

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County

Library Service

Local Studies Guidelines

2015-2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Libraries' Local Studies Guidelines sets out a path for the future of the Local History service of this County. It aims to take stock of what the service currently offers and provides realistic objectives for future development and improvements. The Guidelines place a strong focus on making users aware of the collection content, delivering access – both physical and digital, and cooperating with other individuals and agencies with similar remits.

Branching Out-Future Directions (2008:55) stated that libraries should aim 'to collect and make available local studies material in all formats, documenting the changes in our towns, cities and communities.' Recording these changes provides communities with a window to the past and an understanding of the development of the County. Opportunities for All (2013:18, 39) reiterated the above and also aimed 'to increase national and local digital collections and to optimise their accessibility and preservation activity'. These Guidelines have been formulated in the context of the dlr Library Development Plan 2016-2020 together with the Collection Development Plan 2015 and aims to incorporate their philosophies and policies.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

This policy document addresses the need to ensure that Local Studies, as part of the Library Service, collects and makes available to library users, material relating to the history and development of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County area. In addition to this historical and developmental emphasis, material relating to economic, social and demographic aspects will be included. This plan is a companion policy to the Collection Development Policy (2015-2019).

The overall mission statement of dlr Library Service is: 'To connect and empower people, inspire ideas and support community potential'.

Within this context, the mission statement of the Local Studies Guidelines is as follows:

'To collect, maintain, preserve and make available material and online resources pertaining to the history and heritage of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and to encourage greater public and community awareness and understanding of the County's rich culture and traditions.'ⁱ

2.1 Key Points

- The Local Studies Collection is based at dlr LexIcon and is the major local studies collection for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Libraries. It is housed on Level 5 with further storage on Level 2 for the book store collection.
- Valuable and single copy items in stock in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Libraries should be housed at dlr LexIcon.

- Other branch libraries hold material which will answer the majority of their Local Studies queries. More specialised queries can be referred to or passed to the Local Studies Librarian via email to localhistory@dlrcoco.ie .

3. ACCESS TO LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION

The Local Studies collection is housed in a dedicated Local Studies department in dlr LexIcon. Principal access to the collection is by the library catalogue at <http://libraries.dlrcoco.ie>. The website also includes extensive details under a dedicated Local History section. Local Studies material is held in secured shelving. It can be accessed with staff aid and may be consulted in dlr LexIcon with a valid library card.

3.1 Appointment System

An appointment system is in operation at dlr LexIcon. Persons interested in seeking access to Local Studies Collection material are asked that they make prior contact, so a suitable time can be arranged. It may not be possible to immediately facilitate requests for material or offer research advice. Specific appointments may be arranged on Monday or Wednesday afternoons, 1pm-4pm, and alternate Saturdays, 10am-11.30am.

We request that details of specific queries be furnished before a visit if possible, by sending an email to the dedicated account localhistory@dlrcoco.ie or leaving their contact details with a staff member for call-back.

4. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Formats collected

- Books
- Serials
 - Local Newspapers
 - Directories
 - Journals
- Ephemera
 - Pamphlets
 - Programmes
 - Catalogues
 - Leaflets
 - Posters
 - Branch library local history files
- Physical format electronic resources
 - CD-ROMs
 - Spoken and music CDs
 - DVDs
- Manuscripts
- Donated archives
- Business, professional, political and estate papers.

- Visual materials
 - Photographs
 - Prints
 - Maps
 - Exhibitions
- Microfilm
- Microfiche
- Software

4.2 General Selection Criteriaⁱⁱ.

Any or all the following criteria will be applied by library staff to all items selected for purchase or offered for donation:

- Professional awareness and judgement
- Reputation, authority and competence of author and/or publisher
- Literary merit
- Accuracy, clarity of information and/or presentation
- Published reviews, trade literature and attention of critics
- Value for money
- Suitability and durability for library use
- Adding value to specialist collections appropriate to the Local Studies collection

4.3 Special selection criteria for the Local Studies Collection

When selecting material for the Local Studies Collection, special consideration should be given to the following:

