Bedfordshire Archives Service
Guidelines for depositing digital archives

Bedfordshire Archives Service collects archives in digital form. However, we are limited in the type of digital files we can store, access and preserve.

Software and file formats

• Ideally you should use an open source software product.

• If you don't have access to open source software, use a very commonly used operating system and/or product such as Windows and Word, Excel etc. **Contact us** to see whether we can accept the files you are using. If you use a Mac please ensure that files are saved as PC friendly.

• An alternative file format is .PDF (portable document format) created with Adobe Acrobat.

• Image files should ideally be TIFFs, although some cameras will only produce Jpegs. TIFFs should be uncompressed. Images should be the best resolution with the least compression possible.

Sound files should be .WAV (Waveform audio file format). If this is not how the files were originally created please talk to us before saving them as WAV.

If you use any other form of software or file format please speak to us to see whether you can save the files in a format that we can accommodate, or whether we can suggest somewhere else for you to deposit your files.

Storage media
What should I store it on, and use to bring it to the Record Office?
We are unlikely to keep the storage media but will instead transfer the files to our servers so that digital preservation can be practiced more easily. However these are the possible transfer methods we can take.
- CD ROM, USB stick, 3 inch floppy disc, external harddrive - transfer of files needs to be arranged with our IT department and can take some time to do. Please **contact us** archive@bedford.gov.uk in advance to arrange this.
- By a service such as Wetransfer.com
- By e-mail. We have a limit to the size of files we can take as attachments (currently 10MB) so please send in batches and contact us in advance to make sure we know what to expect.

Metadata (information about data)
Information you need to include about a digital archive
• What version of software (e.g. Excel 2003) and operating system (e.g. Windows 7) was used to create it?
• When was it created?

- Who created it?
- Description of any images (e.g. details of who/what/where/when).
- Is the information available elsewhere, (e.g. on a web site)?

Please see a our digital deposit form, which you should endeavour to complete before you contact us about depositing your files so that you know that you have all the necessary information to hand.

In addition, for digital surrogates (copies of original items held elsewhere)
- Who owns the original, and are they the copyright owner? If the copyright owner has not given permission for the copy or transfer we will not be able to take the file.
- Is the owner happy for the image to be made available to the public?
- Are there any copyright restrictions on its use?
- Physical description of the original, e.g. size, glass plate negative?
- What digitisation equipment was used, e.g. scanner?
- Who did the digitising?
- When was it digitised?
- At what resolution?

Digital sound recordings

It is unlikely that we will take any sound recordings other than oral history recordings however please contact us to discuss if you have other digital recordings.

Oral history recordings must meet approved standards (see the Oral History Society's website for advice http://www.ohs.org.uk/) and must be accompanied by permission forms to enable the use of the material by researchers. If any material needs to be redacted from the access copy of the recording it is the responsibility of the depositor to ensure this prior to deposit. Full transcripts and summaries should also be provided by the depositor at the time of deposit.

Digital moving images

Currently Bedfordshire Archives Service does not take any moving images (film/video) due to insufficient capacity and knowledge to deal with such material and because it believes these to be better placed with the East Anglian Film Archive.

Preservation and Access

In order to ensure the long-term survival of digital archives, Bedfordshire Archives needs to make multiple copies for preservation purposes, and to migrate data to updated versions of software as necessary.

We will also provide printed or electronic copies to researchers in the search room. We may also make them available online with the owner's permission.