



OPERATIONAL SELECTION POLICY OSP7

THE WELSH OFFICE 1979 -1997

Revised November 2005

1 Authority

- 1.1 The National Archives' Acquisition and Disposition Policy statement announced the Office's intention of developing Operational Selection Policies across government. These policies would apply the collection themes described in the statement to the records of individual departments and agencies.
- 1.2 Operational Selection Policies are intended to be working tools for those involved in the selection of public records. This policy may, therefore, be reviewed and revised in the light of comments received from the users of the records or from archive professionals, the National Assembly of Wales' experience of using the policy, or as a result of newly discovered information. There is no formal cycle of review but we would welcome comments at any time. The extent of any review and revision exercise will be determined according to the nature of the comments received.
- 1.3 If you have any comments upon this policy, please e-mail records-management@nationalarchives.gov.uk or write to:
Acquisition and Disposition Policy Manager
Records Management Department
The National Archives
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2 Scope

- 2.1 This Operational Selection Policy focuses on the period 1979 (the beginning of the first Thatcher administration which followed the first devolution referendum) to 1997, when the Labour Party entered office.
- 2.2 By 1979, the Welsh Office had assumed responsibility for most policy areas. The main exceptions were foreign policy, national defence, maintenance of law and order, (including the administration of justice), and direct taxation.
- 2.3 This Operational Selection Policy does not cover those aspects of functions where the Welsh Office followed the lead from Whitehall in its entirety. These will be dealt with in Operational Selection Policies for the Whitehall department concerned. This policy focuses on issues specific to Wales.
- 2.4 It is not an exhaustive statement of all records that will be acquired but it is intended to provide a clear direction to those who are making review decisions.
- 2.5 The Government of Wales Act 1998 designated a new kind of public record – Welsh public records. As well as the records of the elected National Assembly for Wales, Welsh public records include the records of the Welsh Office and those of its sponsored bodies that were previously public records. A list of these can be found in s 118 of the Government of Wales Act.

3 Responsibilities of the Welsh Office

3.1 In 1979, the Welsh Office had responsibility in Wales for ministerial functions relating to:

- Health and personal social services
- Education (except for terms and conditions of service, student awards and the University of Wales)
- Welsh language and culture
- Local government
- Housing
- Water and sewerage
- Environmental protection
- Agriculture and fisheries
- Land use, including town and country planning
- New towns
- Ancient monuments and historic buildings
- Roads
- Tourism
- Certain matters affecting the careers service and activities of the Manpower Services Commission in Wales
- The operation of the European Development Fund in Wales
- Other European Community (EC) matters relating to Wales
- Civil emergencies
- Economic affairs and regional planning in Wales

3.2 By 1997 the following functions had been added to this remit:

- Sport
- Countryside and nature conservancy
- Certain matters concerning the Training Agency in Wales
- Forestry

Changes had been made to the scope of some functions:

- Education now included responsibility for the University of Wales
- “Arts” had been added to Welsh language and culture
- Responsibility for the careers service had been enhanced to include training
- Financial assistance to industry had been added to economic affairs

4 Relevant Collection Themes in The National Archives’ Acquisition and Disposition Policies

4.1 The Acquisition Policy statement outlines those themes which form the basis of The National Archives’ appraisal and selection decisions. Of these themes, the following are of potential relevance to the work of the Welsh Office:

- 2.2.1 Policy and administrative processes of the state:
 - 2.2.1.2 Management of the economy
 - 2.2.1.3 External relations and defence policy
 - 2.2.1.5 Formulation and delivery of social policies
 - 2.2.1.6 Cultural policy
- 2.2.2 Interaction of the State with its citizens and its impact on the physical environment:
 - 2.2.2.1 The economic, social and demographic condition of the UK, as documented by the state's dealings with individuals, communities and organisations outside its own formal boundaries
 - 2.2.2.2 Impact of the state on the physical environment
- 4.2 The Disposition Policy statement identifies records that are more fittingly deposited with or presented to other archives. Paragraphs in the statement, which are of relevance to records created by the Welsh Office, are:
 - 2.2.1 Local record offices for records of projects relating to specific geographical areas in Wales
 - 2.2.3 More specialist archives for site-related Cadw records
 - 2.2.5 Records in specialist media for the aerial photograph collection of Wales produced by the Ordnance Survey which are regularly deposited at the National Assembly for Wales, Cathays Park where they are used for both administrative and research purposes. (N.B. These records are not otherwise dealt with in this Operational Selection Policy)
- 4.3 Unless otherwise stated, the records that will be selected for permanent preservation relate to policy decisions made by the Welsh Office and not to case files or other unregistered papers.

5 Themes for Selection

Within the core responsibilities of the Welsh Office, the themes listed below were of particular significance during the period 1979 to 1997. The order of the themes is not significant. In some cases they may cross the responsibilities of more than one Welsh Office division.

