

JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 7th May, 2025
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Mandela Room, Middlesbrough Town Hall

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Fire Evacuation Procedure

In the event the fire alarm sounds attendees will be advised to evacuate the building via the nearest fire exit and assemble at the Bottle of Notes opposite MIMA.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes of the Joint Archives Committee - 5 March 2025 3 - 8

5. Tees Valley Heritage Feasibility Report (Draft) 9 - 344

6. Digital Preservation - Briefing Paper 345 - 352

7. Any other urgent items which in the opinion of the Chair, may be considered

Charlotte Benjamin
Director of Legal and Governance Services

Town Hall
Middlesbrough
Monday 28 April 2025

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors C Male (Chair), N Cooke, C Richardson and P Storey

Assistance in accessing information

Should you have any queries on accessing the Agenda and associated information please contact Claire Jones, 01642 729112, claire_jones@middlesbrough.gov.uk

JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Joint Archives Committee was held on Wednesday 5 March 2025.

PRESENT: Councillors C Male, R Cook, U Earl and P Storey

OFFICERS: Tara Connor, Christopher Di-Niro, Ruth Hobbins, Richard Horniman, Claire Jones, Gaye Kirby and Marnie Ramsey

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors S Nelson and C Richardson

24/52 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and explained the fire evacuation procedures.

24/53 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item / Nature of Business
Cllr R Cook	Non-pecuniary	TVCA Cabinet Member

24/54 **MINUTES OF THE JOINT ARCHIVES COMMITTEE - 4 FEBRUARY 2025, 14 JANUARY 2025 AND 2 OCTOBER 2024**

The minutes of the Joint Archive Committees held on 4 February 2025, 14 January 2025 and 2 October 2024 were submitted and approved as correct records.

24/55 **TEESSIDE ARCHIVES EXECUTIVE REPORT**

The Head of Culture and Archives Manager were in attendance and presented the Executive report to the Committee.

The report outlined the following:

Collections

The largest deposits of this period were plans of Ayresome Ironworks (Gjers Mills) and plans from British Railways Property Board. The plans covered varying time periods and required conservation before they would be accessible to the public. The listing of the records of the Teesside Federation of the WI that were received following the closure of the St. Mary Centre in Middlesbrough had been completed

The annual accession return had been completed and submitted to the National Archives in January.

Restore had confirmed their intention of moving the collection to a new facility in County Durham. The Place of Deposit Manager at the National Archives was required to visit the site to ensure it could be appointed as a Place of Deposit for Public Records. The visit was scheduled for 11 March and included the Archives Manager and Conservator and the National Archives Engagement Manager for the region.

Public Access and Outreach

The service had continued to be busy. The Community Engagement Officer had been successful in securing some small grants and had provided a wide range of events and activities that appealed to a broad audience. The Archives Supervisor who managed the volunteers had completed her MA in Curating with Teesside University and had assisted with engagement sessions. The volunteers were valued and provided a great deal of assistance to the service

Conservation and Preservation

The Conservator had been working on a number of collections, reacting to new collections and also to the requests from members of the public and staff. Work completed included;

- Assessed and repackaged a collection of 20 photograph albums and almost 800 photographs showing the ICI Nylon works.
- Three large maps of the Teesside area were fully cleaned and repaired prior to being digitised.
- The Federation of the Women’s Institute had deposited their large collection of documents, scrapbooks and photographs, many of which required stabilising and repackaging to protect them for the future.
- A large collection of rolled engineering drawings created by Gjers Mills which showed Ayresome Ironworks had been received. All required extensive cleaning and some required full conservation.
- Disaster planning training for the Archive staff had been led by the Conservator
- The Conservator attended a Symposium at Durham on ethics and decision-making. Talks with demonstrations of conservation work had been given to groups of 11-12yr olds with a future careers theme, which showed options for their future.

Marketing and Communication

There had been requests to include material from the collections in exhibitions in Rome and South Georgia, illustrating the wide reach and appeal of the archives. Teesside Archives had supplied images for use in association with the recent royal visit and maintained a regular presence through content shared on social media.

Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators were presented:

In person visits to the archives from September 2024 – January 2025:

Local Authority	No. of Visitors	% of total
Hartlepool	16	3.1%
Middlesbrough	259	49.8%
Redcar & Cleveland	100	19.2%
Stockton	60	11.5%
Other UK	84	16.2%
Rest of the world	1	0.2%
TOTAL	520	100%

Total number of document issues (Sep 24 – Jan 25): 924

Total number of enquiries (Sep 24 – Jan 25): 1,717

Engagement Activity delivered by Local Authority from September 2024 – January 2025

Local Authority	No. of People	% of total people
Hartlepool	25	3.1%
Middlesbrough	343	42.0%
Redcar & Cleveland	218	26.7%
Stockton	97	11.9%
Tees Valley	133	16.3%
Other	0	0%
TOTAL	816	100%

N.B Stockton Reference Library exhibition numbers (Last Orders) had been removed from the figures as only library user numbers (9,009) were known.

AGREED that the report was noted.

24/56

TEESSIDE ARCHIVES BUDGET 2025/26

The Head of Culture presented a report which sought the approval of the 2025/26 budget for Teesside Archives. It was explained that the proposal included a 3% pay award for staff, rent increases and a slight reduction in storage costs.

The Local Authority contributions were also presented within the report.

AGREED that the proposed budget for 2025/26 was approved.

24/57

TEES VALLEY HERITAGE FEASIBILITY UPDATE

The Head of Culture presented an update on the Tees Valley Heritage Feasibility Study.

In February 2024, Focus Consultants 2010 LLP were appointed by the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) as the lead consultants to deliver the development of the Tees Valley heritage sector vision, feasibility study and business plan. In collaboration with the project team, consisting of Purcell Architects, Blue Sail Marketing and archive consultant Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan, Focus reviewed the existing heritage offer and developed a comprehensive, compelling and sustainable heritage vision for the region. This included finding a long-term solution for the Teesside Archives.

To date, significant progress had been made through:

- Extensive stakeholder engagement across the heritage, culture, and local authority sectors.
- Thematic analysis identifying emerging themes and priorities
- Market appraisal to understand current positioning and future opportunities.
- Visioning workshops to explore ambition, delivery mechanisms, and the role of the archives.
- Development of emerging options for heritage delivery mechanisms and the future of the Teesside Archives.

The independent assessment of the Teesside Archives service was noted as a professionally run archive service that had significant potential to serve the Tees Valley region given the quality of its collections, the aspirations and knowledge of its staff and the possible opportunities with other heritage and cultural activity in the region. However, it was noted as severely constrained by several serious factors including:

- A fragmented and disinterested governance and funding environment
- A lack of suitable and sufficient accommodation in which to serve the public, work effectively, collect and store Teesside's archival heritage, access collections, generate income.
- The lack of digital preservation system to assure the survival of Teesside's modern experience as captured in digital records.
- A very tight funding environment which constrains all public services.
- A restricted public service offer, low or no profile with funders and residents, and limited relationships

The report considered the future of the Archives Service; costings, assessments of different building options, case studies and digital preservation.

It was noted that digital preservation was the digital equivalent of an archive function for paper records and was fundamental in ensuring the long-term survival, authenticity and accessibility of digital records through a digital preservation infrastructure and was a key element of Archive Service Accreditation.

Teesside Archives did not have a digital preservation system. A previous bid by Teesside Archives for installation and use of the Preservica system was rejected by the funding boroughs as unaffordable in the long term. In the meantime, the boroughs had no means of ensuring the survival of their records, fulfilling their legal obligations under the Local Government Act 1972 to make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belonged to or were in the custody Teesside Archives had sought to undertake basic activity such as creating a Digital Asset Register but was unable to undertake more meaningful activity. The Local Authorities needed to invest in a digital preservation system to secure their own records and preserve the modern historical records of the region.

