Built Legacy

Preserving the results of historic building investigations with the Archaeology Data Service

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Collections Development Manager

http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk
Exercise: Gone the way of the Dodo?

- Set out the dates to form a timeline
- Hardware
  - Guess the release date
  - Draw a line long the timeline for how long you think it was in use for
- Software
  - Can you guess when the providers last offered support for these formats?

You have 10 minutes!
Introduction

- What is digital preservation?
- Why is it necessary?
- What does it involve?
- What’s in it for me?
- What should I do?
- How should I go about it?
What is digital preservation?

“In library and archival science, digital preservation is a formal endeavour to ensure that digital information of continuing value remains accessible and usable... The goal of digital preservation is the accurate rendering of authenticated content over time”

Wikipedia

“Digital Preservation Refers to the series of managed activities necessary to ensure continued access to digital materials for as long as necessary. Digital preservation... refers to all of the actions required to maintain access to digital materials beyond the limits of media failure or technological and organisational change.”

Digital Preservation Coalition
Why is digital preservation necessary?

“The rate of change in computing technologies is such that information can be rendered inaccessible **within a decade**…”

Joint Information Systems Committee: Why Digital Preservation?
Why preservation: Obsolescence

- Hardware
- Formats
Why Preservation: Memory / Access failure

• **Documentation**

What is this? Where is it?
Can I use this picture in my report?
Who took it?

• **Access**

“Dear former employer,
I need my project from a few years ago, can I have a copy please...?”
What does preservation involve?

Similarities with Traditional Preservation

• Material needs to be assessed
• Material needs to have a plan made for its long-term survival
• The plan must be appropriate to the material

• The correct conservation work must be done to the material
• The material must be monitored and further conservation or remedial work carried out as appropriate
• It should be carried out by professionals who keep up to date with the latest advances
What does preservation involve?

Accreditation

How do you know you can trust the way we preserve our data?

• We hold a Data Seal of Approval
• We follow the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model
What does preservation involve?
Digital Preservation Standards

• **Submission Information Package (SIP):**
  Original data supplied by the producer (creator or depositor) including documentation to facilitate archiving and reuse.

• **Archival Information Package (AIP):**
  Data generated from the SIP and the long-term Preservation package managed within the OAIS Including administrative, technical and reuse documentation.

• **Dissemination Information Package (DIP):**
  Data generated from the SIP/AIP and made available to consumers (users) including documentation to facilitate use.
## What does preservation involve?

### Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In common with traditional archives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A collections policy</td>
<td>ADS Preservation Policy</td>
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<td>Selection and retention, review and disposal</td>
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</table>
What does preservation involve?

**Ingest**

Data transfer
Virus check
Media and file readability check
Check file formats are suitable for deposit
Documentation and integrity check
Record details of SIP in Collection Management System
Standardise file names
Copy to data server
What’s in it for me?

Visibility!

Source: Beagrie et al 2013 The Value and Impact of the Archaeology Data Service

Figure 5.2: Cumulative website accesses, 1998-2012
What’s in it for me?

I gave it the archive... on a CD... in a box... in their store... about here

Discovery!

Where’s your stuff if you, or someone else, wants it again?

OR...
What’s in it for me?

It’s here... help yourself!

Brixworth Church Survey: data digitisation and analysis
David Parsons (FSA), D S Sutherland, 2015

Introduction

The Brixworth Archaeological Research Committee was founded in 1972 and wound up in 2015. From 1976 a fieldwork project had as its aim the stone-by-stone recording of all the exposed fabric of All Saints’ Church, which continued sporadically into the early 1990s, as opportunities for surveying arose. A large number of stone types is present in the fabric and the recording included the petrological identification of each individual building stone.

What’s in it for me?