5.1 Private Office

- 5.1.1 The Private Office of the Secretary of State for Wales and his ministers did not maintain its own file series. It has been the practice within the Welsh Office to send all Private Office papers to the appropriate division for filing on divisional files. Selected records will be taken from this source.

5.2 Agriculture

This theme is covered by sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the administrative processes of the state and interaction of the government with the individual. The relevant Acquisition Policy sub-section is identified in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

- 5.2.1 Responsibility for agricultural policy passed to the Welsh Office from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) between 1968, when the Welsh Office Agriculture Department (WOAD) was set up, and 1978. During the period covered by this Policy, the Welsh Office generally followed MAFF's lead, but there were a number of areas that had a more definite relevance to Wales. These include: relations with the European Community; the administration of a number of grant programmes; schemes for encouraging Welsh farming; the Welsh fishing industry; forestry in Wales; and initiatives to introduce more environmentally friendly farming practices.
- 5.2.2 The Welsh farming industry is predominantly composed of small pastoral farms. The sheep farming is the most important aspect but cattle are important in areas of south-western Dyfed. Hill farming is carried out in much of central Wales and the importance of sustaining environmentally fragile countryside was recognised within WOAD. Forestry was also economically important with the Welsh Office sharing responsibility with the Forestry Commission. As with the rest of Britain, the fishing industry had been in decline for a number of years and by the time period covered by this Policy was mainly centred in the Milford Haven area.
- 5.2.3 An important part of the work of WOAD was the administration of grant schemes established by central government, the Welsh Office and the European Community. Records relating to policy matters concerning the distribution of such grants will be kept; those related to individual grants will be destroyed except where specific cases resulted in a change of policy. (2.2.1.2)
- 5.2.4 The Welsh Office, often through its various agencies, took advantage of services provided by the European Community (EC). Within Wales WOAD and the European Union (EU) has been responsible for the adoption of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Records covering direct approaches made by the Welsh Office to the EC and implementation of the CAP will be selected. (2.2.2.1)
- 5.2.5 A separate division within WOAD was responsible for animal health and welfare, including meat hygiene and the monitoring of slaughter houses. By the 1990s, this division was also responsible for dealing with environmental pollution caused by and affecting farming practices. In some of these areas, WOAD would have followed practices established by MAFF, but there were a number of aspects that were of particular importance in Wales. These included the effects of pesticide and the results of the BSE epidemic. Records relating to these functions will be selected. Of particular relevance to farming in Wales was the explosion at the nuclear power station at Chernobyl in the Ukraine in April 1986. The resulting radioactive fallout had immediate and long-lasting effects on Welsh sheep

farming. WOAD records relating to the identification and resolution of these problems will be selected. (2.2.1.5 and 2.2.1.2)

5.2.6 Policy for the Welsh fishing industry was the responsibility of the same division as animal health. In common with the fishing industry elsewhere in Britain, the industry had long been in a state of decline. In Wales it was mainly concentrated in the Milford Haven area, though commercial fishing was still carried out in North Wales and in the Gower. Records relating to WOAD's policy to promote the industry, in those cases where there is a significant Welsh element, will be selected. Subjects likely to be covered include: conservation and the management of stock; improvements to harbour and marketing facilities; and the development of fresh water fisheries. Where records exist that are relevant only to specific areas, these will be presented to the appropriate local record office. (2.2.1.2)

5.2.7 WOAD was responsible for developing and implementing plans for national and civil emergencies within Wales. This mainly involved the maintenance and distribution of food stocks within Wales and the co-ordination of the activities of the other Welsh Office divisions. The Department was responsible for policy decisions concerned with the storage and distribution of food stocks, and planning for managing the large numbers of evacuees and refugees expected from elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Records relating to these activities will be selected. (2.2.1.3)

5.3 **Economic Planning**

This theme is covered by sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the administrative processes of the state and interaction of the government with the individual. The relevant Acquisition Policy sub-section is identified in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

5.3.1 The Welsh Office Economic Planning Group was originally set up to provide services for the Welsh Economic Council and Welsh Council. On the winding up of the latter in 1979, it also became responsible for economic development within the Welsh Office. The function of the divisions within the group was to provide co-ordination of policies in the fields of economic planning, planning of land use, and to liaise with external agencies including the Welsh Development Agency, the Development Board for Rural Wales, local authorities, private firms, and individuals.

