

Cedar Project Acquisitions Policy

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1. The purpose of the CEDAR project

CEDAR stands for “Community Experience, Data, Analysis and Research”. The CEDAR Project involves amassing a database of information (very broadly defined) that is directly relevant to LGB·T people and communities in the South West peninsula, and to policy-makers and service-providers whose work affects LGB·T people’s lives, wellbeing, or access to services.¹

It is envisaged that the usefulness of the CEDAR Project will be explored and developed over time, but that the primary applications of its resources will centre on:

- educating public, voluntary, and community sector organisations and key personnel in the needs, vulnerability to disadvantage and attitudes of members of the various LGB·T communities within the peninsula.
- community development through raising awareness of heritage, tradition, and histories
- promoting effective social inclusion and mainstreaming equality through service-delivery in all fields
- providing a community-led and trusted resource whereby other organisations can commission new targeted community consultations and needs-assessments
- combating isolation and the social and health-related disadvantages that follow this
- providing access to relevant formal and other research

Not all CEDAR information should be local to the peninsula. CEDAR must also include national policy documents and research reports, good practice guidelines from across the UK, and relevant research and other information from all areas in the EU and across the world.

It is not anticipated that the financial value of the CEDAR collections will reach a level at which the Trust’s general contents insurance will be affected, but the Executive Director has the responsibility of assessing this issue from time to time and advising the Trustees accordingly.

2. The operational functions of the CEDAR project

CEDAR has three operational functions.

2.1 collecting, classifying and storage of information

For more details see sections 4, 5 and 6 below.

2.2 interpretation and contextualisation

Experience has shown that sometimes, even with the best of intentions, information gathered and applied by organisations that are not community-led (e.g. public authorities) has raised barriers rather than reduced them, because they have applied to their local context data that was specific to a very different context. An easy example would be a community survey that presents as having been inclusive but turns out on examination to have an overwhelming majority of white gay men amongst their respondents, making it unsafe to roll out its findings as a guide to the local needs of (say) lesbians, or transgendered people, or asians or asylum-seekers. Again, an impressive-looking survey may have been conducted only amongst people who were widely Out and had access to a metropolitan scene in, say, Manchester or London; it would therefore be highly misleading to use its results to assess the needs and attitudes of highly closeted and self-protective LGB·T people in a rural PCT or local government district, sixty miles and three bus-journeys away from the nearest gay-friendly pub. And, less obviously, we have sometimes found that the methodology of a piece of research suggests that the researchers were less likely than they thought to have won the confidence of a broad or representative spectrum of different community voices.

CEDAR therefore willingly provides any research that we possess (so long as it is in the public domain), but we will support it appropriately with our own knowledge of the local demographics,

¹ As always in Intercom documents, “the peninsula” means the area included within the Counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset and Somerset, and the Unitary Authorities of Plymouth, Torbay, North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, Bournemouth and Poole.

needs and attitudes, providing a skilled and fair analysis of how far the research usefully and accurately reflects the local situation within the context of the purpose for which it is required.

2.3 making resources available to other organisations across the peninsula

The primary beneficiaries of the resource, within the peninsula, are local LGB/T communities, projects, and individuals, who have free access to the resources within our capacity; other unfunded voluntary and community-sector organisations, who have the same free access; and public authorities, well-funded VCISOs, businesses and commercial organisations, where we would expect that access to the resource would be on a fair basis of providing affordable support to help make the resource sustainable.

Where CEDAR information is also relevant in other areas of the UK, or at a national level, it is expected that it would be supplied on terms that would effectively support the operations of the Trust and the CEDAR project.

3. Scope of the Information

The term “information” in this context includes the broadest possible range of content. (For physical formats, see section 5 below). The two primary boundaries are:

3.1 the information must be specifically relevant to LGB ·T people and communities, broadly defined, across or within the peninsula, and must be able to benefit them directly, or be valuable intelligence for those people and organisations who are responsible for planning or delivering services (again, this must be read as being very broadly-defined) that affect the well-being of LGB ·T people in the peninsula;

3.2 no information may be held in the CEDAR Project resources that affects the privacy or confidentiality of any living individual, whether they are technically the data subject or are more distantly involved in the information. All personal, helpline, advocacy and other case files, whether Intercom’s or generated by any other agency, are specifically barred to all external access, and are not included within the CEDAR Project’s resources.