- Primarily material to be collected will relate to the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County administrative area, that which was created or published locally or created or published outside the locality but with local relevance.
- Material relating to neighbouring local authority areas, South Dublin, Fingal, Dublin City, Kildare and Wicklow may also be collected especially where it sheds light on aspects of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County or answers local studies queries, or on those administrative areas which the county was formerly part (i.e Rathdown, Dublin County, Dublin Diocese, &c.).
- Material relating to Ireland, where it sheds light on aspects of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown history and development.
- Material which documents the experience of local citizens.
- Material which is of a rarity and significance that it is considered of local importance.
- Material which meets subject of interest criteria:
 - Related to places, personalities, individuals, groups, organisations, events, activities, experiences or themes of significant local relevance
 - Documents significant aspects of the history, social or cultural life of the local community.
 - Enhances the collection.
 - In line with National Library of Ireland advice on the output of infrequent publication: 'Items such as parish and school

histories, sports club publications and the publications of a wide variety of local organisations and societies are of great importance. Frequently, they are produced in relatively small numbers go out of print quickly, and are rarely reprinted.ⁱⁱⁱ

- Models of local studies material may also be collected where methodology or comparative light might be used in a similar study of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (e.g Maynooth Local Studies Series, National Inventory of Ireland, &c.)
- A special effort to be made to collect and make available material produced by Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.
- Material relating to family history and genealogy.
- Access to newspapers.
- General books on Irish history which will inform studies of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown history.
- Material appropriate to the special collections (i.e. Local Authors, Local Publishers, Antiquarian, Rare Book etc).

5. LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES & OPPORTUNITIES^{iv}

5.1 Strengths

- A centralised repository of material in a purpose-built space on Level 5 at dlr LexIcon. Includes ample storage space on site for complete Local Studies Collection, including fiction and non-fiction book store (Level 2), an office for the Local Studies Librarian (Level 5) and a room for Local Studies visitors on an appointment basis (Level 5). Includes space to exhibit Local Studies material on Level 5 with 2 large display units and ample space for exhibition boards.
- A strong selection of book material, with a good range of publications on the local area.
- Dedicated space for an extensive Irish and local author collection on Level 5.
- Some primary and unique materials (Dún Laoghaire Council Minutes, Registers of Electors).
- Strong supplementary resources sourced from other institutions. (i.e Thom's on microfilm, Parish Registers, etc.)
- dlr LexIcon attracts Local Studies donations from the community.

5.2 Weaknesses

- Need to obtain further collections of unique material.
- Need to expand on collection of primary material. Many primary sources held by Fingal County Council following reorganisation of local authorities in 1994.
- Many resources relating to the former Dublin County area within Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown are held at the Gilbert Library, Dublin.
- Dependence on other institutions' collections as source.
- Restrictions on use of material sourced from other institutions.
- Dependence on licence agreement for continued access to online resources, with no lasting resource built-up.

- Need for specialist expertise of qualified archivists and conservators. This is vital for areas such as the Council Archive and recent donations to the LexIcon.
- Further IT input necessary to develop online access and promotion of dlr Local Studies Collection.

5.3 Opportunities

- Areas/spaces to expand and grow the Local Studies Collection at dlr LexIcon.
- Technological developments through new digitisation methods.
- Links with third level Colleges in the dlr area.
- Potential for partnerships.
- Funding for digitisation projects for Decade of Commemoration via new funding streams eg. Creative Ireland &c
- Recovering economy.

6. PRIORITIES FOR 2015-2019

The priorities for the five-year Local Studies Guidelines 2015-2019 focus on the growth of the Collection through the acquisition of relevant material, preservation and conservation and the promotion of the Local Studies Collection as a whole.

6.1 Collection acquisition

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Library Service acquires material by:

- Purchase
- Donation
- Generation

6.1.1 Purchase

Acquisition of quality material within available purchasing funds across the broad range of knowledge and material formats. See Selection Criteria above and also item 2.2.4 of Collection Development Policy (2015).

6.1.2 Acquisition by Donation or Gift.

'Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Library Service accepts donations of Irish material and local studies material pertaining to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, especially items that are not already in the collection'.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Libraries welcomes interest and support by way of donation and/or gift of money or materials. Such criteria as apply to acquisition by selection and purchase will also apply to donations/gifts of materials. Offers of material will be reviewed on that basis.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Library Service reserves the right to decline donations/gifts and reserves the right to determine the disposal of all

donations and gifts received, including the sale of material to the benefit of the Library and in the interests of library users.

Other conditions which apply include:

- Donors must have a clear title to the material offered.
- Except in exceptional circumstances, material will not be accepted with conditions attached.
- That, where relevant, copyright and any other rights vested in the material are assigned to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Library Service at the time of acquisition.
- dlr Library Service reserves the right to dispose of duplicate materials or other materials acquired as part of a collection which do not accord with collection development criteria.
- The library will not accept donations of material of no evident Irish or Local Studies interest.
- On receipt of donation, a letter of agreement will be issued to the donor outlining dlr policy above. This process document is being developed in conjunction with UCD Archives. It will outline the terms of future use.