5.3.2 The main responsibility of the Economic Planning Group was the co-ordination of the Welsh Office's direct dealings with the EU and planning for the single European market. This included formulating Welsh Office policy towards the European Structural Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, and other regional development funds. It had responsibilities for planning and developing specific EC programmes, though by 1992, those relating to industry had become the responsibility of the Industry Department. Files relating to main policy decisions will be selected. (2.2.1.3)

- 5.3.3 The Group also had responsibility for developing regional policies for Wales. It was responsible for establishing enterprise zones, the dispersal of government departments, and the location of public sector jobs within Wales. Records relating to these functions will be selected. (2.2.1.2 and 2.2.2.1)
- 5.3.4 The Group was also responsible for the sponsorship of the Welsh Development Agency (WDA) and the Development Board for Rural Wales (DBRW). Neither the WDA nor the DBRW are Welsh public records bodies so their records are not subject to the supervision and guidance of the National Archives. No disposition arrangements have been made for the records of the WDA; those of the DBRW are deposited at the National Library of Wales.
- 5.3.5 Records illustrating the development of and changes in the relationships between the WDA and the Welsh Office will be selected. (2.2.1.2) Because the fate of WDA records is uncertain, copies of records relating to policy decisions reached by the WDA may be selected. These are likely to include the criteria used in awarding grants, the financial management of grants and records covering major projects. In particular, minutes and papers of the main WDA committees will be selected where they survive within Welsh Office files.
- 5.3.6 The Group was also responsible for policy relating to employment and training, including liaison with the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) and its successors. It encouraged local enterprise, particularly the growth of small businesses. By the early 1990s, it was involved in privatisation and deregulation and provided support for the 1992 National Garden Festival at Ebbw Vale. Records dealing with the Welsh Office aspects of this work, including policy files illustrating the Festival's contribution to the redevelopment of the Valleys, will be selected. Welsh Office records relating to the planning following that decision will be presented to the Gwent Record Office. (2.2.1.2 and 2.2.1.5)

5.4 **Land Use Planning**

This theme is covered by sub-sections 2.2.1.2 and 2.2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the management of the economy and the impact of the state on the physical environment. The relevant Acquisition Policy sub-section is identified in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

- 5.4.1 Close connections existed between the Economic Planning Groups and the Land Planning Groups and their successors. Both Planning Divisions were responsible for oversight of planning throughout Wales. Oversight of functions carried out by local authorities was the responsibility of the Local Government Division (see 5.13 below). The specific areas dealt with by the Planning Group, for which at certain periods responsibility was shared with the Economic Development Groups, included: urban and rural renewal, particularly the Valleys Initiative, the Cardiff Bay Development Corporation, and the activities of the Welsh Tourist Board. Records relating to policy decisions affecting all the initiatives listed above will be selected. Records relating to local activities in this field will be presented to the

appropriate local record office where one can be clearly identified. The records of the Cardiff Bay Corporation (not a Welsh public record body) have already been transferred to the Glamorgan Record Office. (2.2.1.2)

5.4.2 Another important area of activity for the Land Use Planning Group, especially during the 1980s, related to environmental concerns. By the early 1990s, many of these functions had been transferred to other divisions of the Welsh Office, in particular the Environment Division, and will be dealt with in section 5.14. By 1997 the Group only retained responsibility for national parks, public rights of way and commons. Files relating to major policy decisions will be selected, particularly those dealing with environmental matters. Records relating to the conservation and recreational use of the countryside will be appraised using the guidance set out in the Operational Selection Policy *Use and Conservation of the Countryside for Recreational Purposes*. (Although that Operational Selection Policy does not cover the complete period covered by this one, a similar approach will be taken.) Records relating to policy towards specific national parks may be presented to appropriate local record offices or to the individual national park or the National Trust if required for administrative purposes. (2.2.2.2)

5.5 **Demographic Position**

This theme relates to sub-sections 2.2.1.2 and 2.2.2.1 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the management of the economy and the demographic condition of the UK. The appropriate Acquisition Policy sub-section is identified in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

5.5.1 Since at least the nineteenth century, there has been a strong tendency for industry and consequently population to congregate in the south of the country. This trend has been most noticeable in the area between Cardiff and Newport. Not only has the population been increased by migration from rural areas of Wales, but the area has also received immigrants from England, Europe and Commonwealth countries. Associated with this development has been the increase of service industries such as banking, finance and insurance.

5.5.2 The depopulation of rural areas is an ongoing trend, and has not been halted by the growth of tourism or attempts to stimulate traditional industries, such as slate mining, woollen cloth, and clothes manufacture. Records dealing with formulation and effects of Welsh Office policy on rural depopulation will be selected. (2.2.1.2 and 2.2.1.5)

5.5.3 One way in which the Welsh Office tried to encourage people to remain in rural areas was, from the 1970s, by trying to establish small industrial estates in towns in Mid and North Wales. They also continued the practice of establishing new towns. Although plans for setting up a new town at Llantrisant outside Cardiff were abandoned in 1978, Newtown in Powys was developed during this period and is now the largest town in Mid-Wales. Records relating to the Welsh Office's involvement with the redistribution of population in Wales will be selected.

Responsibility for carrying out policy decisions lay with the Welsh Development Agency and the Development Board for Rural Wales, neither of which are Welsh public record bodies. Welsh Office files or unregistered papers relating to developments in specific areas will be presented to the relevant local record office. (2.2.1.5)

5.5.4 The effect of population moves on parliamentary boundaries is the responsibility of the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales; the responsibility for local government boundaries lies with the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW). The LGBCW has continually monitored the extent of local divisions (counties, district and communities) and records relating to its activities in this area will be selected. From 1990 the LGBCW also played a large part in the re-organisation of Welsh counties, though major decisions were made directly by the Secretary of State. An Operational Selection Policy will be produced covering electoral functions and records will be selected according to its guidance.