Following the application to remain an Accredited Service, Teesside Archives received confirmation in November 2024 that it had retained its accredited status. This status was provisional, and its retention depended on Teesside Archives being able to satisfy some requirements by 7 November 2026 and on keeping the Accreditation Panel apprised of developments at the service in the interim.

The Head of Culture advised that the final report is expected at the end of March 2025. Members were of the view that an additional meeting of the Joint Archives Committee should be arranged in order to discuss the findings of the Tees Valley Heritage Study.

AGREED that:

- The information was received and noted.
- The Archives Manager would draft a letter on behalf of the Committee, to the Secretary of State/Department for Culture, Media and Sport in regards to potential partnerships/guidance on statutory responsibilities of public bodies and the maintaining of documents.
- A meeting of the Joint Archives Committee would be scheduled for 7 May 2025, 5pm to discuss the final report of the Tees Valley Heritage Study.
- Tees Valley Combined Authority and Teesside University would be invited to the meeting.

24/58

INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Culture presented a report to inform the Committee of the interim arrangements of the Teesside Archives Service.

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) for the Teesside Archives Service was extended to 31 March 2025 with agreement from the Joint Archives Committee (JAC), whilst the service awaited the outcomes from the heritage feasibility work which was expected to complete in October/November 2024.

The work had been delayed and it was proposed that the committee agreed to a further one-year extension to the existing Service Level Agreement to 31 March 2026, via a Deed of Variation, to allow time for proposals around the future governance of the service to be considered.

It was noted that previous discussions had taken place in respect of making changes to the existing SLA. However, as the Joint Archives Committee was an executive function of the Council, changes would require an approval process beyond the authority of the Executive Members of JAC. It was suggested that a reasonable approach was to delay any fundamental changes until the requirements to support a new vision and operating model for Teesside Archives had been achieved.

The current staffing provision for the Teesside Archives Service was provided in the report, equating to 1.2 FTE per Local Authority. Due to the maternity leave of an Archivist which commenced in March 2025, a flexible arrangement had been adopted to increase the hours of the Archive Assistant and Community Engagement Officer as and when required to provide support for the service.

In addition to the existing staffing establishment, the Archives were likely to require a full-time Digital Engagement/Archivist post to work on bringing born digital records into the archives, as well as managing the public-facing digital platforms including the procurement of a new cataloguing system. Future staffing arrangements would be considered in the context of the new operational model to be agreed by JAC further to receipt of the Heritage Feasibility report and costings.

The Committee were advised that the five-year Restore contract for storage of the Teesside Archives collection would end in July 2026. There was provision to extend the contract up to a maximum of five 12- month periods, however the procurement framework allowed a maximum length contract of seven years in total i.e. to July 2028.

The Committee was advised that it was unlikely to have secured a new Archive facility with on-site storage by July 2026 and therefore the service had begun to explore storage options for an interim period and conversations had begun with other partners locally to assess if there was a desire for shared storage space. Proposals would be presented to the JAC in October 2025.

Once a direction of travel for the Archives Service had been achieved, the service would discuss potential financial support with prospective funders (e.g. TVCA, National Lottery

Heritage Fund).

AGREED that:

- The information was received and noted.
- The Service Level Agreement was extended to 31 March 2026.

24/59

ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED

None.

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Teesside Archives – Joint Archives Committee Meeting

Wednesday 7 May 2025

Digital Preservation Briefing Paper

Overview:

Following the discussion at the last JAC meeting, this briefing paper has been produced by the Archives Manager and Head of Culture to provide more details on the investment required into the Archives Service to support the storage and preservation of born digital and other digitised material held by Teesside Archives.

The need to address this issue is pressing, as the volume of material that is now being generated in 'born digital' format is accelerating. Public Records and the core records of the Teesside boroughs are now being created in this way, and they form the statutory element of the Archive Service. Furthermore, The National Archives has updated its Accreditation requirements and the importance of the ability of an Accredited archive service to look after digital material is now a fundamental requirement which we are not adequately addressing at the current time.

