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# Architecture, Building and Construction Records Survey 2011-13

A partnership project between The National Archives  
and the Business Archives Council

April 2013

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## **Executive summary**

The Architecture, Building and Construction Records Survey was conducted in partnership between the Business Archives Council and The National Archives to establish the nature and location of collections of records produced by architectural practices and construction firms in England and Wales which had not been deposited. Such businesses make a major contribution to the British economy, yet their archives are not generally well known or understood. These historical records are important sources for a range of academics and other researchers, as well as offering practical benefits to those working within the architectural and construction sectors. The focus of this survey was on collections which remain with their creators, as opposed to having been deposited in archival repositories, and as such the accessibility of these records to researchers varies across the sector. It is nevertheless vital that they are preserved as part of this country's archival heritage.

Architectural practices and construction firms across England and Wales were contacted and visits were made to conduct surveys in various locations. In addition, a number of businesses supplied details of their archival collections in the form of records summaries. As details of historical records were uncovered as part of the project, they were added to the National Register of Archives, where there had previously been a noticeable lack of such information. The ARCHON Directory was also updated as a result of the connections and contacts made as part of the survey.

The work undertaken for this project has made a start on the mapping of archives of architectural practices and construction firms. However, there remains scope for further investigation. There is potential for conducting a more targeted survey, focusing on architectural practices in England and Wales perhaps, or on a specific type of firm within the construction sector. There is also scope for a broader initiative, which could include the construction industry in Scotland as well.

The project has highlighted that encouragement should be given to businesses within the architectural and construction sectors to strengthen record keeping practices and raise awareness of the importance of their archives. The greatest focus should be on the construction industry, which proved more difficult to persuade to participate than the

architectural sector and demonstrated a lack of awareness of archives and the archival profession.

# 1. Background

1.1 Businesses operating within the architectural, building and construction sectors make a major contribution to the British economy, yet their archives are not generally well known or understood. The Architecture, Building and Construction (ABC) Records Survey set out to establish the nature and location of records produced by such firms in England and Wales that had not already been surveyed or deposited.

1.2 The project was conducted in partnership between the Business Archives Council and The National Archives. Both the Business Archives Council and the Historical Manuscripts Commission had previously undertaken surveys of the historical records generated by a range of industries (including shipbuilding, banking, brewing, pharmaceuticals, and textiles). It was agreed that it was important to discover more about the archives of the architectural and construction sectors, where a clear gap in knowledge had been identified.

1.3 A search for building firms in the National Register of Archives (NRA) revealed details of a number of businesses, but most were small local companies whose records had been deposited with county record offices over the years. There were exceptions, such as the large building firms John Laing plc (established 1848) which had deposited its records with Northamptonshire Record Office, and Trollope & Colls Ltd (established 1903) whose records are held at London Metropolitan Archives. However, on the whole there was a noticeable lack of information concerning leading firms in the field, and little representation of those businesses which retained their archival collections in-house. As data about the nature and location of records was uncovered as part of the survey it would be added to the NRA, improving awareness of such collections.

1.4 As well as the need to address this lack of information, there was also increasing concern about the threat the economic downturn posed to all categories of business archives, and especially those created by the construction sector, which has been particularly hard hit. This was highlighted as the project was underway in the spring of

2012, when figures revealed that over 5,000 construction firms had been declared insolvent since the start of 2010, when the idea of the project was being developed.<sup>1</sup>

1.5 There had been some research into the historical records of architectural practices previously. Rebecca Bailey's *Scottish Architects Papers: a source book*, published in 1996, presented the results of a thorough survey into the survival of architectural archives across Scotland.<sup>2</sup> In England, Adrian Allan, on behalf of the Merseyside Archives Liaison Group, compiled a report in 1995 following a postal survey of the records of architectural practices in the Merseyside area.<sup>3</sup> Oral history projects focusing on those within the architectural and construction sectors have been undertaken over recent years. The British Library's National Life Stories: Architects' Lives project documents the lives of British architects and those in associated professions.<sup>4</sup> As part of the Building Workers' Stories project, conducted by the University of Westminster, more than 50 building workers who had been employed on high profile construction projects in the 1950s and 1960s were interviewed.<sup>5</sup> However, there was clearly scope for further research into the existence of architectural records in England and Wales, and certainly into the survival of collections of records created by building and construction firms, about which very little was known.

