

OPENING ARCHIVES CASE STUDY

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

Northumberland Archives Preserving Cramlington Camera Club's Digital Archive



HERITAGE DOMAIN:

Museums, Libraries and Archives.

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

This project worked with local Cramlington Camera Club to preserve the Club's digital archive at Northumberland Archives and involve community groups with the creation and preservation of digital photographs. Northumberland Archives and the Camera Club worked with members of Cramlington Guides and young people from a local secondary school to introduce them to what Northumberland Archives does, while Camera Club members led sessions on photography skills. The participants then took digital photographs of Cramlington that were exhibited at Cramlington Community Hub, in an online exhibition on Northumberland Archives' website, and added to the Archives' collection. This contemporary record of Cramlington is permanently preserved using Preservica and accessible via the Archives' CALM online catalogue.

PROJECT STATS (data accurate as of April 2022):

- 57 young people took part in digital photography workshops over 5 sessions.
- 81 digital engagements with the Preserving Cramlington Camera Club webpage.
- 2 volunteers with expertise in photography led workshops with young people for the first time, developing skills in facilitation and community engagement.

SUCSESSES:

- Northumberland Archives built new relationships with community groups and engaged an intergenerational community in digital photography and archiving.
- The project raised awareness of the importance of digital preservation within the community.
- Northumberland Archives staff have developed new skills in working with young people and have plans in place for future collaborations with schools and youth groups.

LEARNINGS:

- A longer time frame would have enabled more time to develop relationships with community groups at the beginning of the project.
- Showing up in person and attending community meetings regularly is important in building relationships and engaging people with the project.
- Creative and tactile approaches, such as exploring objects from the archive and playing memory games, are valuable in engaging young people with an archive collection.

TOP TIP FOR WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES AND ARCHIVES:

Give it a go. Be ambitious. Give yourself enough time to build relationships.

LINK TO DIGITAL OUTPUTS:

<https://northumberlandarchives.com/catalogue/>