5.6 **Industry**

This theme relates to sub-sections 2.2.1.2, 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the management of the economy, the economic condition of the UK and the impact of the state on the physical environment. The relevant Acquisition Policy sub-section is indicated in brackets at the end of each paragraph.

5.6.1 Welsh industry has traditionally been concentrated in a few areas. Coal mining, iron and steel production, and the heavy industries associated with it centred in the south-east with another area of coal mining situated in the north east border region. During World War II there was increased production leading to an apparent boom after 1945. Both industries were in decline throughout the second half of the twentieth century. The Welsh Office's industrial policy has concentrated on attempts to revive these traditional industries and to encourage inward investment and the introduction of new industries, both in the older industrial areas and in more rural areas in Mid-Wales and the north.

5.6.2 Although the last deep coal mine in Wales run by British Coal, the Point of Ayr Colliery in North Wales, did not close until 1996, production was falling and the closure of mines throughout the country was an important issue from the 1950s onwards. Drift mines, usually small-scale commercial operations, can still be found in West and South Wales, as can open-cast mining, which is undertaken as a larger commercial operation. Welsh Office files relating to the encouragement of diversity in this industry will be kept, as will those that reflect concern at the decline of the industry (2.2.1.2). Operational records of many Welsh collieries have been deposited in or presented to the appropriate local record office.

5.6.3 A similar situation has arisen with the steel industry. By 1970 the Welsh steel industry was in decline, unable to compete with West Germany and Japan. During 1975 and 1976, the Ebbw Vale steel works closed with many other

closures following by 1979. Steel Production at the John Summers Works at Shotton in north-east Wales ceased in 1981, leading to substantial reductions in the work force. A much-reduced site operated as a finishing plant for steel produced elsewhere in the United Kingdom. Steel works at Llanwern and Port Talbot managed to survive but only by radical re-organisation including large cuts in the work force. Files relating to Welsh Office policy and involvement in dealing with the effects of the closures and attempts to establish alternative industries will be selected. (2.2.1.2)

- 5.6.4 Since the 1960s, the Welsh Office followed a policy of introducing new industries in many parts of Wales. Special emphasis was put on diversification. South Wales was declared a development area, foreign - particularly Japanese - investment was encouraged and grants from the European Community were sought. Since 1972, Japanese companies have established more than 20 factories in Wales, one of the earliest being the Sony factory at Bridgend established in 1973. Grants were given to encourage this development. Policy records relating to the development of new industry in Wales will be selected and as will some significant case files illustrating the way in which this policy was implemented. (2.2.1.2)
- 5.6.5 The decline of coal mining and other heavy industry in the South Wales valleys led to high unemployment throughout the area. In 1988, the Secretary of State launched the Valleys Initiative with the aim of regenerating this area. Records relating to the establishment of this project and policy records relating to its implementation will be selected (2.2.1.2)
- 5.6.6 Milford Haven was recognised as possessing a harbour suitable for accommodating oil tankers and the first oil terminal was built by 1961. The harbour continued to be developed between 1960 and 1980. This development raised a number of environmental issues. Records relating to the later development of oil refining and distribution at Milford Haven will be selected. (2.2.1.2, 2.2.2.2)
- 5.6.7 The discovery of North Sea oil in the 1960s stimulated efforts to discover a similar source in the "Celtic Sea" (St George's Channel). Records relating to Welsh Office policy and support in this field will be selected. (2.2.1.2)
- 5.6.8 Alternative sources of power were investigated. This resulted in the establishment of nuclear power stations at Trawsfynydd, Merioneth, and Wylfa Head, Anglesey. Whilst Wylfa Head is still in production, Trawsfynydd was closed in 1993. A number of hydroelectric schemes have been introduced in Mid-Wales, and more recently experiments have been made encouraging the introduction of wind farms. Files relating to Welsh Office policy and involvement in these developments will be selected. (2.2.1.2, 2.2.2.2)

5.7 Vocational Training

This theme relates to section 2.2.1.5 of the Acquisition Policy: to the formulation and delivery of social policies.

- 5.7.1 Responsibility for vocational training in Wales was transferred from the Employment Department Group in 1992. The Welsh Office's new responsibilities included producing policy on youth training schemes, apprenticeships and vocational qualifications, the introduction and monitoring of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and the provision of a careers service. Training and Enterprise Councils were set up in 1989 and became the responsibility of the Industry Department. In many cases, the policies developed in this field would have been similar to those developed in England. Selection of records relating to these functions will be made in accordance with an Operational Selection Policy, which will be drawn up to cover the work of the Employment Department. Records relating to the decision to transfer the responsibility to the Welsh Office will be selected.

