



Accreditation Award

Archive Service Name: Teesside Archives

Date of Panel meeting: 5/7/2018

Decision on award of accredited status: Provisional

Provisional approval is awarded for: 2 years

Accreditation number: 2018-32

Panel Narrative

The Panel recognised and congratulated Teesside Archives on a range of high-quality delivery across its remit. While there remain some significant legacy issues around cataloguing, the service has a clear and effective approach to its activities and to its core community. The service articulates its offer well and it was good to see the effort made to engage its multiple parent authorities in understanding the service's potential to deliver to meet a range of social needs.

However, the Panel also noted the ongoing and significant challenge posed by the premises occupied by the archives. While risks are managed well, the resource drain of maintaining a fundamentally unsuitable building reduces the service's capacity to deliver in other areas. The award is provisional in recognition of this issue, and the Panel hope to see development of a realistic partnership plan to deliver a new home for the service within the term of the provisional award.

1 Organisational Health

Please assess and comment on how far the applicant service meets each requirement or subrequirement

	Is requirement met?	Commentary on requirement
1.1 Mission Statement	Met	Teesside Archive Service is able to articulate its role to collect preserve and provide access to records both now and in the future that reflect the history of Teesside, working with both funding bodies an in partnership with other organisations to achieve this.
1.2 Governance	Met	<p>Teesside Archives is the joint archive service for Middlesbrough, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland and Hartlepool Borough Councils. The archive service is hosted by Middlesbrough Borough Council and there is a five year long service level agreement (from April 2017) to support the joint service arrangement and delivery of the archive service. A Joint Archive Services Committee composed of elected members oversee the archive service and there is direct liaison between the archive service and council officers of the four funding councils. Elected members of the joint service committee meet twice a year along with council officers and are briefed by the Archive Service Manager.</p> <p>Minutes of the Joint Archive Service Committee are published on the website of Middlesbrough Borough Council.</p> <p>The Archive Service Manager reports to the Community Infrastructure Manager at Middlesbrough Council.</p>
1.3 Forward planning	Met	<p>There is a three year forward plan 2018 -2022 in place and covers objectives both developmental and ongoing activities around collections management and audience development within the context of recent developments at the archive service. Collections management is a current priority for the archive service</p> <p>The plan has been developed by the archive service and presented at the last meeting of the Joint Archive Service Committee and will be reviewed annually. This will be a useful tool for</p>

		<p>demonstrating key areas of development for the archive service to elected members and respective council officers, capacity to deliver this and reporting on progress to achieve these.</p> <p>There is potential for strengthening forward planning further, for example by including strategic aims of the archive service, closer definition of objectives, and tighter planning around audience development.</p>
1.4 Resources: spaces	Partially met	<p>Teesside Archives occupies converted premises that were formerly a telephone exchange and Post Office and includes a grade two listed building</p> <p>The premises are spacious, but present challenges for delivery of the archive service, access, and the care of collections due to the nature of the building.</p> <p>The archive service has acquired additional expansion space previously located in a linked adjacent building and these repositories are now accessed via an entry point made between the buildings on the second floor. There is an estimated seven years expansion space calculated through empty spaces on shelving around the repositories but it is not clear how any large acquisition would impact on existing expansion space.</p> <p>There is a large reading room and research area that is adequate for current levels of usage and this can also accommodate group visits when the archive service is closed to researchers. There is a conservation studio on the first floor and staff office adjacent to the reading room.</p> <p>The fire service has previously raised concerns over the evacuation of the former education room located on the first floor and consequently this area is no longer used for events.</p> <p>There is agreement at both within the councils and by Joint Archive Services Committee that the current premises no longer provide suitable accommodation for the archive service, reflected</p>

