



**BISHOPSGATE
INSTITUTE**

Bishopsgate Special Collections and Archives Digital Archives Policy

**Written by Nicky Hilton; edited by Colleen Goldspink;
Approved by Stefan Dickers.
April 2021
© Bishopsgate Institute**

Rationale

This document specifies what digital material can be deposited at Bishopsgate Institute Special Collections and Archives and how the service will preserve and manage 'digital archives'.

Scope

This policy and related guidance covers:

- Born digital files deposited under acquisitions procedure and held as originals by Bishopsgate Institute
- Digital surrogate/access copy files created from 'original' documents in any media (manuscript, photograph, map, video, audio, digital file etc...)

It should be noted that digital files created by Bishopsgate Institute during the course of work will only be preserved as part of the 'Digital Archive' if they are to be permanently retained.

Selection, Appraisal and Acquisition

The process of selecting digital material for preservation based on content is the same as that for non-digital records. Therefore, selection is carried out in accordance with the Library's Collection Policy.

Bishopsgate Library and Archives can ingest the following categories of records:

- Image files
 - Word processing files
 - Simple spreadsheet files
 - Sound files
 - Audio-visual files
 - HTML files, e.g. websites (after running through software to make them accessible offline¹)
 - Message files, e.g. emails²
- Any record types not listed above, will need to be discussed with the Library and Digital Archives Manager before depositing. The ingest of any record types not on the list will be subject to Bishopsgate Institute's ability to; store, preserve and provide access to the records effectively. Bishopsgate Institute reserves the right to return any records not listed above if they have not been discussed with the Library and Digital Archives Manager before depositing.
 - Bishopsgate Institute cannot guarantee to preserve password-protected material unless the ability to access the material is provided.

¹ Bishopsgate Institute have recently sourced free, open-sourced software to enable websites to be downloaded, archived, and browsed offline. The ability to do this is completely dependent on having continued access to sufficient software and is subject to change. Ability to download all content on website is subject to the structure of each individual website and will be discussed with each depositor individually.

² Bishopsgate Institute can only accept emails that have been downloaded or saved from inboxes. Bishopsgate Institute reserve the right to refuse deposits of entire inboxes that have not been organised by depositors.

- Bishopsgate Institute reserves the right to refuse deposits where no attempt has been made by the depositors to impose an order or system of arrangement on the digital material.
- Bishopsgate Institute can accept digital deposits on hard drives delivered in person or by post. Arrangements can be made for the return of hard drives after material has been ingested. Alternatively, digital material can be transferred via the free transfer service, WeTransfer. Other transfer methods such as Dropbox and Google Drive can also be used if discussed with the Library and Digital Archives Manager in advance.
- Sufficient metadata (ie. file name, software, date of creation) about digital material is required before it can be accepted into the archives. Bishopsgate Institute cannot guarantee long term preservation without this supporting information.
- Depositors will be encouraged to convert digital material to preferred formats (TIFF, Jpeg, PDF/A, WAV, AVI) prior to deposit.
- When necessary, Bishopsgate Institute will convert and/or migrate material for preservation purposes. In this instance, the original file will also be maintained.
- Bishopsgate Institute will seek to continue to develop procedures for capturing and preserving a wider range of record types and keep up-to-date with new developments in digital preservation methods.
- Bishopsgate Institute will seek to work with depositors to encourage good practice on the creation and care of digital records.

Care and storage and security

Digital files that are ingested will be managed as part of the 'Digital Archive'. The 'Digital Archive' is stored on an internal storage device, which is only accessible to the Special Collections Team and the IT and Technical Support Officer. This storage is also backed-up internally to prevent data loss.

Digital material is catalogued using the cataloguing system Adlib. Appropriate levels of technical and descriptive metadata will be entered into this system and will be viewable on our online catalogue. File fixity, (checksums), will also be established using the software DROID, to ensure data integrity.

Bishopsgate Institute will continue to work towards improving methods for processing and storing digital archives. Staff will remain up to date with changes in best practice, through networking with fellow professionals and completing appropriate training.

Access

Bishopsgate Institute is committed to increasing access to digital material both in the Library and online.

Digital material that is open for public consultation will be made accessible via a dedicated access terminal in the Researcher's Area of the Library.

Additionally, Bishopsgate Institute continues to work towards making more digital material accessible online via social media and the website.

When necessary, Bishopsgate Institute will migrate obsolete or 'at risk' digital material to supported, open-source formats to retain accessibility. Decisions to migrate will be made by the Library and Digital Archives Manager. In all circumstances, the original file will be maintained.

Review

The field of digital archives management continues to develop rapidly with changes in technology. As a result, this policy will be monitored regularly, and a formal review will take place no later than December 2022. Any changes will be approved by the Special Collections and Archives Manager.

For further information, please contact the Special Collections and Archives Manager,
Stefan Dickers
Bishopsgate Institute
230 Bishopsgate
London EC2M 4QH

T 020 7392 9270

E Stefan.dickers@bishopsgate.org.uk

Version	Version date	Summary of changes
1.0	January 2015	New policy created by Nicky Hilton, Archivist. Approved by Stefan Dickers, Library and Archives Manager.
2.0	August 2016	Policy updated by Nicky Hilton, Archivist following the purchase of Preservica CE by the Institute. Approved by Stefan Dickers, Library and Archives Manager.
3.0	April 2021	Policy updated by Colleen Goldspink, Library and Digital Archives Manager, following ending contract with Preservica CE. Approved by Stefan Dickers, Library and Archives Manager.