

The Gloucestershire Archaeological Archive Standards set out the recommended standards and policy for all Archaeological Archives created from projects undertaken in the county of Gloucestershire. The purpose of the document is to ensure all new and undeposited Archaeological Archives in Gloucestershire meet a common standard, and are appropriately and consistently created, compiled and packaged across the county to nationally agreed standards. By creating a more uniform approach, the Museums in Gloucestershire aim to ensure the future sustainability of Archaeological Archive curation in the region, thereby facilitating long-term care and public access to Gloucestershire's shared past. The document has been developed in partnership with Museums throughout the county, local government archaeological officers and a number of archaeological contractors. This standard has been developed to ensure that the Museums are involved throughout the process of any Archaeological Project rather than solely as the end repository.

The Gloucestershire Archaeological Archive Standards are the result of several years of work by the staff of Museums in Gloucestershire, supported by the county's Museum Development Officer. This work has been prompted by the chronic lack of storage space in the stores of the partner Museums, and recognition by those Museums that they needed to take proactive steps towards easing the strain on their resources. Whilst rationalisation of existing holdings is undoubtedly a future consideration, the Museums are agreed that the first step is to introduce this more robust policy on Archive transfer, alongside guidelines on selection, retention and dispersal in order to try to reduce the volume of material being deposited. However, the Museums do recognise that any such reduction must be carefully considered so that there is the smallest possible impact on the research value of the collection. Further, through the application of these standards it is hoped all parties consider what really needs to be retained for future research, and what might be discarded prior to deposition, without impacting the research potential of the Archive or the stories Museums can tell.