5.8 **Tourism**

This theme is covered by sub-sections 2.2.1.2 and 2.2.2.1 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the management of the economy and the impact of the state on the physical environment.

- 5.8.1 For many years, tourism has been important in Wales, receiving a large amount of support from the government. The Welsh Tourist Board is not a public record body, but records relating to the Welsh Office's relationship with the Board will be selected.

5.9 **Education and Training**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.5 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the formulation and delivery of social policies.

- 5.9.1 By 1979, the Welsh Office had full responsibility for education in Wales with the exception of the funding of higher education. This followed in 1992, with the establishment of the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales. Throughout much of the period, Welsh education followed the same pattern as English education, though there are significant differences. The most important of these is the increasing use of the Welsh language as a medium for teaching in schools, colleges and universities. The teaching of specifically Welsh history, literature and culture has increased. Records relating to the encouragement of Welsh culture and the use of the Welsh language throughout the education sector will be selected.
- 5.9.2 In Welsh, as in English education, the most important event in the period covered by this Operational Selection Policy was the passage of the 1988 Education Reform Act. In both countries this had a fundamental effect on the way that education was carried out. Most of the changes brought about by the Act will be

dealt with in future Operational Selection Policies. Records relating to the Welsh Office's input into this legislation will be selected.

5.9.3 The teaching of and through the medium of Welsh was further encouraged by the introduction of the National Curriculum following the Education Reform Act 1988. The responsibility for dealing with the National Curriculum in Wales lay with the Curriculum Council for Wales 1988-1992, and following the 1992 Education Act, with the Assessment and Curriculum Council for Wales (1992-1998). The minutes and papers of these bodies will be selected and those of their sub-committees and subject panels dealing with the teaching of geography, history and religious education in Wales because there are significant differences between the content of the curriculum in Wales and England.

5.9.4 The introduction of grant-maintained schools following the 1988 Act was of less importance in Wales than it was in England, as very few schools voted to become grant-maintained, despite encouragement from the Welsh Office. Although the 1993 Education Act made provision for a Funding Agency for Schools in Wales, this option was never taken up. Records relating to the involvement of the Welsh Office in encouraging the establishment of grant-maintained schools in Wales will be selected. Case files relating to individual schools which became or considered becoming grant maintained will be selected.

5.9.5 Throughout the period and for some years previously, there had been some discussion about the form that the organisation of the University of Wales should take – whether it should be a federation of individual colleges or one centralised university. From time to time, the Welsh Office and, after 1992, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has been involved in these discussions. Policy records relating to Welsh Office and Funding Council participation in these discussions will be selected from both organisations.

5.10 **Cultural Matters, including responsibilities relating to the Welsh Language**
This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.6 of the Acquisition Policy relating to cultural policy.

5.10.1 With the exception of responsibility for the Welsh language, responsibility for wider cultural issues was transferred from the Department of Education to the Welsh Office Education Department in 1992. These new functions included financial sponsorship of and liaison with the National Museum of Wales and the National Library of Wales. Other areas of responsibility included public libraries, broadcasting, sport and other recreational activities. It also co-ordinated Welsh interests in the National Lottery.

5.10.2 Throughout the period covered by this Operational Selection Policy, the encouragement of the Welsh language in areas other than education was of major importance. Legislation from 1967 had allowed the use of the Welsh language in all official communications but had not made it compulsory. This was achieved by

the 1993 Welsh Language Act which gave the language equal status with English. Records relating to Welsh Office policy towards the Welsh language, the drafting and passage through Parliament of the Welsh Language Act, and its implementation and interpretation, will be selected.

5.10.3 Closely connected with the encouragement of the Welsh language was the establishment of a Welsh language television channel, S4C. Files relating to the Welsh Office's policy towards broadcasting in Welsh will be kept. Policy files illustrating Welsh office encouragement of other aspects of the arts in Wales will be selected. These will include the establishment and funding of Welsh National Opera, Welsh National Orchestra, the encouragement of literature in Welsh, and support for eisteddfodau, both national and international.

5.10.4 Sport, particularly rugby, is an important part of Welsh culture. During this period, Wales sought to maintain sporting relationships with South Africa and prepared plans for the new Millennium Stadium in Cardiff. Records relating to the Welsh Office's policy towards both these issues will be selected.

5.11 **Health and Social Services in Wales**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.5 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the formulation and delivery of social policies.

5.11.1 By 1979, the Welsh Office had full responsibility for health matters in Wales. In many areas of its work, the Health and Social Work Departments operated in a similar way to the Department of Health in England. The selection of records relating to health matters in Wales will follow the guidance given in a forthcoming Operational Selection Policy covering health. Policy records relating to matters of particular importance in Wales will be selected. These are Welsh Office policy with regard to occupational diseases such as silicosis, problems arising from an ageing population in rural Wales and the arrangements for general practitioner and hospital coverage in areas with transport and communications difficulties.