		<p>in discussion to date around possible options for new premises. The three year Cultures and Communities Directorate delivery plan for 2019/2020 includes plans to look at funding options for a potential 'Middlesbrough History Centre'.</p> <p>Teesside Archive Service currently holds digital material on network drives or external hard drives or on various media within the collections themselves. The archive service aware of the risk to their digital collections and preferred options to enable their longer term preservation. The funding bodies through the Joint Archive Service Committee are aware of this need.</p> <p>This requirement is assessed as partially met to reflect the need for ongoing planning around new premises for Teesside Archives and for the provision of storage for born digital records.</p>
1.5 Resources: finance	Met	<p>Teesside Archive Service is funded through the four borough councils of Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton as outlined in the Service Level agreement. Budgets are agreed annually.</p> <p>Following a reduction in funding six years ago, funding levels have now stabilised.</p> <p>Where any expenditure cannot be covered by core funding, for example for born digital records, the archive service makes business cases for additional funding through the Joint Archive Services Committee</p> <p>The Archive Service Manager is responsible for managing the budget overall and for income generation at the archive service. Teesside Archives are planning to write a Fundraising Raising Strategy and this should help the archive service build on those areas of current success and identify new areas of income generation eg identification of potential external grant funding sources, developing the role of the Friends of Teesside Archives in fundraising on behalf on the archive service.</p>

<p>1.6 Resources: workforce</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>Teesside Archives is managed by the Archive Service Manager who is supported by a small team of staff, including an archivist, a conservator and part-time para professional staff who deal with research enquiries.</p> <p>The archive service plans to recruit to the post of Community Engagement Officer later this year and this will add needed capacity to this small team to take forward this area of activity.</p> <p>Training needs are identified through monthly team meetings and through the annual appraisal system.</p> <p>At and beyond induction, staff have access to corporate training through Middlesbrough Council and there are opportunities for both professional and paraprofessional staff both to attend training provided by Middlesbrough Council and develop professionally by attending groups and courses that in line with business needs and visiting other archive services.</p> <p>Professional training is funded from within the archive service itself and although there are some budget pressures, staff do take advantage of free training and travel resourcefully within the constraints of the budget.</p> <p>A clear and well documented staff procedural manual in place that covers all areas of activity at the archive service. This is a useful document for ensuring consistency of approach, and to support staff training and succession planning.</p> <p>A Volunteer Policy is now in place and this provides the framework for the recruitment and ongoing management of volunteers.</p> <p>Volunteers make a significant contribution to collections related activities, and include those recruited directly by the archive service and some members of the Friends of Teesside Archives.</p> <p>The archive service also offers work placement opportunities for those interested in a career in</p>
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		archives. There is a Friends of Teesside Archives Group and the archive service is working with the group to develop their fundraising capacity.
Overall view of Organisational Health	Met	The archive service demonstrates that it meets this module overall although are clear constraints on the archive service due to the nature of the premises.

2 Collections

Please assess and comment on how far the applicant service meets each requirement or subrequirement

	Is requirement met?	Commentary on requirement
2.1 Collections Management	Met	The Collections Management Policy demonstrates an understanding of an integrated approach to Collections Management across the small team of staff.
2.2.1 Collections development policy	Met	<p>The Collections Management Policy provides the framework for the development of collections held by Teesside Archives, covering development, appraisal, acquisition and transfer of collections, including collecting priorities. Collecting is carried out with reference to the legal framework and geographical area in which the archive service operates, identified themes and formats. Noteworthy collections reflect the industrial heritage of the area.</p> <p>Teesside Archives receives regular transfers of core records from its governing bodies and more recently larger adhoc transfers due to building closures.</p> <p>With the move towards electronic records, the archive service has raised the need for a more sustainable approach to the management of born digital records with its governing bodies.</p>
2.2.2 Collections development planning	Partially met	Although there is no formal collections development plan in place the archive service continues to acquire documents that are in line with the current Collections Management Policy as is demonstrated through recent accessions. These have included records from governing

