

BGS is recognised place of deposit under the Public Records Act 1958 S.4(1)

If it appears to the Lord Chancellor that a place outside the Public Record Office affords suitable facilities for the safe-keeping and preservation of records and their inspection by the public he may, with the agreement of the authority who will be responsible for records deposited in that place, appoint it as a place of deposit as respects any class of public records selected for permanent preservation under this Act.

Section 4(1) of the 1958 Act provides for the deposit of any public records, in buildings (e.g. record offices) run by organisations other than the PRO. The power to appoint these places of deposit has been delegated to the Keeper of Public Records by the Lord Chancellor. His general responsibility for public records in places of deposit is, however, unaltered. No organisation is obliged to hold public records, but if it agrees so to do, then it accepts responsibility for the records and for meeting the required standards of storage and public use facilities. The costs of caring for public records in place of deposit must be borne by the organisations which maintain them; no central government funding is earmarked for archives.

Places of deposit are officially appointed in the annual Lord Chancellor's (Places of Deposit) Instrument. A schedule, issued with the Instrument, lists all the places of deposit and the classes of public records they hold. Places of deposit are appointed to preserve specific classes of public records, not public records generally. Since the aim of local deposit in most cases is to facilitate local access, only a few places of deposit hold single classes. A wider range of public records is usually deposited with bodies, like local authority archive services, which keep complementary archives. An appointment to hold public records does not indicate that the authority responsible for them is equipped to run a full archive service. This is particularly true of bodies appointed for limited classes of records.

Appointments are not made for all time. If standards decline so that the conditions for preservation and public use of the records become unacceptable, then the appointment will be revoked and the public records withdrawn. The PRO's Liaison Officer inspects places of deposit when they are first appointed, and regularly thereafter, to check that standards are maintained. The Liaison Officer must be told about any proposals to replace or alter substantially buildings in which public records are stored and used. Plans of, and specifications for, any construction work should be sent for comment at an early stage. Public records should not be moved until the new premises have been inspected and passed for appointment. Public records must not be held in premises which have not been appointed or where appointments have been revoked.

Information from The National Archives

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/beyond_pro.pdf