



# Borthwick Institute for Archives

## Digitisation Policy

This policy describes how and why we digitise records.

### 1. Policy

- 1.1 Digitisation is key to the mission of the Borthwick Institute for Archives as a means of preserving archives and making them widely available for research to all people, now and in the future.

### Aims

- 1.2 Digitisation is carried out to:

- Widen and improve access to resources for researchers
- Open and add value to new areas for research (for example by using digitisation techniques that reveal illegible, inaudible or otherwise hidden content; and by providing deep-level metadata to enable swift and reliable identification of relevant information)
- Preserve fragile and vulnerable materials by providing digital surrogates in their place
- Lower the carbon footprint associated with the Borthwick by reducing the need to travel to the Borthwick

### Selection

- 1.3 Selection of materials for digitisation takes into account many factors, including actual or potential research demand, the condition and physical characteristics of the original, ownership of and rights in the material, the complexity and length of projects, cost and the likelihood of obtaining funding, and the availability and quality of descriptive

metadata. Based on these variables, the Borthwick Institute reviews priorities for digitisation annually through its Archives Development Group.

### Standards and legislation

- 1.4 The Borthwick Institute creates digital surrogates that are fit for their intended purpose. Specific and detailed digitisation standards are cited in the supporting documents and are selected with the end use of the digital surrogate in mind.
- 1.5 When making decisions about the digitisation and dissemination of material, due consideration will be given to:
  - Copyright legislation. The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 and intellectual property rights. A 'best endeavours' approach to finding rights-holders will be employed.
  - Data Protection legislation and protection for the rights of living individuals identified in documents.
  - Contractual obligations. Agreements with owners (depositors), donors and commercial partners.

### Methodology

- 1.6 Digitisation equipment and methodologies are selected to ensure the care of the original and the production of a digital surrogate that is fit for purpose.
- 1.7 Staff involved in digitisation are trained in digitisation techniques and appropriate handling of the originals.

### Metadata

- 1.8 Digital surrogates to be retained for the long term must retain a permanent reference to the original.
- 1.9 Additional metadata may be created as part of the digitisation process. This may include technical metadata captured automatically through the digitisation process, information relating to the process of digitisation (date of digitisation and member of staff who carried out the work), methodology (particularly where specialist techniques have been

used) or other information to supplement existing archival descriptions or add value to the digitised material.

### Storage and archiving

1.10 All digitised materials that need to be preserved in perpetuity (such as digitised versions of sound recordings) will be curated and managed within the digital archive in accordance with the Collections Care and Conservation Policy.

1.11 All other digitised materials with long term value will be curated and managed appropriately.

### Access

1.12 Digitised materials will be made available online where appropriate in accordance with the Access to Archival Information Policy.

### Sustainability

1.13 Digitisation activities will be sustainable and will evolve in line with industry developments. Staff within the Borthwick will determine the cost and benefits of different options and secure project funds and resources for digitisation and ongoing curation as needed.

## **2. Scope**

2.1 The policy applies to materials held by the Borthwick Institute for Archives

2.2 The policy applies to the University of York Special Collections.

2.3 The policy does not apply to University of York Library materials outside Special Collections.

2.4 The policy does not apply to materials digitised through our external digitisation service. Separate documentation and terms and conditions exist for this service.

2.5 The policy is binding on all staff, volunteers and contractors involved in archive digitisation activities within or on behalf of the Borthwick Institute.

### **3. Oversight**

- 3.1 Overall responsibility for digitisation is with the Assistant Director of Information (Archives and Policy) as Keeper of Archives.
- 3.2 The Digital Archivist is responsible for overseeing policy implementation.

### **4. Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Digitisation is carried out by Borthwick staff or other appropriately trained and experienced people, including, for example, volunteers and external contractors.
- 4.2 The Digitisation Coordinator is responsible for coordinating digitisation activities.
- 4.3 The Conservation Team monitors and advises on the implementation of digitisation programmes and the methodologies employed.
- 4.4 The Keeper of Archives is responsible for final decisions on whether digitisation of fragile materials should be carried out.

### **5. Policy implementation documents**

- 5.1 This document is supported by the following policies and implementation documents:
- Access to Archival Information Policy
  - Collections Care and Conservation Policy
  - Archival Information Policy and plan
  - Reprographics procedures
  - Digitisation procedures
  - Preservation and conservation procedures
  - Digital preservation plan
  - Digital preservation procedures
  - Access plan and procedures
  - University of York Information Security Policy
  - University of York Data Protection Policy

### **Document history and status**

22 April 2016	J Mitcham	Began first draft
29th April 2016	J Mitcham	Updated after discussion with CT and NW
13th January 2017	J Mitcham	Updated after first round of comment/feedback and prior to further discussion at BSMT

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