maps from the following publishers should be maintained: David & Charles, Cassini Historical Maps, Alan Godfrey.
- **Geology maps.** Paper map editions, although infrequently published, should be acquired from the British Geological Survey. Small scale (1:50,000 / 1:63,360) maps are accompanied by explanatory sheet memoirs and are published for popular

consumption. Large scale (1:10,000) geological maps are only available at prohibitive cost, so sample maps for areas of intensive geological interest only should be acquired – e.g. Headington Quarry.

- **Soil Survey, Land Use and Agricultural Land Classification maps.** These various 20th century surveys achieved partial Oxfordshire coverage in printed format. Efforts should be made to conserve or provide surrogate copies of these maps to ensure long-term availability for public consultation. Providers should be monitored for any extended coverage of Oxfordshire, and realistic opportunities to acquire data in digital form should be taken, with a view to public access through PlanWeb.
- **Shopping Centre plans.** Large scale shopping centre plans of Oxford City and other Oxfordshire shopping areas have been published regularly since 1967 by Charles Goad & Co., later Experian Goad. All plans are updated either annually or biennially and should be acquired on standing order. Although expensive, the cost is justified by the current and long term historical interest in retail information.
- **Street maps and atlases.** All sheet maps and atlases of Oxfordshire streets should be acquired. The city and university of Oxford attract a greater share of the market for street maps and atlases, which encourages very frequent reprinting with minimal or no change to content, so care should be taken to ensure that a representative selection – rather than an exhaustive collection – is achieved.
- **Special interest maps.** Unique (as opposed to serial) publication of printed maps of certain villages, parishes or other local communities may be prompted by campaigns or events. Every effort should be made to acquire copies of these one-off publications. Examples include Common Ground's *Parish Maps Project* and Millennium publications such as *The parish of Radley near Abingdon, Oxfordshire, in year 2000*.
- **Manuscript maps.** Original manuscript maps should not be collected – this being the function of Archive collections of OHC. Existing surrogate copies in Local Studies collections may be appropriate for supplementing the use of originals in the Searchroom, especially where surrogates extend coverage (e.g. photographic copies of college estate maps, microfilm of Berkshire tithe maps).

## 9. Image collections

- **Archival or Local Studies treatment.** Where photographs and prints occur in existing or any future Archive collections, their archival integrity should be respected, but opportunities should be sought to digitise these and add references to Local Studies 'Images & Voices' catalogues. Any future isolated accessions of photographs and prints (i.e. without other records requiring the preservation of archival context) should be added to Local Studies 'Images & Voices' collections. The *Early Blanket Factory* images are a good example of archival collections containing photographs which can simultaneously be individually treated (scanned and catalogued) via the Images and Voices collections.
- Photographs, engravings and drawings should be acquired to illustrate the county of Oxfordshire, including people, topics and events as well as places, sites and buildings.
- Collection should include coverage of the present day scene as well as the acquisition of older material (but active survey work by members of staff may not be achievable).

Selection will always be necessary because of the sheer number of available photographs and must be based on the added value of the image content.

- Basic selection criteria should include:
  - uniqueness – is there likely to be a copy elsewhere?
  - importance to the collection – does it fill a subject or date gap?
  - potential use within the collection – has it a significant research or educational value?
  - image quality – poor quality images will rarely be worth acquiring.
- The Oxfordshire relevance of the illustrations is generally of paramount importance but photograph albums including a mixture of local and non-local subjects may be collected and the non-local work of local photographers may be included where it is judged desirable to preserve the integrity of a significant collection.
- Published picture postcards, unframed prints and drawings are collected but not framed items or watercolours.
- The extension of Image collections (to improve access, generate income, etc.), through piecemeal or project-based digitisation, to cover engravings in books, maps and archival material, should treat such new images as surrogates only and respect the fact that the originals belong properly in other collections.
- The publication in September 2014 of Oxfordshire Images and Voices through the *Picture Oxon* website, in commercial partnership with House of Images, is OHC's preferred route for improved public access and generating income.