5.11.2 Responsibility for social services, closely connected with health, passed to the Welsh Office at the same time as responsibilities for health. The criteria for selection contained in the relevant health Operational Selection Policy on the Administration of Social Security (OSP 5) will be followed for Wales.

5.11.3 In 1996, the Secretary of State announced that there would be an investigation into allegations of child abuse in residential homes in North Wales. The resultant North Wales Child Abuse Tribunal sat from January 1997 until 1998, and its final report was published in 2000. The records of the Tribunal will be selected in their entirety, though it should be noted that documentary evidence supplied by local authorities will have been returned to them. Welsh Office files that were consulted by the Tribunal will be selected as will files relating to Welsh Office activity in advance of the establishment of the Tribunal.

5.12 **Housing in Wales**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.5 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the formulation and delivery of social policies.

5.12.1 Responsibility for all the housing functions of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, and the Department of the Environment had passed to the Welsh Office by 1974. Its responsibilities were similar to those of the Department of the Environment, and selection of files from the Welsh Office will follow criteria in an Operational Selection Policy which will be developed covering housing issues. Files relating to issues of particular importance in Wales will be selected. These will include the sale of council houses to tenants, policy relating to rural housing, and housing aspects of industrial villages.

5.12.2 The Welsh Office had funding responsibilities for two non-departmental public bodies, the Land Authority for Wales and Housing for Wales (Tai Cymru). Neither of these organisations were public record bodies but since 1997, Tai Cymru has been subsumed by the National Assembly of Wales which inherited surviving records. The Land Authority for Wales was abolished in 1999 when its responsibilities and assets passed to the Welsh Development Agency. Some policy records covering the Welsh Office Housing division's relationship with these organisations will be kept to illustrate the way in which the Welsh Office carried out its responsibility for this function.

5.13 **Local Government**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.5 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the formulation and delivery of social policies.

5.13.1 The Welsh Office had responsibility for dealing with local authorities from its inception. The Local Government Division's main duties concerned oversight of local government revenue and expenditure, and it was therefore responsible for overseeing the introduction of the Community Charge ("Poll Tax") and later the Council Tax. The Division was also concerned with cash limit monitoring and when necessary rate capping of local authority budgets. Selection of records relating to these functions will be made in accordance with a forthcoming Operational Selection Policy covering the work of the Department of the Environment and its successors, relating to responsibilities for local government.

5.13.2 The Local Government Division also had responsibilities for overseeing local authorities' activities concerning water supply and the sewage disposal. As for 5.13.1 above, selection will follow guidance laid down in an Operational Selection Policy covering similar activities carried out by the Department of the Environment.

5.13.3 From 1984 local authorities were encouraged to contract out many functions to private suppliers. The Local Government Finance Division had responsibility for framing the Welsh Office's policy in this area, including responses to EC public

procurement directives. It was also responsible for monitoring Councillors' allowances and interests. Policy files covering these functions will be selected following the guidance laid down in an Operational Selection Policy covering similar activities carried out by the Department of the Environment and its successor. Files will also be selected which illustrate the Welsh Office's concern over a number of corruption scandals involving local authorities that took place during the late 1970's.

5.13.4 Following the Local Government Re-organisation (Wales) Act in 1994, the Local Government Re-organisation Division was set up to implement its requirements. It was responsible for ensuring that staff transfers and compensation were carried out in an equitable manner. It also had oversight of electoral matters, including sponsorship of the Local Government Boundary Commission (see para 5.7.5 above). A number of decisions concerning local government boundaries, particularly in regard to the establishment and extent of the unitary authorities were made within the Welsh Office. Records relating to these decisions and procedures used to reach them will be selected.

5.14 **Environmental Protection**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the impact of the state on the physical environment.

5.14.1 The Environment Division held responsibility for water quality, dealing with waste, air pollution, coastal protection and land drainage. By the mid 1990s, its responsibilities in the field of pollution had been extended to cover land as well as air pollution. By the end of the period covered by this Operational Selection Policy, the remit also covered environmental research and "green co-ordination". The Division also had oversight of countryside and nature conservation, and from 1991 sponsored the Countryside Council for Wales. Selection of records relating to these functions will be made in accordance with those Operational Selection Policies that cover environmental issues.

5.15 **Transport and Highways**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.5 and 2.2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the formulation and delivery of social policies and the impact of the state on the physical environment.

5.15.1 Responsibility for transport and highway matters was part of the original Welsh Office remit. Transport and Highways Division had responsibility for the design, construction and maintenance of motorways and trunk roads in Wales. It had close relations with local authorities, making capital allocations and grants to local highway authorities for country roads. It also provided financial support for roads, local public passenger transport and general roads administration through the Rate Support Grant. Records relating to these functions will be selected following the guidance in a forthcoming Operational Selection Policy, covering similar work carried out by the Department of Transport and its successor. Some policy files

relating to specific road projects will be selected; these include the Welsh extension of the M4, the Heads of the Valleys Road (A465) and the North Wales Coast Road (A55).

