

# Sheffield Trees Archive

## Engagement Strategy

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### **1. Aims and Objectives of the Sheffield Trees Dispute Archive**

- 1.1 The aims of the Tree Dispute Archive are to gather together in one place all of the material relating to street trees generated by the City Council between January 2013 to December 2018; to catalogue and publish it; and to ensure its long term availability as part of the city's archive collection.
- 1.2 Much of the documentation has already been placed in the public domain, via answers to Freedom of Information requests or published on the Council website. A key benefit of the archiving project will be to publish more comprehensive data all in one place. It will be properly indexed and will be significantly easier to access information. Information which has so far only been accessible to an individual who requested it will now be available to all members of the public.
- 1.3 Creating a tree dispute archive has two main objectives
  - 1.3.1 Openness and transparency - to publish all relevant materials within the next few months thus enabling anyone with an interest in the issue to access information without having to make a formal request.
  - 1.3.2 Ensuring documentation is retained in perpetuity through the development of a comprehensive archive from the Council but also from other stakeholders to record a rounded and balanced view of what happened for researchers of a variety of disciplines in the years and decades to come.

### **2. Scope of the Project**

The tree dispute archive will comprise information relating to the controversy over tree felling which first began in 2013; thus, subsequent to the Cabinet resolution the project Management Board agreed to extend the Archive project so it incorporates information from the beginning of the issue. The archiving project will encompass all information through to the Joint Position Statement on Mediated Talks between Sheffield City Council, Amey, and the Steering Group for Sheffield Tree Action Groups (STAG SG) issued in 2018.

### **3. Project Management**

The Project is overseen by a Project Management Board. This comprises:

- Mike Crofts, Interim Executive Director of Place Portfolio
- James Henderson, Director of Policy, Performance and Communications
- Catherine Hodgkinson, Senior Information Management Officer

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### 4. Stakeholders

- 4.1 The Project Management Board have identified a range of stakeholders. These are included in a separate stakeholder register.
- 4.2 In addition to documenting the official record, the City Archives aims to ensure all of the different views and voices are recorded for posterity. It is hoped that material from other organisations will be offered to the Archives in order to develop a truly comprehensive and balanced record of the Tree issue.
- 4.3 Other organisations and individuals will be approached as the initial project gets underway to enquire if they wish to transfer documents into the Archive. Each approach will be tailored to meet individual needs.

### 5. Approach to stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 We will adopt a continuous improvement approach to stakeholder engagement with the archive project that includes keeping the stakeholder register, including the frequency, type of contact and content of briefings/updates, under review.
- 5.2 Stakeholders will be engaged in a way that is mutually agreed between the project management team and the stakeholder in question.
- 5.3 The project management team commits to take on board feedback from stakeholders in the development and delivery of the archive project, and to clearly explain the reasons for any decisions taken.

### 6. The Role of the City Archives

- 6.1 The City Archives is the official document repository for the City Council and acts as the corporate memory holder. As such it holds documents dating back to the creation of the then Town Council in 1843, right up to modern Cabinet and departmental papers.
- 6.2 In addition, it holds records from a wide variety of other organisations, from across the public sector (such as the NHS, HM Courts, HM Coroner, SY Police) along with records from private business, voluntary organisations and charities, families and individuals.
- 6.3 Most of the archives are not owned by the Service - they are held on long term deposit, with ownership being retained by the creator.
- 6.4 The Archive collections aim to document all of the different communities of Sheffield from the earliest times to the present day.

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- 6.5 Professional Archivists manage the collections in line with guidance issued by the National Archives. They work to a professional code of ethics. The following extract is particularly relevant to the Tree Dispute Archiving Project:

*As professionals, record-keepers have a broad responsibility to the public interest which they must keep in mind alongside their responsibilities to their employer. Records and archives have an important organisational, legal, historic and societal role. Preserving accurate information for the efficient and effective management of organisations, and for wider social benefit. Professional record-keepers should keep this societal role in mind when conducting their work.*

*The primary duty ... is to manage, preserve and protect the integrity of documentary heritage and records in the public interest, in order to ensure that they continue to provide reliable evidence of past actions and decisions.*

*Members [Archivists] should ensure open and equitable access to records and archives as far as they can, compatible with respect for other concerns such as the privacy of information subjects and their organisational context.*

## 7. Key Project Milestones

There are 4 main stages in this project:

- 1) gathering in all of the documentation
- 2) processing the documents - organising, cataloguing and presenting in line with FOI/(UK)GDPR/EIR.
- 3) publication of the catalogue and the documents to the general public
- 4) preserving the digital files for the long term

## 8. Publishing the Archive

- 8.1 At the end of the project there will be a publicly available and detailed catalogue of the City Council's documents, together with other contributors. In line with legislation, documents will be attached to the catalogue, allowing anyone to read the documentation, without having to make a formal request.
- 8.2 Documents will be processed and published in line with the Project's Access and Disclosure Protocol with any redactions being made in accordance with the agreed redaction framework.

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- 8.3 Dependent on the amount of material that comes into the Archive, we are hoping to publish the catalogue and documents in about 4 months-time. However, this is not a fixed deadline as the amount of material to be disclosed is not yet known.

### **9. What Happens after Publication?**

- 9.1 Once published the archive catalogue and published documentation will be freely available to anyone to research and use.
- 9.2 The original documents and information that is transferred to the City Archives will be managed alongside the extensive archive collections from a wide range of organisations stretching back over many centuries. They form part of the city's story, as such they will be retained in perpetuity.

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