• Risk Management
  • File migrations / data recovery
• Adherence to CIfA best practice
  • 3.4.6 The digital archive should conform to recognised standards and guidelines on how data should be structured, preserved and accessed, as summarised in AAF 2007 and made available by the Archaeology Data Service.
  • 3.5.4 All born digital material should be included in the archive, together with appropriate digital material compiled from paper records.
  • 3.5.5 Digital archive material should be deposited with a trusted digital repository, where data migration and backup procedures are in place, and the integrity of the digital archive is maintained.
Assessment in advance of conversion from bookshop to sandwich shop (A1 to A3).

Late C17th and c1760, later modification to Petergate in 1771.

19th Century shop front

Intangibles?
What should I do?

Everyone has a part to play:

- Development Management Advisors (Archaeologists / Conservation Officers)
- Contractors
- Archives / Museums
What should I do?

• Recognise data is as fragile and vulnerable
• Stop archiving data as objects rather than computerised information
• Raise awareness of what’s involved in digital preservation
What should I do?

Development Management Advisors

- Specify that data management plans are put in place in WSIs / Briefs
- Recommend standards and best practices
- Specify the deposit of digital data with a Trusted Digital Repository (ADS)
- Talk about the costs of digital archiving and make sure they’re understood
What should I do?

Museums & Archives

• Stop accepting CDs and DVDs in documentation boxes (or otherwise)
• Specify the deposit of digital data with a Trusted Digital Repository (ADS)
• Point to the ADS cost calculator for digital data
• Talk to ADS about access to digital data from units and researchers working in your collecting area
Put in place a data management plan and implement it!
The plan should cover:

• The data you will be creating
• How and when this will be documented (the standards to follow; the naming conventions to use)
• Where data will be stored during the project
• Who is responsible for data security and backups
• Obtaining permission from the owners of the IPR to preserve and distribute the data
• Where data will be deposited after the project

http://www.dcc.ac.uk/resources/data-management-plans
How do I go about preservation? Depositing with ADS

1. **Traditional deposit** for large datasets
2. **ADS-easy** for small to medium data sets
3. **OASIS** for grey literature*

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*OASIS refers to the Open Access Studies Information System.*
Tools for you: OASIS

Add up to 150 digital photographs with your report for £150+VAT
Tools for you: ADS-easy

Welcome to ads-easy

ads-easy is a system into which you can upload digital files and associated metadata from archaeological fieldwork and research. On submission these files will be delivered to the ADS for inclusion in our archive.

When should you use ads-easy?

At least for the time being, ads-easy is best used for small to medium sized archives, by which we mean archives of around 300 files of a common type. The system works best with projects that contain straightforward file types such as text, images, spreadsheets and CAD files. ads-easy complements the use of the OASIS system so is especially useful for depositing the digital outputs of small fieldwork projects where you are happy with a simple archive interface i.e. you don’t want an online GID interface or something similar.

ads-easy can also accept audio, databases and geophysics files but we currently exclude the upload of 3D laser scanning and larger files due to the limitations of using the web to upload large files.

If you are uncertain about whether you should use ads-easy please get in touch and we can talk to you about the options.

Registering for ads-easy

Please click here to register for ads-easy, if you have already registered, please click on the login link on the menu bar above.

Latest news from the ADS

March 2013: Five new archives added to Southampton’s Designated Archaeology Collections Programme

March 2013: Archaeological and cultural heritage investigations on the site of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

February 2013: ADS maritime records discoverable through the MEDIN portal

February 2013: Re-release of the HMJ Underhill Archive

January 2013: The ADS’ growing Grey Literature Library

January 2013: The Archaeological Journal of the Royal Archaeological Institute at ADS

December 2012: Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports at the ADS
# Traditional Deposit

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• Data about data!
  • For preservation
  • For discovery
    • Collection
    • File

• What goes in your spreadsheet goes straight into our database. If your description says ‘Wall’ how will this distinguish it from the 5,000 or so other files that depict a wall?
Contact us

- Deposit
  - [http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/deposit.xhtml](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/deposit.xhtml)

- Costings
  - [http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/easy/costing](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/easy/costing)
  - collections@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk

- General Help
  - [help@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk](mailto:help@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk)
Exercise: What’s this?!