		<p>bodies, public records and some business records.</p> <p>On the validation visit we discussed how the archive service has met with potential depositors of collections that the service is interested in acquiring and has liaised with depositors regarding access to collections for researchers.</p> <p>There is a legacy of largely un-appraised collections held at Teesside Archives that are re-appraised as resources allow.</p> <p>Historically a number of documents have been held at local libraries across the funding boroughs and where this is the case, archive service staff provide advice on the care of these collections.</p> <p>The archive service has identified a need to move towards more proactive collecting and to link this with outreach activity where appropriate.</p> <p>Although collections development does take place this requirement is partially met to reflect the limited formalised approach. A more formalised approach to collection development planning would strengthen and demonstrate any ongoing and future activity in this area.</p>
2.3.1 Collections information policy	Met	<p>The Collections Management Policy outlines the archive service's approach to creating information about collections from the point of accessioning through to cataloguing.</p> <p>Teesside Archive Service is faced by a number of legacy issues regarding collections information and in particular poor catalogue information, and although the archive service has now adopted best practice guidelines this has not always been the case. The archive service demonstrates a clear understanding of these legacy issues and this will help inform on future planning.</p> <p>A priority for the archive service is recording sufficient information about new and existing collections so that these can be searched by staff in response to research enquiries where cataloguing is not possible within existing</p>

		resources. Volunteers, under the supervision of the archivist, assist with listing activity. The archive is planning to move away from CALM view that cannot be accessed via the archive service's webpages effectively and to make information available through TNA's Discovery Platform.
2.3.2 Collections information planning	Partially met	<p>Improving collections information and making this available through TNA's discovery platform is a key area of activity for the archive service and is included in the forward planning documentation. This continues to build on progress achieved to date by the archive service to better record information about its archive collections.</p> <p>Cataloguing priorities are user driven.</p> <p>Legacy issues, including a high proportion of unlisted collections, and relatively low percentage of catalogue information available online mean there is considerable work yet to delivered in this area and this is reflected in the overall assessment for this requirement.</p>
2.3.3 Collections information procedures	Met	A well documented procedural manual is in place and this includes collections information procedures.
2.4.1 Collections care and conservation policy	Met	<p>The Collections Care and Conservation Policy provides a framework for the care of the collections with reference to national best practice guidelines and a risk management approach to the care of its collections including security, fire protection, environmental monitoring, pest management, and housekeeping, packaging and document handling.</p> <p>Conservation work is carried out by the professionally qualified conservator through a prioritised programme and a budget is available for the purchase of conservation and preservation materials.</p> <p>Whilst the archive service will accept born digital material, policy surrounding the management of born digital material is yet to be fully realised.</p> <p>Films are held at North East Film Archives.</p>
2.4.2 Collections care and conservation planning	Partially met	Collections care planning is included in the forward planning documentation with a clear

		<p>focus on the preservation of collections. Whilst much of this is linked to cataloguing work through the repackaging of collections and delivered with the assistance of volunteers, there are objectives around digitisation again linked to long-term preservation and access to the collections. Monitoring and maintaining suitable storage conditions for archive collections in the current premises present challenges and draw considerably upon staffing resource in this area.</p> <p>In the longer term, Teesside Archive Service is working with its funding bodies to identify options for new accommodation for the archive service. This is included in Middlesbrough Council's Culture and Communities Delivery Plan 2019/2020.</p> <p>The archive service is progressing a solution to the management of born digital records through ongoing discussion with its funding bodies and the Joint Archive Services Committee.</p> <p>This requirement is partially met to reflect ongoing progress around the move to new premises and ongoing planning around the management of born digital records.</p>
2.4.3 Collections care procedures	Partially met	<p>Archive Collections are housed in a series of repository areas (37 in total) located from the basement to the roof space of a converted 1930s telephone exchange and nineteenth century post office building. A few years ago the archive service expanded its repository space by taking over floor area of an adjacent property and this is accessed through an entrance on the second floor.</p> <p>On the validation visit, the assessment team asked to see a number of representative repository areas.</p> <p>Although clean and tidy, the repository areas pose many challenges for the archive service both in terms of maintaining a safe environment for its collections but also in terms of providing access. An aging goods lift is used by staff to transport documents to the reading room although some of</p>

