

Torbay Library Services

Policy Statement for Local Studies Services

Aim

The aim of the local studies service is to assist people with their enquiries through the provision of a wide range of resources reflecting the history of Torbay but also the wider geographical area of Devon. The service will cater for personal visits, telephone enquiries and correspondence, both electronic and conventional.

Background

Local Studies collections are available at all Torbay Libraries for both lending and reference use, However; the main reference collection is based at Torquay. This resource includes a number of specialist indexes and a wide range of materials that are used to assist enquiries received at all the authority's service points.

Access

Each service point will have a collection of clearly-signed local studies material. The reference collection at Torquay will be housed in a designated local studies room, named the John Pike room after a prominent local historian. Some material may be stored in the stack area or in locked cases and will be made available upon request.

Stock

Books and Pamphlets

- Each service point will have a collection of local books and pamphlets. The collections at the branch libraries will reflect Torbay as a whole, but with particular emphasis on the immediate local area as far as is possible.
- The main reference collection at Torquay will consist of a minimum of two copies of works specific to Torbay. Single copies of significant studies on Devon will be purchased, as will appropriate titles covering Teignbridge and the South Hams. Only titles of significant works covering other areas of the county will be purchased. Priority will be given to works of non-fiction: works of fiction by authors resident in Devon will be at the discretion of the Reference and Information Services Librarian.

Periodicals

- Material covering Torbay will be collected and maintained at Torquay. Where appropriate, these may be bound. Periodicals covering Devon will be purchased according to their presentation, content and quality of information. Infrequently published titles will also be obtained where possible.

Newspapers

- Torquay will purchase two copies of current local newspapers one of which will be kept on file. A microfilmed version will also be purchased and the original copy will only be available when the enquirer is unable to use the machine reader.
- Original bound copies of early newspapers will be kept on file. These will be available for use, but may not be photocopied.
- Main articles from the *Herald Express* and *Western Morning News* will be indexed. This index is currently made available through the Internet.

Maps

- Torquay will continue to maintain its collection of historical and current maps available in hard copy and on microfiche. These include the Ordnance Survey maps of Torbay from the first edition of 1860 to subsequent surveys.

Photographic Collection

- The main photographic collection is at Torquay Library, where items are made available for individual use. Items for which Torbay Library Services holds appropriate copying rights may be photocopied: a laser copying service is available by arrangement. Donated items will be indexed and added to the collection using conservation paper and protective polyester pockets. Items in the existing collection lacking specialist covers and papers will be repaired as time permits.

Newsplan

- In addition to the purchase of current newspaper titles, Torbay Library Services will participate in the national Newsplan project. This will facilitate the filming of local newspapers not currently available in Torbay. The Reference and Information Services Librarian will represent the authority on the regional Newsplan Group.

Enquiries

Local studies enquiries may be received at any of the library service points. The reference and information staff will support the staff elsewhere using the specialist indexes and materials available at Torquay.

ICT

CD-ROMs of relevant material will be purchased. A list of useful websites relating to the fields of genealogy will also be maintained. It is aimed to review and update this at regular intervals. Developments in the field of digitisation both locally and nationally will be monitored.

Liaison with the Devon Record Office

An archivist from the Devon Record Office visits Torquay ten times a year to provide assistance using materials on loan from the record office collection. Parish Registers on microfiche not normally stored at Torquay can be requested in advance and supplied for use on the day. The Reference and Information Services Librarian will continue to monitor use of the service and assist with promotional activities where possible.

Notice boards are provided for the display of DRO materials in the local studies room.

Liaison with Other Organisations and Agencies

The Reference and Information Services Librarian will maintain links with colleagues in Devon and Plymouth Library Services.

Service Performance

Statistics will be collected for the number of local studies enquiries received across the service. These will be collected in greater detail at Torquay to reflect the depth of information requested and the time required to supply appropriate responses.

Last reviewed August 2007