In case the issue should ever arise, it is laid down that the collections will not accept materials that are in themselves unlawful or that would put Trustees, staff or volunteers at risk of civil liability.

The CEDAR collection already contains several thousand items, including:

- Intercom’s own archive relating to the community events, campaigns and research that we have facilitated or initiated since 1998, and our activities in the areas of (e.g.) community development, community safety, police liaison, local government, and health;
- research reports and demographic studies from within the peninsula and further afield
- Central Government policy and strategy documents, primary legislation and statutory instruments, Hansard debates, etc.
- minutes of meetings, local plans and other strategic and tactical documents of public bodies, including local government, Criminal Justice Boards and their member agencies, Local Strategic Partnerships, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, etc.
- public authorities’ equality and diversity policies and strategies
- many files of media reports (local, national and international) relating to (e.g.):
 - young LGB ·T people’s projects and homophobic bullying issues in schools
 - CJS policies and examples of good and bad practice (e.g. in encouraging reporting of phobic crime)
 - good and not-so-good practice on a wide variety of LGB ·T-related issues
 - homophobic organisations, policy documents and political campaigns against equality
 - policy issues
 - workplace issues

- and many other topics
- coverage of important trials, tribunal hearings etc. relating to phobic crime, case law development, etc
- important historical, literary, and other cultural events and the rôle that local LGB·T people have played in local and national history

There are inevitably gaps, and we are seeking set-up funding from charitable sources with which to employ a professional researcher to work on filling the gaps and improving the cataloguing and classification of the collection. (See section 6 below).

4. Gaps and priorities

We have identified significant gaps within the collections as they have been accumulated over the last nine years.

In the opinion of staff and Trustees, the primary gap is local history and heritage, though over the past two years we have been trying to fill this gap as far as capacity allows. There is however no capacity to do any extended active research in local archives or to identify and make contact with individuals and personal repositories of important events and people. Filling these gaps is a priority, since (a) awareness of local heritage and local histories can do a great deal to combat the social isolation and low self-esteem issues that affect many rural LGB·T people, (b) these histories have an important rôle to play in local strategies for reducing the level of public prejudice, and (c) they ought to be preserved for their own sake.

There are other significant gaps amongst our holdings of minutes of meetings and strategic documents from CDRPs, LCJBs, Area Child Protection Committees, and LAA teams and their sub-groups, particularly in Dorset and Somerset.

5. Physical formats and preservation

The Executive Director, who has relevant experience and skills, has undertaken the responsibility of acting as CEDAR archivist in a voluntary capacity for the time being, which includes ensuring that the archival and conservation needs of the collections are assessed and satisfied.

5.1 General policy on vulnerable and/or valuable and/or unique documents

Intercom does not intend to accumulate a collection of vulnerable documents which would require sophisticated archival conservation and a controlled environment. If the funds and dedicated curatorial skills and time were available, we would welcome this as a development in the future. For the time being, our present building is physically entirely unsuitable in terms of (a) convenience of physical access by visitors, (b) workspace for visitors, (c) exhibition and display space, and (d) any possibility of creating and maintaining a sophisticated temperature and humidity controlled environment anywhere on the premises. Rather, we are aiming either to accumulate documents as scanned images, photocopies or transcripts (see below, 5.3), and in the form of shelf or box or other appropriate references to original documents in professionally-housed collections.

Where Intercom is offered the opportunity of acquiring original archival documents we shall discuss with the would-be donor the best way of preserving the items as documents. We would as a rule try to broker a donation of the documents directly to a professionally housed archive within a local records office or a local university library, or to a specialised archive such as the Hall-Carpenter collection at the London School of Economics.

5.2 The current range of formats

The CEDAR collection already contains printed books, pamphlets and booklets; other paper documents; electronic files (mostly in TIFF, JPEG or PDF format); original photographs; videotapes and audiotapes of Intercom's own launch-events, press-interviews, and other media events; and CDROMS and DVDs.