		<p>the repositories can be accessed by stairs alone.</p> <p>The repositories present varying standards of accommodation but failing to meet modern standards for storing archive collections, for example in basement areas liable to flood; repository area with wooden flooring, flaking paint, shelving of various standards; repositories where difficulties in maintaining a stable environment within best practice guidelines; fourth floor repository where previous building work caused with a large crack in the plaster as the building settled.</p> <p>Maintaining a stable environment within current best practice guidelines can be problematic and in some areas achieved through the manual control of radiators, use of fans and dehumidifiers</p> <p>Whilst there is regular and ongoing maintenance to the building and the repository areas, and the archive service can demonstrate a good understanding of the building, its vulnerabilities and risks to collections, the building presents considerable challenges overall for the archive service and the future care of its collections, and has been recognised, is an unsustainable option in the longer term.</p>
2.4.4 Disaster and emergency planning	Partially met	<p>A Disaster Control Plan is in place. The Fire service are familiar with the plan and are familiar with the building following visits to Teesside Archives .</p> <p>The archive service has a contract with Harwell Drying Restoration Service and staff have undertaken training re hands on disaster training.</p> <p>The archive service is planning to test the plan as a desk exercise with relevant archive service staff.</p>
Overall view of Collections	Partially met	<p>Whilst the policy framework provides overall direction for planning, this module is assessed as partially met overall to reflect the progress around collections management and that yet to be achieved</p>

3 Stakeholders and their experiences

Please assess and comment on how far the applicant service meets each requirement or subrequirement

	Is requirement met?	Commentary on requirement
3.1 Access policy	Met	<p>Teesside Archive Service demonstrates an understanding of particular audience groups interested in their accessing collections and the provision of access to their collections across the boroughs of Teesside and beyond, for research, formal and in formal learning.</p> <p>The Access Policy defines the archive service's approach to providing access to collections through onsite and remote access, and a developing outreach and a formal learning offer. There is a stated commitment to reaching wider audiences through the development of the online catalogue, raising awareness of the archive service eg through social media and through greater partnership working.</p> <p>Access to collections is provided within the legislative framework within which the archive service operates, the conservation needs of collections, or in accordance with depositor agreements.</p> <p>Customer care is delivered within the wider Middlesbrough Customer Strategy framework whilst feedback procedures are in place at the archive service. Front line staff have visited other archive services to benchmark customer care delivery against service provision at Teesside Archives.</p>
3.2.1 Understanding audiences	Partially met	<p>Teesside Archives uses information about current users from existing sources such as visitor books, request slips, booking processes, remote enquiries and monitoring of social media, to understand the profile and interests of current users. Local government statistics are consulted to better understand the local communities in the Teesside area.</p> <p>The archive service has close links to heritage, cultural, and specialist interest groups within the local area, and liaises with as appropriate in developing and delivery activity in partnership.</p>

		<p>Developing new onsite accommodation would require further consultation with current and potential stakeholders and users of the service to better understand their needs to inform the planning and delivery of the future archive service</p>
3.2.2 Analysing audience needs	Met	<p>The archive service is able to demonstrate analysis of information collected to better understand their current users, particularly in terms of locality and interest in collections and this has informed on improving information about collections and focusing outreach, for example exhibitions, within particular local boroughs where current users are under represented.</p> <p>Discussion with current and potential partners similarly informs on planning.</p> <p>The nature of the building means that although the archive service can be used by those with mobility issues, access to the building is through a rear fire exit in the reading room and the archive service recognises that this is an unsatisfactory.</p> <p>Learning and outreach activities are developed to appeal to audiences across the boroughs of Teesside and in line with the school curriculum.</p> <p>Tailored talks delivered to special interest groups and content developed to support specific group sessions.</p>
3.2.3 Planning to meet audience needs	Met	<p>Access planning is included in the forward planning documentation and focuses on the development of online presence, delivery of its event and education offer, and developing a better understanding of its stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Teesside Archives is keen to ensure that audience across its funding boroughs are represented in its users groups.</p> <p>Developing the audience development plan will help the archive service consolidate and build on achievements to date in this area and underpin focused and prioritise future planning, broadening access and participation across the boroughs and beyond.</p>

