

Managing Archives and Records

Corporate Records

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True or False?

- All documents are records **True/False?**
- All records are written **True/False?**
- Archive = a selection of records **True/False?**
- Archives are permanent **True/False?**

Who, what, why & when?

- What are corporate records
- Why (and how) do we keep them
- Who keeps records
- When (& how) do we dispose of them
- Who has access

What is a corporate record?

Museums create two main types of record:

Specific :

Loans in/out files

Pest management files

Accession registers

Object files

Donors files

Generic (corporate):

Payroll records

Health and safety reports

Events records case files

Building plans

Staff files

Both types contribute to permanent archives.
Some corporate records are classed as vital.

Why manage corporate records?

Records are as important a museum asset as its object collections.

- ▶ documentary heritage
- ▶ evidence of the business transactions of the organization
- ▶ support collections and research
- ▶ corporate memory
- ▶ protect/enhance reputation
- ▶ legal compliance

Who manages corporate records?

- ▶ Everyone!
- ▶ We all generate records
- ▶ We all use records
- ▶ Shared moral/legal responsibility for management

How are records managed?

- ▶ Records management policy
- ▶ Records management plan that takes into account other related initiatives
- ▶ Records management tools

Records management tools

Records Survey & File Plan

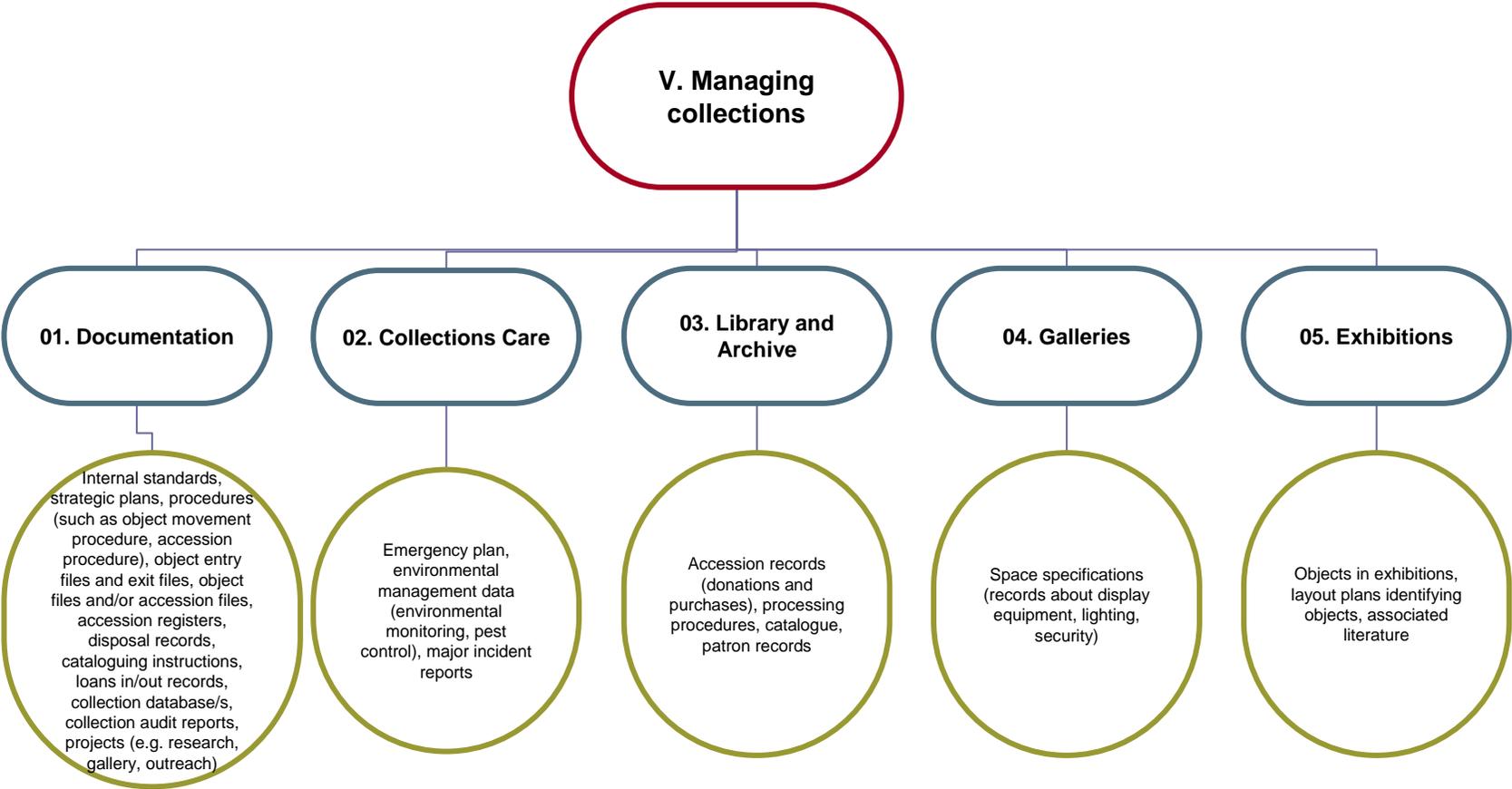
A records survey

- ▶ provides a summary of what information exists

A file plan

- ▶ A file plan is **key tool** for organizing records; allows us to *group similar types* of information
- ▶ it should be consistent across paper and electronic files