## 10. Sound and video recordings

- Sound and visual recordings of local relevance should be collected as a valuable record of the county and its people.
- Collection should include oral history field recordings made by staff, volunteers or local groups as well as broadcast material deposited by local radio stations.
- Cine film should be actively sought but originals should be deposited with the Wessex Film & Sound Archive and copies housed in the OHC.
- Given the special circumstances of Oxfordshire (particularly Oxford colleges), commercial sound recordings, e.g. of local choirs, should only be collected very selectively and with good justification.
- Relevant commercial video recordings should be acquired but, where long-term preservation is desirable, efforts should be made to obtain copies in digital format.
- Following copyright law changes in June 2014, copying sound and video collections for preservation and public use on the same premises is now permitted. In partnership with All You Have Is Ears (Bristol), OHC has digitised vulnerable videotape and cine film. OHC aims to make digitised video publicly accessible on site to users of the Centre.

## 11. Family history

- OHC should aim at exhaustive coverage of the history, genealogy and heraldry of Oxfordshire (inc. north Berkshire) families or individuals.
- OHC should encourage the donation of copies of all published output of the **Oxfordshire Family History Society** – including transcripts and indexes of Oxfordshire records of genealogical value, in hard copy and electronic format.
- Choice of acquisition of general reference works must be informed by the increasing availability of genealogical data and reference tools online. Growing availability of web-based alternatives suggests a more limited approach to the acquisition of printed reference sources. OHC should look to Oxfordshire Library Service to maintain the county's comprehensive collection of general reference books on genealogy.
- OHC should therefore maintain only a small and selective range of general reference material to assist the research of Oxfordshire family historians. Such material should cover:
  - guides to **types of resources** (e.g. newspapers, poor law records, transportation)
  - guides to the **interpretation of records**
  - the genealogy of **particular groups** (e.g. Soldiers, Romanies, Catholics).
  - the genealogy of particular **geographical areas** in which Oxfordshire researchers may have a legitimate interest, primarily focusing on English and UK genealogy, and to a much lesser extent on Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The constant migration to and from the capital city suggests that a small range of guides to London genealogy is also helpful. A handful of guides to Australian and American genealogy may be appropriate.
- British (*and to a lesser extent foreign*) forenames and surnames – works on origins, definitions and name changes should be collected.
- Peerage, baronetage and Knightage. OHC should maintain a wide ranging (but not exhaustive) collection of dictionaries and directories of British titled or landed families by authors such as Burke, Debrett, Lodge and Walford. It should be noted that Cokayne's *Complete peerage* is available through the Ancestry Library online resource.
- Through the provision of electronic datasets of national and international family history resources, OHC should maintain its ability to support individual users' family history research, whether based in Oxfordshire or beyond. Corporate subscriptions to Ancestry Library and Find My Past should be maintained, using the cost advantages of bulk access across the Oxfordshire library network. The American bias in Ancestry Library can be counterbalanced by FMP's stronger focus on British sources.
- OHC should use OCC subscriptions to online content through Ancestry Library and FMP to give access to key British resources for building genealogical research, such as: General Register Office birth, marriage and death indexes, Principal Probate Registry calendars 1858-1957, and the UK Census 1841-1911.

## 12. Virtual resources

- The explosion of local information published in digital form suggests that the service should acquire significant material in this format. The challenge of providing robust electronic storage has previously meant that digital acquisitions can only be achieved on a selective and piecemeal basis. The procurement in 2015 of G-Cloud approved digital storage will allow OHC to begin to fulfil its role in recording and capturing the changing Oxfordshire scene through the community's published electronic output.
- Information and publications may be in portable format (DVDs, CDs, etc.), as websites, or downloadable files from websites. Web archiving will depend not only on appropriate technical resources, but also on owners' permission to copy.
- The issue of permanence of particular digital media may have a bearing on the file format and carrier in which they are accepted.
- The capacity of OHC to collect born-digital resources depends on the procurement of G-Cloud (government approved) digital storage. Cloud storage should have the capacity to store our digital content, to control access to it (including selective access via public PCs on site), to link to electronic catalogues, and to ensure the automatic onward migration of vulnerable file formats. Procurement and installation of such a system is programmed for April 2015.