In addition to managing archival records, an investment in digital preservation would also enable material to be housed for partner services like museums, as well as being central to the success of the proposed 'Vessel' facility which is identified in the Tees Valley Heritage Feasibility Report as a centre for the digitisation of collections.

The proper safe keeping in archives of born digital records is a statutory function of the Archives Service. The purpose of this briefing paper is to outline the current challenges around the storage, management, accessibility and long-term preservation of digital records, and to outline a potential solution to this challenge.

Context:

Digitisation is important to heritage-based services for both preservation and access. Here in the Tees Valley, the role of digital material is central to the new vision outlined in the Tees Valley Heritage Vision & Feasibility Report which proposes a way forward for the Archives Service through 'The Vessel'. In summary, digitisation should:

- Increase external access to heritage materials
- Enhance visibility and outreach
- Help preserve originals
- Improve internal access

Drivers for digitisation and digital preservation include:

- Research
- Value to the public

- Physical condition of originals
- Technological obsolescence (NB we have already experienced loss of digital files and analogue cassette tapes are at high risk of loss)

Challenges around digitisation and digital preservation include:

- Equipment
- Space
- Time
- Staffing
- The requirement of good digital infrastructure (see below)
- Environmental impact

Doing nothing poses a number of risks. The service is already struggling to keep digital files on hard drives that risk loss of records. Digital formats become outdated and without an appropriate digital preservation system information will become unreadable in the future.

Option for Discussion:

Having articulated the need for a digital repository, Preservica has been identified as the best system to meet those needs. Thanks to New Burdens funding (current balance of £115,991), the service currently has the funds to purchase this system and support the running costs for 3 years, which is the minimum initial contract – total cost: £66,810.

We would also require an investment in staff resource and would recommend an initial one-year fixed contract for a Digital Archivist to manage the set up and initial population of Preservica, which could also be funded through New Burdens – total cost: £43,172.

As shown in Table 1, this would result in a total investment from the New Burdens fund of £109,982 leaving a small balance of £6,009 to cover any contingencies that may arise.

However, this investment would only get us so far. There would need to be a commitment from the partners in the Archives Service to support the ongoing annual cost of Preservica beyond Year 3 (£15,250 pa). There would also be an ongoing requirement for staff resource beyond Year 1 to manage the system and the archiving of digital records. We estimate this to be £25,000 pa, which would equate to circa 22 hours per week. The hours required would be determined by what the partners agree around the system's use, the records it will receive from each LA/other partners, etc.

Appendix 1 includes a full breakdown of costs from Preservica.

Financial Considerations:

Table 1 below gives an indication of the costs over the first three years and summaries proposals for where the funding would need to come from.

Table 1: Digital Preservation Costs (Years 1-3)

	Preservica	Staffing	Total	Propose Funded from
Year 1	£36,310	£43,172 (Grade I, top of scale, plus on costs)	£79,482	£79,482: New Burdens
Year 2	£15,250	£25,000 - Investment in ongoing staff resource would be required – TBC depending on the number of partners depositing records.	£40,250	£15,250: New Burdens £25,000: Archive Partners
Year 3	£15,250	£25,000 – As above	£40,250	£15,250: New Burdens £25,000: Archive Partners
Total	£66,810	£93,172	£159,982	£109,982: New Burdens £50,000: Archive Partners

As detailed above, the New Burdens grant of £115,991 can be used to fund the following:

- £66,810 acquisition of the Preservica system, including 3 years running/maintenance costs.
- £43,712 for a full-time Grade I Digital Archivist for one year.

An additional £25,000 pa would need to be found in years 2 and 3 for staffing. From year 4 onwards, the costs would increase to £40,250 pa to include the annual Preservica fee. These costs would need to be funded from a mix of increased income to the service which may arise from the implementation of the system, the introduction of new partners and/or a review of the current staffing structure. This is to ensure that the implementation and ongoing costs associated with it are deemed to be cost neutral to the OLA's.

Table 2 below shows the cost of the increase to the OLA's should funding not be found from other sources. This is based on the Year 4 onwards costs, as these are the highest.