Example file plan



Records management tools

A Retention Schedule

- ▶ is a control document that identifies all the record series created by an institution
- ▶ sets out how each should be managed throughout its 'lifecycle'

Retention decisions should be determined by:

- ▶ business requirements; statute, legal or regulatory compliance
- ▶ the value of records to the museum

Records management tools

A more detailed retention schedule may also contain information about:

- ▶ the reason for retention (eg. legislative requirements)
- ▶ location of the records – where they are kept at each stage of their lifecycle
- ▶ responsibilities – who will be responsible for managing the record at each stage of the lifecycle.

Example retention schedule

May look something like this:

STAFF RESOURCES/ PERSONNEL					
Record Series	Retain	Action	Value	Authority	Notes
Recruitment					
Unsuccessful applications	6 months	Destroy	Administrative	Data Protection Act, 1998	HR only
Current Staff					
Individual case files arranged alphabetically by surname	72 years after birth of individual or 5 years after last action, whichever is latest	Weed and destroy on a rolling basis	Review records for historical value.	Data Protection Act, 1998, Health and Safety in the Workplace Act, 1998	Transfer records of relevance eg. aspects of museum work to the Museum Archive.
Volunteers					
Agreements	6 years after completion of engagement	Destroy	Administrative	Data Protection Act, 1998; Limitation Act, 1980	Summary data may be kept as record of work
Freelancers					
Contracts	6 years after completion		Legal historical	Limitation Act, 1980; Data Protection Act, 1998	Summary data may be kept as record of work
DEVELOPING THE MUSEUM (FUNDRAISING)					
Individual Donors					
Case files including correspondence	Current + 6 years/ permanently	Close file after 5 years, weed after further 6 years: then transfer to Archive or securely destroy	Selected records may have long-term historical value	Data Protection Act, 1998	

How long should we keep records?

- ▶ Don't retain all records indefinitely
- ▶ Don't destroy records on an ad hoc basis (usually when file drawers are full or when staff move on)
- ▶ Do follow an approved file plan and retention schedule **BUT.....**

Weeding

Weeding is:

- ▶ the selection process for disposal
- ▶ can be done at any point in the record life cycle
- ▶ must be done before transfer to permanent archive

Common approaches:

- ▶ dispose of everything that has exceeded its retention date
- ▶ retain everything permanently 'just in case'

Weeding

Obvious Weeds

- ▶ copies and drafts of documents (unless they record major changes from the original to the approved version or have meaningful annotations)
- ▶ routine correspondence including email, such as meeting arrangements or calendars
- ▶ correspondence originating in other functions that have been distributed for your information
- ▶ copies of original records that are created or kept by other functions (such as copies of invoices if the original records are kept by Finance)
- ▶ obsolete items e.g. supply catalogues, manuals and warranties, blank forms and templates

Disposal

- ▶ Check not subject to open FoI or DPA enquiries
- ▶ Dispose of in line with individual museum policy
- ▶ Shred any with personal/ sensitive business data
- ▶ Document all disposals (proof of compliance)

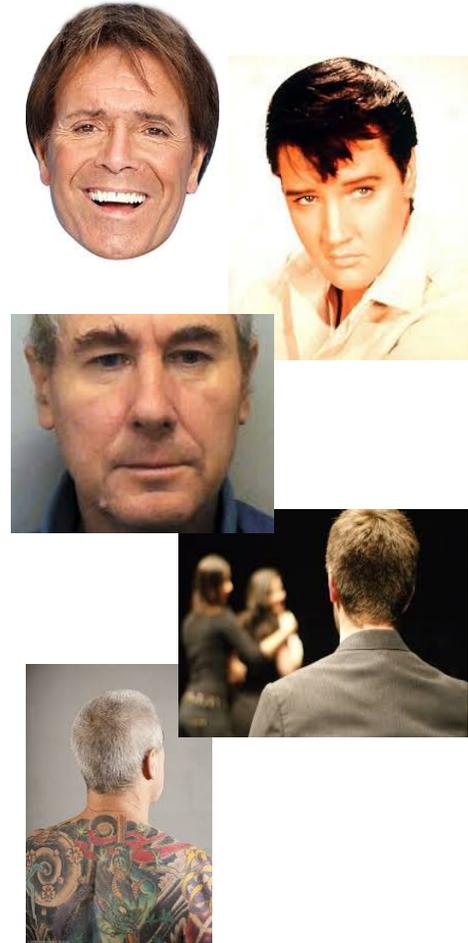
Legislation & museum records

- ▶ Added Tax Act, 1997
- ▶ Charities Act, 2006
- ▶ Chartered Institute of Personnel Development recommendation
- ▶ Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, 1994
- ▶ Copyright, Design and Patents Act, 1988
- ▶ Data Protection Act, 1998
- ▶ Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- ▶ Freedom of Information Act, 2000
- ▶ Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974
- ▶ Health and Safety in the Workplace Act, 1998
- ▶ Limitation Act, 1980
- ▶ Public Records Act 1957, 1967
- ▶ Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community Regulations 2009 (INSPIRE),