## 13. Archives

- **General rule on accepting archival or manuscript material.** Original manuscript material is not generally acquired for Local Studies collections at OHC<sup>##</sup> [see below], and there should be no attempt to break up the integrity of an archive group. The Archive collections of OHC are the proper place for the deposit or gift of archival material.
- **Surrogate copies.** Surrogate copies of selected resources have previously been made for OHC's Local Studies predecessor, Oxfordshire Studies, to meet popular demand or widen access to otherwise limited-access Oxfordshire material – e.g.
  - Oxfordshire and Berkshire tithe maps (National Archives) <sup>microfilm</sup>
  - Selected Top. Oxon. manuscript papers (Bodleian Library) <sup>microfilm</sup>
  - Henry Dryden mss. topographical notes and drawings (Northamptonshire Libraries) <sup>microfilm</sup>
  - Oxfordshire and north Berkshire estate maps held in Oxfordshire Record Office or in various Oxford colleges <sup>photographic copies</sup>
  - Percy Elford photographs of schools (Oxfordshire Record Office) <sup>digitised for easier access via Oxfordshire Images & Voices</sup>
- **Exception to rule.** Henry Taunt's original manuscript topographical notes belong properly in the Oxfordshire Images & Voices collection, where the 'archive' of his photographic material is held.
- **## Manuscript material in Local Studies collections.** Further isolated examples of manuscript or unique typescript material can already be found in the Local Studies collections of OHC – (search *Heritage Search* Local Studies shelfmark field for "mss") – which in many cases will have been unsuitable or too insubstantial for acquisition by OHC – Archives (formerly Oxfordshire Record Office), for example:
  - D.H. Allport papers on the history of Ramsden. Collection 1957-1969.



- Over Norton Scrapbook 1965 / compiled by the Women's Institute to commemorate the National Federation of Women's Institutes Golden Jubilee Year.
  - Collection of bills from Walkers Stores, Henley. Manuscript 1957.
  - W.H. Hallam. Letters about the Lockinge Trees and Scutchamore Knob 1947-1954.
- **Potential for overlap.** The potential for overlap between the 'published' and photographic collections of the service and the 'archival' collections of Oxfordshire Record Office must be understood. Specific comments and decisions are recorded above regarding such items as parish magazines, theatre programmes, printed maps, sale catalogues and photographs. For materials not specifically mentioned, a case-by-case decision may need to be made on the basis both of preserving the integrity of each collection and of respecting the needs of users of each collection.

#### 14. Relationship with Oxfordshire Library Service

- Following the removal of Oxfordshire Studies from Westgate in May 2011, and its merger with the Oxfordshire Record Office to form the Oxfordshire History Centre, Oxford Central Library has provided a free-standing Local & Family History area on its 2nd floor .
- The Central Library collections are based chiefly on duplicate and lending copies of books, and popular electronic sources. The objective is for a potential 80% of customers arriving at the Central Library to be satisfied by resources on-site 80% of the time. Central Library staff make referrals to the unique collections of OHC in all appropriate cases.
- Central Library supplies OHC with a monthly list of Local Studies acquisitions, including material which has appeared via branch libraries. OHC will also encourage branch Library Managers to inform OHC directly of any new publications of interest.
- The Local & Family History collections at Central Library are there to serve the majority of popular demand, while the printed Local Studies collections at Oxfordshire History Centre should be deemed to have a unique or 'preservation' status.
- Oxfordshire Library Service has agreed (Feb 2015) to support countywide subscriptions to online providers of family history and newspaper content, including access at OHC. OHC has begun (Dec 2014) a programme of training and tours for Library Service staff and is consulting (Feb 2015) on a programme of further promotional activities to enhance local and family history provision in Libraries and increase visits to OHC.

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