Table 2: Additional Cost to LA's from Year 4

Authority	Cost	Cost + Uplift
Hartlepool	6,637.23	7,168.20
Middlesbrough	9,849.18	10,637.11
Redcar & Cleveland	9,728.43	10,506.70
Stockton	14,035.18	15,157.99
	40,250.00	43,470.00

Potential Impacts:

Topic	Impact
Financial	One off cost of the Preservica system, plus an ongoing annual cost to run/maintain the system. Ongoing staff cost of managing/preserving digital records. Depletion of New Burdens funding which, when required, has been used to subsidise the service.
Legal	Meeting the statutory duty of the four Local Authorities to retain and make available public records. Legal contract to be put in place with Preservica.
Risks	Risks of doing nothing: Loss of local authority records / failure to meet statutory duty re the retention of public records. Key information is lost that could negatively impact on the councils in the future e.g. their ability to prove key decisions were taken, due process followed, etc. Failure to meet the National Archives Accreditation standard. Wider risks: Failure to secure the additional investment required to manage digital Preservation beyond the initial 3-year contract. Possible rising service costs due to recontract with Restore (due July 2026).

Next Steps:

The service has taken the first step on the digital preservation journey by creating a Digital Materials Register. It has identified 20,976 files or 248.12GB of 'born digital' data. In addition, there is a quantity of digitised material, currently less than 1TB, but expected to grow in future. Should we get to the point where we have more than 1TB of data, Preservica would charge an extra £460 pa for storage.

Further work needs to be undertaken with LA partners to identify where the additional investment will come from, in order to be able to bring a formal proposal back to JAC. Opportunities should be explored through the proposals detailed in the Heritage Feasibility Report and through conversations with potential partners including TVCA and the LA museum services.

If the additional investment is identified, a formal proposal could be brought back to JAC in October.

Gaye Kirby
Head of Culture
Middlesbrough Council

Ruth Hobbins
Archives Manager
Middlesbrough Council

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Digital Preservation Appendix 1: Preservica Costs

	Issue / aspect	Professional	Professional Plus
No of staff users	Number of staff able to use system at the same time (no restrictions on public users)	unlimited	
Total storage space	The more space the more content that can be held	1TB AWS S3	1TB AWS S3
Infrastructure	Cloud-based allows admin access from a laptop/PC Critical data is located in UK for GDPR purposes	Cloud based managed hosting/backup/recovery, shared multi-tenant cloud AWS EU Dublin or UK London	
	Flexible & fast ingest tools (Ingest Outlook, Gmail, PastPerfect, CONTENTdm, DSpace, Disk images and BagIt)	up to 30Tb and up to 1 million digital files	up to 50Tb and up to 2 million digital files Rest API
	Cloud Escrow Service, 100% data durability guarantee	n/a	additional fee
	<i>Optional</i> IIIF Viewer	[£3,000pa]	included
	<i>Optional</i> Gov Apps additional fee	additional fee	additional fee
	Automated records retention management & disposition	n/a	included
Axiell Collections integration	Can the solution be integrated with Axiell collections management systems – typically through an API.	£1,100 pa	included
Cost (per annum)	What are the annual costs	£15,250 pa	£35k
Additional storage cost	How much would it cost for 1TB storage per year	£1210 (S3) or £460 (Glacier)	£270 (S3) or £60 (Glacier)
Support	Accelerated Success Package (Professional Plus only)	Unlimited	Unlimited; Accelerated Success Package [£12,500]
Startup costs (yr 1 only)	One-off costs incurred in Year 1 Catalogue integration with Axiell Collections	£3,240 (one-off)	integration included
SharePoint	Integration – <i>Preserve365</i> add-on	n/a	additional fee depends on existing MS license
Total cost	Total cost for 5TB (S3) for 3 years including Axiell integration	£66,810	£108,240
Contract	3 years is minimum contract		
Website	Further information, see https://preservica.com/pricing and https://preservica.com/professional		

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Digital Preservation Appendix 1: Preservica Costs