5.3 Approved and preferred formats

- A. Wherever possible and lawful, resources are accumulated as high-quality scanned images, or where appropriate as PDFs.
- B. Where our existing resources are in non-unique paper form (e.g. newspaper cuttings, photocopies, printouts), and copyright law permits, we have a programme in place for scanning the documents as high-resolution TIFFs or PDFs, checking against the originals, and then disposing of the originals for recycling. Because of lack of general capacity this programme depends on the availability of appropriately-skilled volunteers.
- C. Some printed or paper resources will be best preserved in that form (e.g. because of copyright restrictions, or for convenience of consultation or annotation). These are housed in physical security according to their nature.
- D. The normal standard for a TIFF will be 600 dpi. For the most routine texts 300 dpi will be acceptable. Where we can foresee that we or our stakeholders might need to use photographs or other images as high-quality printed images these will normally be scanned at 1200 dpi.

5.4 Storage

Bound volumes should be stored on shelves where they fit comfortably and are physically supported by neighbouring volumes of a similar size; booklets and pamphlets should be stored similarly to books but with added physical support (e.g. in shelved magazine boxes), or else flat in protective boxes; loose papers should be boxed (or possibly stored in hanging files) provided that there is full physical protection for the needs of the paper and medium. (Important pencil annotations, for example, must be protected from rubbing, and ballpoint annotations must be prevented from bleeding into adjacent documents.) All loose metal such as paperclips must be removed at the earliest opportunity. Fixed metal such as staples should be carefully removed and substituted where necessary with archivally-sound adhesive. Documents should be assessed for vulnerability and flagged for care wherever advisable.

Paper documents will be housed in acid-free paper environments proportionately to their physical needs and their intrinsic importance.

Non-printed materials such as audio tapes and videotapes, CDROMS and DVDs will be held in appropriate protective conditions promoting long life, under standard archival guidelines.

If in the judgement of the Executive Director the Intercom Centre cannot provide a physically safe environment for a particularly fragile, vulnerable or valuable item he will take steps to ensure its preservation in an external secure and appropriate archive. However, it is not envisaged that the CEDAR collections will amass items of this degree of fragility and / or value while Intercom is housed in its present building.

6. Classification and cataloguing

The aim is to classify the content of the CEDAR collections for easy identification of items relevant to an enquiry. The physical location of each item will depend on its physical make-up and conservation needs: physical housing must be independent of the classification system used for the contents of the items. The classification system includes unique references which clearly direct the staff-member or volunteer or enquirer to the physical address of the item in question.

At present the CEDAR collections are accessed through a good classification system developed by earlier volunteers in the form of an accurate and quite sophisticated but unwieldy Excel spreadsheet, which is difficult to maintain. It is an urgent priority to replace this catalogue with a more user-friendly and more sustainable Access-based catalogue, but this will depend on locating the funds to employ a suitably skilled expert in Access to work with the Executive Director and the Community Development Manager in developing the right system and training staff and volunteers to maintain and extend it.

7. Copyright and intellectual property rights

The Trust will scrupulously observe copyright law in respect of photocopying, quoting from, and publishing published documents, unpublished copyright manuscripts, and other works not in the public domain.

Where we acquire photocopies of such materials in public hands (e.g. from local records offices) we shall ensure there is a written record of whatever limitations may be imposed by the owner of the original documents and/or any separate copyright-owner, and that these limitations are carefully respected.

External users and Trust volunteers will only be permitted to photocopy or quote from or publish a document, or use it in a display, after they have demonstrated and the Trust has ascertained that the proposed use is not in breach of the law or of any agreement between the Trust and a third party. If any such limitation exists approval must be sought by the prospective user and given formally in writing by the Executive Director or a senior member of staff, and the documentation must show that the proposed use has been shown to be legitimate and within the terms of any agreement, or else that all necessary permissions have been obtained in advance.

It is the Trust's standard practice to have regard to the British Library Manuscript Collections' published guidance on copyright, and in case of any uncertainty which cannot be solved by the owner of the original document recourse will be had to national experts and information-sources such as the Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance, the Society of Authors, etc. We anticipate that careful observance of this policy, of agreements with third parties, and of national good practice guidelines will continue to ensure the Trust is not in a position of needing to take legal advice on any such issue.

As a general rule the Trust will always take the most cautious stance on any issue of copyright or intellectual property, which is to be understood as meaning that stance which is most scrupulously protective of actual or potential rights or vested interests of others.