

CREATED

FOUND

DETECTED

EXPLORE YOUR ARCHIVE

CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

04 STORY BOXES

EXPLORED

UNEARTHED

LEARNT

DISCOVERED

CELEBRATED

CONNECTED

IMAGINED

REVEALED

Creating a Story Box

We haven't narrowed the campaign to a single theme; hopefully that gives you the flexibility to get involved in whatever way you want to. If you feel you have a story to share, you might like to create a 'Story Box' This can be physical as well as virtual, but the premise remains the same.

We chose 'Story Boxes' because it allows you the flexibility to make the campaign work for your archive, while keeping consistency across the country so that everyone is involved in the same campaign. We also know that new audiences need a tangible trigger for inspiration to show them the potential of archives – Story Boxes are a way of introducing people to what they could find.

Your Story Box can be filled with documents, journals, objects and curios all connected to a theme, story, place or person e.g. a local scandal, a famous person, travel, sport, a film set in the area, fashion, music, conflict, buildings, unsolved mysteries, etc – the choice is yours.

We want people to go on their own voyage of discovery; we want to inspire a sense of adventure.

This idea also allows us to highlight, on a national level, the goldmine of information and untold stories within archives. It allows us to show the broad variety of content, so we can appeal to diverse audiences.

How to choose content for a Story Box

The topic is completely up to you. It should allow you to show off something unique about your archive but it doesn't have to be something obvious.

Ideally, if you can bear in mind something that might appeal to a more diverse audience and to highlight the fact that we have rich, multicultural content in our archives, that would be helpful.

You know your archive better than anyone else so we hope that you'll have plenty of choice when it comes to choosing something to inspire people.

Key things to consider when choosing what to put in your Story Box are:

- Will this appeal to someone who doesn't know archives well?
- Do I have anything relevant to ethnic minorities or poorer communities?
- Will the local media be interested in this?
- Is this unique to my archive?

Here is some inspiration for things to think about for your box:

- A theme – e.g. transport, royalty, sport, food, conflict or fashion
- A story – e.g. scandals, romance, invention, unsolved mysteries
- A place – e.g. buildings, landmarks, place that inspired writers/artists, industry
- A person – e.g. a famous person, an inventor, communities/immigration, religion, a pioneer

In terms of what content to include, this could be:

- Journals
- Drawings
- Records
- Photographs
- Audio
- Newspaper cuttings
- Objects

All the contents should be somehow connected to your central theme, story, place or person. Ideally, the contents should allow people to build a story or a picture in their minds and it should evoke the sense of 'journey' that many archive users reference as one of the joys of archives.

In the case of an unsolved mystery, or a story waiting to be told, it may be that extra guidance material is needed to help people show how they can join the dots between the materials.

The Story Box in practice

In terms of getting hold of this box, we have provided a digital template for the box, which you can take to your local printer company to have printed, ideally on acid free card. (Again, this can be found among the selection of downloadable templates on the [Explore Your Archive](#) web pages).

If it's easier, you could make use of a box that you already have, or a box that is particularly relevant for your collection (a trunk or suitcase, a biscuit tin) or connected to your theme in some way.

Either way, gather all your contents and collate them in your Story Box.

Share your box idea with us if you think it's particularly good. We're looking to do two things with the Story Boxes:

- Create a series of national Story Boxes online – we're looking to select some of the Story Boxes from across the country that demonstrate the sheer variety of content in archives to create an interactive 'map' of boxes online – for this, we'd simply need scans or pictures that are relevant to your box so that we can pull everything together. **Wherever possible, please make sure that the images you supply are scanned or taken at the best quality possible. A 300dpi Jpeg or Tiff file is the best quality for printing purposes.**
- Replicate a selection of the Story Boxes to send to relevant journalists as teasers (e.g. technology correspondents, royal reporters, food writers, fashion journalists etc)