6.1.3 Generation

“Document changes in the physical, cultural and social life of the County”^{vi} Acquisition of material will include that of generation by staff or by commission. This is envisioned to encompass the photographing of sites, buildings and streetscapes and serve as an important documentation of the County environment.

6.2 Preservation and Conservation

The Library Service will comply with recognised professional preservation and conservation standards for all collections. Every acquisition per se poses a storage and preservation problem. Certain items may also be in need of conservation. In making any acquisition decision, account must be taken of the associated access, storage, and preservation and conservation challenges and costs. A rolling programme of conservation, preservation and digitisation will be undertaken annually but the following factors are noted:

- Local Studies stock in branch libraries will be assessed and appropriate manner of maintenance established.
- Local Studies material must be stored in archival boxes, envelopes and pockets.
- Local Studies serials to be bound as needed and, likewise, material in need of conservation binding to be rebound.
- Laser copies of photographs to be made available to users, rather than the original items.
- Digital copies of material to be made available to users where practical.

- Work with UCD Archives is to be completed with reference to appropriate policy development and in drawing up proper process documents such as an inventory and letter template.

6.2.1 Digitisation

Online digital resources are purchased either outright, or through annual subscription. There is an ongoing need to develop the Local History website as a portal for local history resources nationally and internationally.

From a preservation perspective, a programme of digitisation will be undertaken to maximise public access to the collections. Any items that are deemed too fragile, valuable or cumbersome in their original form be made available to the public, will be included in the digitisation programme.^{vii}

6.3 Promotion of Local Studies Collection

Promotion of the collection will continue by raising the service's profile while working in conjunction with and liaising with local groups, fellow library services and national institutions. The Local Studies Librarian will continue to participate in and support national initiatives, such as the Irish Life and Lore oral history projects, as well as to facilitate our links with schools and colleges (such as the DFEI, Arts, Culture and History course; the UCD Archives, etc.). The Library Service continues to support and promote heritage programmes in the county, such as Heritage Week and dlr Spring and Summer of Heritage, and participate in training and support project initiatives under Libraries Development, LGMA.

The Local Studies Librarian liaises with the Senior Executive Librarian in dlr LexIcon to ensure a full calendar of exhibitions and events are programmed annually, promoting highlights from the collection and commemorating relevant dates and anniversaries. The Local Studies Librarian will continue to liaise with local history groups within the community and showcase their exhibitions and publications. This will be marked specifically by elements of the 'Decade of Commemoration', with the centenary of the Rising in 2016; also the bicentenary of the Construction of the Asylum Harbour in 2017, the RMS Leinster commemoration in 2018 &c.

The Local Studies Librarian works to produce numerous bibliographic tools and aids to highlight particular areas within the Local Studies Collection.

Examples include:

- Index to journal and book chapters of local interest.
- Index to contents of plan chests
- Database of map collection
- Revision of prints and photographs index.
- Revision of filing cabinet contents index.

In promoting the Local Studies Collection, the Local Studies Librarian has responsibility for the collection and cataloguing of Local Studies material and its wider promotion and discoverability. This often involves the re-cataloguing and re-classification of material already in the collection, in particular to include appropriate subject headings as added entries, and additional information concerning relevance to the local area, including web-links. The Local Studies Librarian will add publishers' descriptions and additional information about rare and digitised items where relevant.

7 CONCLUSION AND POLICY REVIEW

'These guidelines will aid Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown library staff to provide professional awareness and judgement in the selection, acquisition, preservation, housing and subsequent de-selection of library material in various formats'.^{viii}

The Local Studies Guidelines will be periodically evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing future changes to the collection.

ⁱ This builds on the original Mission Statement of the Local History Strategic Plan 2009-2012, p3.

ⁱⁱ Ref. Dublin City Council: Collection Acquisition & Development Policy

ⁱⁱⁱ NLI Collection Development Policy, 2009-2011, n5, p5.

^{iv} From review carried out by Local Studies Librarian of Local History Collection Resources in April 2014.

^v Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Library Service Collection Development Policy (2015), p7.

^{vi} Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Libraries Local History Strategic Plan, 2009-2012, p5.

^{vii} Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Library Service Collection Development Policy (2015), p10.

^{viii} Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Library Service Collection Development Policy (2015), p12.