Data Protection Act 1998

Applies to all museums (both public authorities and private trusts)

- ▶ it allows living, identifiable (even if indirectly) individuals access to their own personal data
- ▶ deceased individuals and those living but not identifiable as individuals are excluded
- ▶ you have 40 calendar days to respond to requests from individuals about what data you hold on them



Data Protection Act 1998

Personal data has an obvious biographical significance

It covers names, private addresses, dates of birth and contact details. There is even greater protection for other data including CCTV images

Its use is covered by data protection principles

Personal data occurs in many areas within museums

- ▶ Donor: Mr A. Batman
- ▶ Address: The Bat Cave, Gotham City
- ▶ Item: My life in Leather: Diaries vols 1–7. 2000–2010
- ▶ Notes: A. Batman is a naturalized citizen of Martian extraction now living in Gotham City. His diaries document his time working as a crime fighter for the Monster Raving Loony Party. After his conviction for stealing rhino horns and in declining health (possibly resulting from devious sexual activities) he donated the diaries to the museum in 2012.



Freedom of Information Act 2000

Freedom of Information Act (Fol) gives the public the right to access information held by any public authority, including museums.

- ▶ public authorities are obliged to publish information about their activities
- ▶ members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities
- ▶ any written request falls under Fol
- ▶ you have 20 working days to respond to written requests
- ▶ the government recommends use of a records management programme to comply with Fol

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Act covers **ALL** recorded information e.g.

- ▶ printed documents
- ▶ computer files
- ▶ drafts and notes
- ▶ emails
- ▶ photographs
- ▶ video and CCTV recordings
- ▶ recordings of telephone calls
- ▶ meta-data
- ▶ letters (including those received from the public)

The following are **NOT** covered under the Act:

- ▶ personal data
- ▶ data not in recorded form
- ▶ information in your head
- ▶ information created *de novo* purely to answer a FoI request
- ▶ information held solely on behalf of a third party

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

Requires information on the following to be made easily accessible to the public:

- air
- water
- soil & land
- flora & fauna
- cultural sites
- energy
- noise
- waste
- emissions
- built structures

Requests may be verbal

Data provision to be within 20 working days

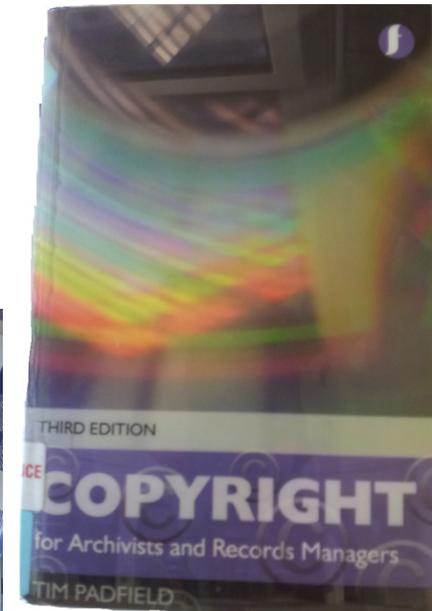
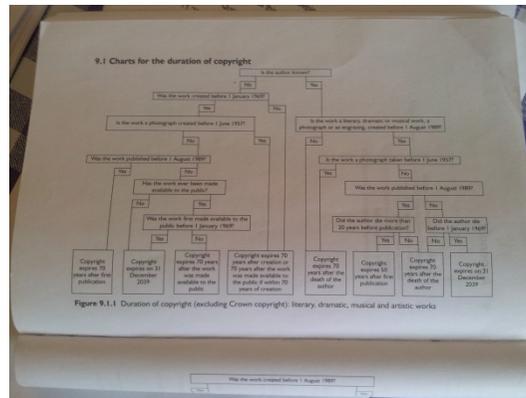
Copyright Act 1988

Protects original creations including:

- ▶ Literary (books, articles, manuals, lyrics and computer programs)
- ▶ Artistic (photography, painting, maps, logos)
- ▶ Drama (plays, dance, etc)
- ▶ Musical (recordings and score)
- ▶ Typographical arrangements
- ▶ Sound recording
- ▶ Film

Exemptions

Approved libraries and archives can make single copies for research, private study and the purpose of preservation



Copyright Act 1988

Under recent changes (& others due shortly) libraries, archives and museums may now:

- ▶ copy works for archiving and preservation reasons if they are part of a permanent collection that is not available for loan to the public
- ▶ preserve films, broadcasts, sound recordings and artistic works (including photographs), as well as literary, dramatic and musical works
- ▶ make as many copies as necessary

AND

- ▶ copying for non-commercial research is extended to all copyright works

Conclusion

Corporate records are part of a valuable asset.

Good records management:

- ▶ is good practise
- ▶ is efficient
- ▶ enables legal compliance
- ▶ makes your archive useful and useable