5.15.2 Communications within Wales have always been difficult. Both road and rail routes run west to east rather than north to south. This problem is particularly acute for rail transport. Attempts have been made to extend the existing rail network especially by completing the western coastal route. The main drivers in these attempts have been to encourage industry in the more remote areas and to promote tourism. The latter has been important in the extension of the network of privately run steam railways in some former industrial areas. Records relating to Welsh Office policy in supporting these initiatives will be selected.

5.15.3 The major airport for Wales is at Rhoose, outside Cardiff. Rhoose developed from a wartime aerodrome and training base to a fully international commercial airport by 1980. Between 1971 and 1995 it was run by the Glamorgan local authorities. In 1995, the airport was privatised. Policy files relating to the Welsh Office's involvement with this and the other Welsh airports will be selected, if any exist.

5.16 **Welsh Nationalism**

This subject is covered by theme 2.2.2.1 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the social and demographic condition of the UK.

5.16.1 Although the referendum on devolution for Wales took place in 1979, and predates this Operational Selection Policy, the effects of planning for the establishment of an assembly for Wales remained a live issue. Files relating to the first devolution attempt will have already been selected and this process will be completed by the selection of any files dealing with its demise. It is unlikely that any files of substance relating to devolution were created during the years of Conservative government but if any do exist they will be selected.

5.16.2 There are a number of organisations in Wales which have supported an increased measure of home rule or outright independence. From time to time, the Welsh Office had contact with these groups. Records, which illustrate the approach of the Welsh Office to issues relating to devolution or independence raised by these groups or its response to actions taken by these groups in support of their objectives, will be selected.

5.16.3 Although there had been some terrorist activity during the 1960s, this had mostly died out during the 1970s. The failure of devolution in 1979, sparked some further activity. From December 1979, arson attacks took place in rural Wales as a protest against the purchase of weekend homes, particularly by the English. Records relating to the way in which the Welsh Office reacted to these attacks will be selected.

5.17 **Emergencies**

This subject is covered by theme 2.2.2.2 of the Acquisition Policy relating to the impact of the state on the physical environment.

- 5.17.1 In February 1990, the sea wall at Towyn, Clwyd (now Conwy) was breached causing substantial floods in a surrounding area of more than 10 square kilometres. The storm also caused structural damage to buildings, brought down trees and main power lines, and overturned vehicles. As well as many houses being flooded, sewage services were unable to function, leading to widespread pollution. This resulted in the largest peacetime evacuation since the Second World War. The responsibility for dealing with the emergency and the subsequent rescue operation lay with the local authority. The sea wall concerned was the responsibility of British Rail; records relating to its reactions will be selected from British Rail records. The Welsh Office commissioned a survey of coastal defences and the Secretary of State was required by Parliament to give greater consideration to ensuring that local authorities and other owners carried out their duties properly. Records relating to the Welsh Office policy concerning coastal defence will be selected. A database describing Welsh coastal protection has already been selected and is available at the National Digital Archive of Datasets (NDAD).
- 5.17.2 On 15th February 1996, the *Sea Empress*, carrying over 100,000 tonnes of crude oil, ran aground at the entrance to Milford Haven harbour. For the next three days, she was battered by heavy seas, and during that time spilled 72,000 tonnes of crude oil. This resulted in heavy pollution of the harbour and the surrounding coastline. The consequent investigation was undertaken by the Marine Pollution Control Unit of the Coastguard Agency, and the clearing up by the Environment Agency, Wales. Records relating to the disaster will be selected from these two agencies, but records illustrating the response of the Welsh Office will also be selected.

5.18 **Cadw**

- 5.18.1 Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, was established in 1991 as a “Next Steps” executive agency of the Welsh Office. It was responsible for protecting the historic environment, including listing, scheduling, and taking monuments into guardianship. Policy records relating to its establishment and to its main responsibilities will be selected. Operational records will be selected in accordance with an Operational Selection Policy on the Preservation of the Built Environment (OSP 17). Records relating to the monuments dealt with by CADW are transferred to the National Monuments Record of Wales at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales at Aberystwyth (2.2.3 of the disposition policy).

5.19 **Central Administration**

This theme is covered by sub-section 2.2.1.1 of the acquisition policy relating to the administrative processes of the state.

5.19.1 The Welsh Office contained a number of general divisions that provided support and services to the Department. During the early part of the period covered by this Operational Selection Policy, practice in the Welsh Office followed the regulations set by central government. Much of the work of these divisions is routine in nature and records will not be kept of their activities.

