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1 Scope

This policy covers the creation of descriptive information about collections in the custody of the Royal Berkshire Archives, and that is made publicly available.

Cataloguing is defined as the process of creating multilevel descriptions which cover the context and content of archives and promote access to them.

2 Governing standards

The Royal Berkshire Archives has adopted the following standards for its cataloguing work:

- The General International Standard Archival Description, or ISAD(G), published by the International Council on Archives 2000
- The National Archives Archive Service Accreditation Standard

The Royal Berkshire Archives will conform to the following statutes relating to the release of information:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

In addition, the Royal Berkshire Archives will seek to implement best practice guidance on cataloguing from The National Archives, the Archives and Records Association, or other recognised national bodies.

3 Cataloguing principles

- 3.1 Cataloguing will be used to protect the integrity of our collections. It will assist their safe preservation and custody during use.
- 3.2 Cataloguing will improve collections discovery for research. It will add and augment to researchers' understanding of collections content.
- 3.3 Cataloguing will be inclusive. It will be mindful of the impact of historical language and seek to be conscious of potential bias in its descriptions.

3 Staffing

- 3.1 Cataloguing work should usually be undertaken by professional staff who have been trained in both archival description and archive appraisal and are familiar with in-house cataloguing rules.
- 3.2 Some types of cataloguing work may be undertaken either by other staff or by volunteers under direction from a suitably qualified professional. This is work that requires no appraisal and the creation of descriptive information that follows a set form.
- 3.3 All staff who catalogue at the Royal Berkshire Archives will receive training. Volunteers will receive task-specific training. The Royal Berkshire Archives staff will receive training on in-house cataloguing rules. The Royal Berkshire Archives staff may also receive job-specific training either in-house or through a recognised external provider.

4 Funding

The Royal Berkshire Archives will commit dedicated resources to cataloguing work. However, the Archives may additionally seek external funding for cataloguing from time-to-time.

Depositors are not usually expected to fund cataloguing work but the Archives may seek funding from depositors to prioritise cataloguing. The Archives will also prioritise cataloguing as an activity for applications to grant awarding bodies.

5 Content of multilevel descriptions

- 5.1 The content of multilevel description will be determined by the rules within ISAD(G). These rules prescribe that
 - Description should be from the general to the specific

- Information is only provided that is relevant to the level being described, which may differ between electronic and hard copy presentation of catalogue descriptions
- Descriptions are linked to other levels
- Information is not repeated at separate levels

5.2 Content will be derived from the various individual elements outlined in ISAD(G). Content should be provided with guidance as to its accuracy, and subjective commentary should be identifiable as such.

5.3 A cataloguing manual will be produced which defines the production of catalogues, current editorial and presentational standards for catalogues produced by the Record Office, the appraisal and selection of material during cataloguing, and the documentation of cataloguing work. Catalogues will be produced in accordance with the manual.

6 Availability of catalogues

6.1 The Royal Berkshire Archives aims to catalogue all collections which are open to the public for research. Records acquired by the Archives will be catalogued as soon as resources become available. The Archives will produce a regular cataloguing plan, based on prioritisation criteria, and monitor its performance.

6.2 All newly-created catalogues will be made available in electronic form, capable of being accessed remotely from the Archives.

6.3 Hard copy catalogues will be made available in the Royal Berkshire Archives. A copy of the catalogue will also be provided to the depositor and a url added to The National Archives' Discovery catalogue.

7 Security of catalogue information

7.1 All catalogue information will be stored on a maintained server which is subject to regular backups or as metadata within a digital preservation system.