

Recent archive building projects

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Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom 1993-2005

- Project funding
 - Society of Archivists (travel costs)
 - TNA (overheads)
- Project timetable
 - Travel and research until end of 2005
 - Copy to press end of March 2006
 - Publication by TNA
- Progress

ABUK 1993-2005

- More than 90 examples identified in UK
- Limited to completed projects: others are in the pipeline
- Every sector: national, university, local, business, private, and specialist media (film and sound)
- Great range of sizes and designs
- Conversions as well as purpose-builds
- Local as well as Lottery funding

Major influences

- HLF funding
- New BS 5454 in 2000
 - Covers libraries as well as archives
- Cross-domain / more multi-purpose :
 - Archives plus eg libraries, museums, archaeology and built heritage, family history, VCH
- Cross-sectoral
 - Work with other neighbouring authorities

Major influences (cont)

- Changing patterns of access
 - On site and on-line
 - Implications for technology/use of space
- Sustainability
 - High thermal inertia
 - Natural climatisation (if possible)
 - But disappointing results to date
 - Energy saving
 - Low maintenance

Major problems encountered

- Architect's vision versus functionality
- Lack of communication at planning stage
- Failure to think through consequences of changes made at planning stage
- Lack of continuity of personnel

Major problems (cont)

- Handling contractors and sub-contractors
- Risks of opting for very new (or for near end-of-line) equipment
- Inflexibility of layout
- Miscalculation of space or equipment needs

Major problems (cont)

... and the most serious problem of all:

- Storage environment not controlled to BS5454 recommendations
 - (a) without air conditioning
 - (b) even with air conditioning

Examples of multi-purpose

- Rochdale Touchstones
 - local studies, art gallery, museum, tourist information
- Orkney
 - library, archives, local studies, talking radio, family history, biodiversity records
- Surrey History Centre
 - archives, local studies, museums
- Essex Record Office
 - archives, VCH, family history
- Many archive services within libraries or joining with museums

Joint working (in place or under discussion)

- Two local authorities: merged services
 - Chester and Cheshire
 - LMA, Corporation of London, Guildhall Library
 - ... and many joint arrangements after LG reorganisation
- Local authority and university
 - Norfolk and UEA
 - Hull City and Hull University
 - Worcestershire and UC Worcester
- Local authority and national
 - Devon and National Meteorological Archive
- University and business
 - Warwick U and BP archive
- Consortium approach
 - South East Film and Video Archive (local authority, university, specialist)