5.19.2 The main functions carried out by these departments are as follows:

- Provision of advice and briefing for other divisions within the Welsh Office: in most cases records containing information in this category will be selected from the files of the responsible division and not from the records of the central division
- Provision of statistics: details of statistics will be selected from the records of the division responsible for the function, though in the case of statistics produced in electronic formats, background and technical material may be taken from the statistical divisions
- Administration of the Welsh Office: records relating to the routine and day to day organisation of the Welsh Office will not be selected with the exception of:
 - Business directories which give details of the internal organisation and names of staff members responsible for specific functions
 - Records relating to changes introduced into the working of the Welsh Office as a result of the decentralisation of the civil service; delegated budgeting policy; staff conditions and pay. The selection of these records will provide continuity with later records of a similar kind relating to a more autonomous administration following devolution in 1998
 - Records relating to the Welsh Office's policy as regards the privatisation of administrative and management functions. Records covering specific market testing projects will not be selected
 - Records relating to public appointments where Welsh interests or concerns were important issues in the selection process. Such appointments will include the chairmen of organisations such as the Welsh Development Agency and the Welsh Funding Agencies

5.19.3 Finance Divisions: The Welsh Office set up a number of divisions that dealt with financial concerns. As well as dealing with financial aspects of running the Welsh Office, some of them were concerned with financial aspects of the Office's core functions. In particular these related to health and personal social services and local government, including the rating system. On occasions the Finance divisions managed the financial implication of specific projects. Other groups within the Office, for example, Education, and Transport and Highways administered their own finances. It is not proposed to take records relating to the routine financial administration of the Welsh Office. Records relating to the Welsh Office Public Expenditure Survey will be selected from the records of the

Treasury. The final arrangements for the selection of records relating to the government budgetary process will be according to the criteria set out in the Control of Government Expenditure Operational Selection Policy (OSP15).

5.19.4 All other records of central administration will be destroyed unless they relate to one of the key themes identified in this Policy.

6 Implementation of Selection Policy

This policy will be implemented through a two-stage process of review:

- 1 An initial review of files of the Welsh Office series by series using retention schedules agreed with the appropriate division; where no schedule has been agreed, a file-by-file or a paper review will be carried out. Records relating to collection themes in this policy will be identified and separated from those files which do not
- 2 The files relating to collection themes will then be subject to a more detailed second review to ensure that they contain high-level material worthy of preservation. The percentage of files rejected, as a result of this examination, will be monitored; if the percentage is low the practice can be abandoned.

Appendix One: Structure of the filing systems used by the Welsh Office

When the Welsh Office inherited functions from other government departments, it also inherited the staff and the filing systems they used. In most cases, a complete regional office was transferred which continued to follow its own existing practices and continued to use the same systems. It was not until the early 1990s, with the introduction of an electronic registry system that a comprehensive registry system was introduced into the Welsh Office. Throughout the existence of the Welsh Office, new file prefixes were created as new units and functions were introduced. This has resulted in a profusion of prefixes, some lasting only for a short period. There was duplication of prefixes across the Welsh Office. There were often two or more series in existence at the same time covering the same functions, though belonging to different units, and it is no longer clear which was the lead division.

Listed below are the main policy prefixes for policy files in use in the Welsh Office. It is unlikely to be comprehensive and it is also possible that some prefixes contain no files for the period covered by this Operational Selection Policy.

Housing – FHC; FMPR; FUR; H; HCE; HES; HGE; HSG; HH; LAND

Welsh Office Education Office – AE; AL; AYW; EDB; EDT; EWL; FE; GES; HMI; INS; LEA; PSE; TT; W; WEO; WRS; WT; YW

Industry - A; AM; DI; DIR; E; G; ID; REG; RP; RSI; SA

Planning – APP; EP; P; PAC; PAA; PG; PLS; PP; RG; SD

Local Government - AP; AP/WS; DC; DW; DS; AP/WS; DC; DW; EP; EP/WS; G; G/WS; GD; LA; LG; RAP

Local Government Reorganisation Group - LB; LCA; LGR

Local Government Finance – FVT; LCD; LVT

Welsh Office Agriculture Department – AAA; AAB; AAC; AAD; ABA; ABB; ABC; ABF; AC; ADL; ADR; AHL; AHR; ALS; ARD; BNP; CAC; CYL; EGF; EL; FCS; FGB; FGC; GAP; LDW; LGV; MAO; MSR; SGD; WOP

Health – AHS; CAH; CH; CHN; DM; EHC; FPM; FPS; GHS; HAS; HBSS; HF; HL; HM; HMWA; HP; HPB; HS; HSD; HSP; IHD; LASS; LS; MHS; MPB; MS; MISC; NAA; NHSR; PGS; PH; RM; SWS; SPB; XDE; XEC; XHP; XHQ; XVA; XX

Cadw – AA; ACS; ANC; CAM; CCB; CCE; CL; CPW; HB; MNA; P

Environment – EE; HW; LDC; LDS; WEP

Transport & Highways – GF; GT; HL; HS; HT; MLA; R; RD; RDL; RDS; RDW; RL; RLM;
RSU; RWT; TO; TRG; TRL; TRP; TRW; WT; ZA; ZB; ZC

Parliamentary - B

Sport – G/SPR

Tourism – WTB