



Shire of West Arthur Council Policy – Community Archives

Policy Number	C3.5 Community
Policy Title	Community Archives
Related Legislation	Local Government Act 1995 (WA) State Records Act 2000 (WA) Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972. Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) Copyright Act 1968 National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries 1.5
Strategic Outcome Supported	Outcome 5.2 - Accountable service delivery by Council and well trained, motivated, customer focussed staff
Adopted by Council	20 May 2020
Review	Manager Community Services, three yearly basis.

1. Objective

To outline the role of the Shire and the Community in the establishment and management of a Community Archive Collection.

2. Scope

This policy applies to documents, objects or other items that document the cultural heritage of community groups or organisations with this Shire of West Arthur. It does not apply to records required for the daily management of community groups or organisations (such as financial records or documentation relating to incorporation).

3. Definitions

Deaccessioning: the administrative process of removing an item from the collection.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 What can be included in the Community Archives

The Community Archives will include historical documents and items from volunteer groups, clubs and organisations within the Shire of West Arthur. These groups may include craft groups, sports clubs, historical groups, church groups or other volunteer organisations.

Items stored in the Community Archives for each group can include (but are not limited to):

- Minute books
- Reports
- Ledgers
- Photographs
- Letters

4.2 Method of Acquisition

Community archives will initially comprise boxes currently stored by the Shire. Once the Archives are established, the Shire will advise other community groups that the

option for storing historical items is available and then Community Archives will be acquired by donation from the community groups on an as required basis.

Acquisition may be limited by storage space available. This will need to be determined as Archives are sorted and stored. The method of acquisition will need to be modified once the initial influx of material is catalogued.

4.3 Acquisition Criteria

The Shire of West Arthur will consider the following criteria when assessing items for inclusion in the Community Archives:

- **Relevance** - The Shire will only retain items that relate to the community groups purpose and that have a historical importance in describing the cultural fabric of the group.
- **Significance** - Priority is given to objects which are significant for their historic, aesthetic, scientific/research or social/spiritual value.
- **Provenance** – Only items related to volunteer community groups based in the Shire of West Arthur will be included in the community archives.
- **Condition, intactness, integrity** - The condition of the object must be taken into consideration when assessing material for inclusion in the Archives. Badly damaged material will not normally be accepted into the collection.
- **Interpretive Potential** - Items that tell a story that adds to historical understanding of the group or organisation will be included.
- **Rarity** - Items may be prioritised if they are rare examples of a particular kind of object.
- **Representativeness** - Items may be prioritised if they are an excellent representative example of a particular kind of object
- **Duplications** - Items that duplicate items already in the archives will not be accepted unless they are of superior condition and/or historic value. In such a case the duplicate may be considered for deaccessioning.
- **Resource implications** - The Shire will considered its responsibility in relation to items that have highly specialised conservation, storage and display needs and the ability of the personnel to care for these items and the financial resources that maybe required to house such items. The Community Archives will largely be document based. Larger objects (such as uniforms) may be considered for inclusion in the Betty Brown Historical Centre.
- **Legal Requirements** – The Shire will only accept items where the legal ownership is transferred to the Shire.

4.4 Documentation and Record Keeping

The Shire shall at all times to maintain an effective documentation system in accordance with the Community Archives Collection Procedures Manual, 2020 (draft). All documentation including Archive Deposit Forms, Archive Agreement forms, Acquisition register and Database will be kept at the Shire office.

4.5 Storage and Conservation

The Community Archives will be stored in the Shire strong room in the Shire office. Additional storage maybe required and this will need to be determined after the initial establishment of the Archives.

4.6 Loans

The Shire will consider lending material to the relevant community group if requested by the community group that originally deposited the items in the Community

Archives. Decisions relating to the borrowing of material will be made by the Shire representatives and will be undertaken on a case by case basis. The Shire will consider the length of time of the loan on a case by case basis.

4.7 Deaccessioning and Disposal

An object can be deaccessioned from the Community Archives collection if:

- it does not comply with the current collection policy of the Shire;
- it is damaged beyond repair;
- the conservation and storage costs for it are beyond the means of the Shire or the community group to which the object original belonged;
- it is a lesser quality duplicate of an object the Centre already owns;
- it lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification or to establish its relevance to the collection; and
- a substantiated request for the return of the object to the original community group is received. This could be the return of sacred material to Indigenous peoples.

Prior to an item being deaccessioned from the collection, the item identified for removal from the collection must be discussed with the relevant community group if it is still in operation, or a past member of that group if it is no longer in existence.

The community group's overseeing committee must discuss the relevance of the object and advise the Shire on the appropriateness of the items inclusion in the Community Archives taking into consideration the criteria stated above before it is disposed of.

Once an item has been deemed no longer suitable for inclusion in the Community Archives it should be returned to the community group if this group still exists, wherever possible. If the community group no longer exists then every effort should be made to contact a past member of the community group to discuss the item. If after a thorough search this is impossible, the following procedures should be followed in the order outlined below:

1. Transferred to another appropriate institution;
2. Sold by public auction, where appropriate;
3. Used as an educative/interpretive tool; or
4. Destroyed or recycled if appropriate.

In the event that the Shire needs to close the Community Archives, a resolution of council will be required.

5. Associated Documents

Community Archives Collection Procedures (draft), 2020