		<p>The post of Community Engagement Officer is currently vacant resulting in reduced capacity to deliver in this area at the moment.</p>
3.3.1 Information on access	Partially met	<p>The archive service provides on-site access to collections three days a week with late opening one evening a week but will accommodate researchers outside published opening hours where appropriate. The reduction in opening hours has allowed the archive service to make progress with collections management activities, including making available information about collections.</p> <p>Finding aids and catalogues are available in the search room and front line staff provide advice to researchers and assistance in interpreting the complex cataloguing system.</p> <p>Although the archive service has recently acquired some modern reading room furniture, the premises are generally dated and would require investment to modernise the current accommodation and buildings.</p> <p>Teesside Archives provides a remote enquiry service and research service for those unable to visit in person. Functional website pages provide information on accessing collections and some catalogue information can be accessed through TNA's discovery.</p> <p>Some collections are digitised and are available through commercial partnership projects or through Flickr and some microfilmed material is available through local libraries across the funding boroughs.</p> <p>This requirement is partially met to reflect the limited availability on online catalogue information about collections.</p>
3.3.2 Access procedures	Met	<p>Standard access procedures are in place and are communicated appropriately. Researchers must sign in the registration book.</p>
3.3.3 A variety of means of access	Met	<p>Teesside Archive provide a variety of methods to provide access collections and include access for</p>

		one to one research and volunteering. The archive service also provides wider engagement opportunities including those delivered in partnership, for example a programme of talks, including to local university students; an established education offer to primary schools, and by linking into and by participating as a partner events within the local areas and beyond, for example through Tees Valley World War Once, and in partnership with Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art.
Overall view of Stakeholders and their experiences	Met	Teesside Archives is actively seeking to broaden its access offer across all boroughs covered by the joint archive service.

Key Findings

1	There current premises place significant difficulties on the archive service both in the delivery of the service and more evidently on the ongoing care of the collections. Whilst these demands can managed by the archive service in the longer term, Teesside Archives, along with its funding bodies, is encouraged to progress strategic planning around improved before these demands become more critical and unmanageable.
2	Teesside Archives and its staff demonstrate a clear understanding of legacy issues around collections management, including cataloguing of archive collections and the policy framework will support ongoing progress in this area. In this case, the decision to reduce opening hours for onsite research has maximised the available staffing resource to make progress in this area.
3	The archive service has developed links with organisations including the library network, across the boroughs represented by the joint archive service and this has helped support the delivery of outreach activities within this area.
4	Developing new premises and any consultation undertaken as part of this process would raise the profile of the archive amongst its stakeholder group

	and generate further interest in the service and its collections.
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Feedback on actions for applicants

This section lists required and improvement actions resulting from the assessment. Required actions need to be addressed to meet accreditation in future. Improvement actions point to areas of future service development.

	Required/improvement?	Requirement number(s) to which it relates	Details
1	Required action	1.4, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2	Continue engaging and consulting with funding bodies and stakeholder groups of Teesside Archives regarding the development of new accommodation for the archive service, ensuring the needs of all groups are represented in decisions around this.
2	Required action	1.4, 2.3,3.1, 3.2	Ensure from the early planning stages that new accommodation for the archive service reflects that new accommodation reflects the needs of the archive service and its future delivery and its stakeholders
3	Required action	1.4, 2.4	Continue working with governing and funding bodies to develop a solution for the long-term preservation of born digital material.
4	Improvement action	1.3, 2.2.2	Consider whether forward planning can be strengthened overall, including developing a more formalised approach to collections development planning.
5	Improvement action	2.3.2	Continue to improve collections information and making this available through online platforms, looking for external funding opportunities as appropriate
6	Improvement action	1.5	Develop a fundraising strategy to consolidate and expand on activity to date, including working with the Friends Group to develop their fundraising capacity and looking into potential grant funding to support cataloguing and collections care work.
7	Improvement action	2.4.2	Consider undertaking another preservation survey to highlight any

			issues with care of the collections in the current premises.
8	Improvement action	2.4.2, 2.4.3	Continue monitoring and managing risks associated with the building to ensure the care of collections
9	Required action	2.4.4	Test the disaster control plan as a desk top exercise as planned.
10	Improvement action	3.2	Develop the audience development strategy as planned and use this to develop analysis of current and potential users of the archive service and ensuring that feedback from events and