

Quick Briefing note for the BMC midlands meeting of what things need to be archived by a club

Archiving is essential for preserving the history and records of a private club. The following guide and briefing notes are based upon:

- A consultation with the Archivist for Shropshire County Council. I am grateful for her advice and knowledge. She is happy to be contacted for future advice and reference.
- I read the full policies of the council for the archiving and retention of records and heritage materials
- I consulted on the legal framework for data collection and retention.

The key message is that each club needs to write explicitly in its constitution where ownership of the club materials including photos etc lays. Presumptively unless explicitly loaned to a club all materials belong to the club membership as a starting point. The second message as it relates to data protection is not one of access but rather clubs should have a good reason for retaining any personal data and should have a clear policy of disposing of personally held data. Typically a timeframe for disposing of data should be clear.

Tips

Start Small: Begin by assessing the scope of your club's records. If your holdings are not extensive, focus on essential items first.

Draft an Archives Policy Statement: Create a policy that outlines how your club will manage its records. This statement should cover aspects like acquisition, access, preservation, and disposal.

Acquire and Accession the Contents: Collect relevant materials, such as meeting minutes, membership lists, event programs, newsletters, photographs, and any other documents related to the club's activities.

Gather Information About the Collection: Document details about each item, including dates, creators, and context. This information will be valuable for future reference.

Analyze Contents of the Collection: Understand the significance of each record. Some items may be historically important, while others may have limited value.

Organize Contents of the Collection: Arrange the materials logically. Use folders, boxes, or digital folders to keep related items together.

Use Archival Containers: Store physical records in acid-free folders and boxes. Ensure proper labelling for easy retrieval.

Provide a Good Storage Environment: Maintain a stable environment with controlled temperature and humidity to prevent deterioration.

Conserve Materials: Address any damage or deterioration promptly. Consult professionals if needed.

Create Catalog Records and Finding Aids: Develop a catalog record for each item and create a finding aid (a guide to the collection) for researchers.

Protect, Authenticate, Appraise, and Insure the Collection: Safeguard the records, verify their authenticity, assess their value, and consider insurance coverage.

Establish a Digital Preservation Program: If your club has digital records, implement strategies for their long-term preservation.

am I legally obliged to archive materials in a private club

Legal obligations regarding archiving materials in a private club can vary based on factors such as your location, the type of club, and any applicable laws or regulations. It's essential to consult legal professionals or seek advice specific to your situation.

Bylaws and Regulations: Review your club's bylaws or governing documents. They may outline requirements related to record-keeping, archiving, and document retention.

Historical Significance: If your club has historical significance or cultural importance, preserving its records could be considered a responsibility to the community. *The Archivist for Shropshire said that they would be happy to archive such records and materials relevant to their area. I therefore assume other areas I the country would do likewise. This would assist greatly with space etc.*

Privacy and Data Protection: Some records may contain sensitive information about members, and proper archiving ensures compliance with data protection regulations.

Litigation and Legal Disputes: Maintaining accurate records can be crucial in legal disputes or litigation. Archiving relevant materials can help protect the club's interests.

Best Practices: Even if not legally required, archiving is a best practice for any organization. It ensures continuity, facilitates research, and preserves institutional memory.

who does archived materials in a private club belong to

The ownership of archived materials in a private club typically rests with the club itself. These records serve as a collective memory, documenting the club's history, activities, and decisions. While individual members contribute to these materials,

they are considered part of the club's institutional heritage. It's essential to maintain proper stewardship and accessibility to ensure continuity and transparency.

if I am no longer a club member and I have materials that formed part of the archive can I remove it permanently

When you are no longer a club member and possess materials that were part of the archive, the decision to remove them permanently depends on the club's policies and legal considerations.

Club Policies: Refer to the club's bylaws, rules, or archival policies. Some clubs may explicitly address the ownership and disposition of archived materials.

Ownership: Generally, archived materials belong to the club as a whole, not individual members. However, this can vary based on specific circumstances and agreements.

Consult the Club: Reach out to the club's leadership or archivist. Explain your situation and inquire about the proper procedure for handling the materials.

Transparency: If you wish to remove materials, be transparent about your intentions. Discuss the reasons and seek guidance.

Preservation: Consider the historical value of the materials. Removing them permanently may impact the club's history and continuity.

Transfer or Donation: Instead of permanent removal, explore options like transferring the materials to the club's current archivist or donating them to an appropriate institution.

Archiving Guidelines for Clubs

Objective: To preserve the history and records of a private club effectively.

1. **Start Small:**
 - Assess the scope of our club's records.
 - Prioritize essential items if our holdings are not extensive.
2. **Draft an Archives Policy Statement:**
 - Create a policy outlining how we'll manage our records.
 - Cover aspects like acquisition, access, preservation, and disposal.
3. **Acquire and Accession the Contents:**
 - Collect relevant materials:
 - Meeting minutes
 - Membership lists
 - Event programs
 - Newsletters
 - Photographs
 - Other club-related documents

4. **Gather Information About the Collection:**
 - Document details for each item:
 - Dates
 - Creators
 - Context (valuable for future reference)
5. **Analyse Contents of the Collection:**
 - Understand the significance of each record.
 - Identify historically important items.
6. **Organize Contents of the Collection:**
 - Arrange materials logically:
 - Use folders, boxes, or digital folders.
 - Keep related items together.
7. **Use Archival Containers:**
 - Store physical records in acid-free folders and boxes.
 - Properly label for easy retrieval.
8. **Provide a Good Storage Environment:**
 - Maintain stable temperature and humidity to prevent deterioration.
9. **Conserve Materials:**
 - Address damage or deterioration promptly.
 - Consult professionals if needed.
10. **Create Catalogue Records and Finding Aids:**
 - Develop a catalogue record for each item.
 - Create a finding aid (guide to the collection) for researchers.
11. **Protect, Authenticate, Appraise, and Insure the Collection:**
 - Safeguard records.
 - Verify authenticity.
 - Assess value.
 - Consider insurance coverage.
12. **Establish a Digital Preservation Program:**
 - Implement long-term strategies for digital records.

Storing digital records safely is crucial for preserving information and ensuring data security. Here are some best practices:

1. **Multiple Locations:**
 - Keep digital files in at least **two locations** to reduce the risk of loss.
 - Consider using a **removable flash drive** stored in a secure place (e.g., lockbox) and also upload files to a **secure cloud storage account**.
2. **Password Protection:**
 - **Password-protect** folders where you store important documents.
3. **Bank Lockbox:**
 - Store a flash drive or external hard drive in a **lockbox at your bank**.
4. **Electronic Record-Keeping:**

- follow your club policies and procedures for electronic record-keeping.
- Ensure that electronic records are **secure** and accessible only to authorized individuals.

Remember to regularly back up your digital records and stay informed about data protection regulations. Safeguarding digital information is essential for privacy and compliance.