1.6 In seeking to improve knowledge of and awareness about business records within the architectural and construction sectors, the project supported the aims of the [National Strategy for Business Archives \(England and Wales\)](#).<sup>6</sup> The strategy was produced in 2009 by The National Archives and its partners, the Business Archives Council, Society of Archivists, Museums Libraries and Archives Council, the Welsh Government (through CyMAL), Economic History Society and the Association of Business Historians. The ABC Survey upheld the strategy's aims to promote, manage and make use of the archival legacy of British business, raising the profile of such collections of records amongst businesses and researchers alike. The Business Archives Council and The National Archives also hoped that undertaking this initiative would promote best practice in record keeping. As part of the survey, guidance was

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<sup>1</sup> G Plimmer, 'Killby & Gayford put into administration', *Financial Times*, 18 April 2012, [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com)

<sup>2</sup> R Bailey, *Scottish Architects' Papers: a source book* (Edinburgh, 1996)

<sup>3</sup> A Allan, *Towards a guide to records relating to architecture on Merseyside*, (unpublished report, 1995)

<sup>4</sup> [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk)

<sup>5</sup> [www.buildingworkersstories.com](http://www.buildingworkersstories.com)

<sup>6</sup> [www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/materials/national\\_strategy\\_for\\_business\\_archives.pdf](http://www.businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/materials/national_strategy_for_business_archives.pdf)

offered to participating businesses on all aspects of their record keeping, helping to encourage understanding of good records management and thereby ensuring the safety of collections.

1.7 Annabel Welsh was appointed as Resource Discovery Officer, following an open recruitment process in 2011, to take forward the survey, based at The National Archives under the direction of Alex Ritchie, Senior Adviser: Business Archives. A professionally-qualified archivist, she took up her duties in September 2011 and work was initially scheduled to run for a year. However, funding was subsequently secured to extend the project until March 2013.

1.8 The National Archives and the Business Archives Council agreed that the survey should be overseen by a steering committee, comprising nominees of each organisation as well as independent experts. The following appointments to the steering committee were made:

Dr Nina Baker – University of Strathclyde  
Dr Roy Edwards – Business Archives Council  
Mike Evans – English Heritage  
Dr Terry Gourvish – Business Archives Council  
Charles Hind – Royal Institute of British Architects  
Dr Norman James – The National Archives  
Nick Kingsley – The National Archives  
Dr Robert McWilliam – Construction History Society  
Carol Morgan – Institution of Civil Engineers  
Alex Ritchie – The National Archives  
Rob Thomas – Institution of Structural Engineers  
Richard Wiltshire – Business Archives Council  
David Yeomans – Construction History Society

The steering committee met formally at The National Archives on five occasions (5 December 2011, 20 March, 28 June, and 9 October 2012, and 22 January 2013).

## 2. Scope

2.1 It was accepted that a fully comprehensive survey covering the industry as a whole could not be produced, given the time and resources available. However, it was hoped that embarking on the project would improve awareness and knowledge of the architectural and construction sectors and their records.

2.2 Given the time restrictions placed on the project it was vital that a list of companies to target as part of the survey was developed and refined as early as possible. Personal approaches (discussed in more detail below) made to those within or connected to the architectural and construction sectors helped this process, but it was important to conduct wider research to identify which businesses to contact. Industry related publications and websites were helpful. Other online resources, including the searchable indexes of Companies House, Open Corporates and Companies in the UK, were particularly effective for locating the details of businesses within the sector.<sup>7</sup> Many individual company websites also provided helpful information about the background and history of their businesses, which was a useful starting point.

2.3 This exploration of the sector produced a long list of just under 200 construction firms and over 300 architectural practices. Given the size and extent of the industry, these rather long lists were not surprising and it was acknowledged that it would not be possible to complete surveys of all of these businesses in the time permitted. As such it was important to narrow down the criteria for inclusion in the survey at as early a stage as possible. Following discussions with the project board, it was decided to limit the survey to architectural practices, building firms, and civil and structural engineering firms. This still covered a very large number of businesses, but excluded certain elements of the sector, such as building materials suppliers and manufacturers. Clearly those businesses which had been established for longer were prioritised over those that were founded more recently (ie post 1960), as they were obviously more likely to possess historical records. However, some relatively new companies were included if they were regarded by the project board as having made a significant contribution to the sector. Although the initial focus of the survey was to be on London and the south east,

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<sup>7</sup> [www.companieshouse.gov.uk](http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk); [opencorporates.com](http://opencorporates.com); [www.companiesintheuk.co.uk](http://www.companiesintheuk.co.uk)

the list of firms covered businesses identified as particularly old or significant, both nationally and locally, across the whole of England and Wales.

2.4 It was a particular challenge to establish the fate of a number of historically significant firms, several of which had been noted as important in the planning stages of the project's development. The construction sector in particular, as well as the architectural sector in a number of instances, has a trend towards consolidation. Tracing who might now hold the historical records of older, smaller firms was a key part of this research phase of the survey. The Consultants Tracker compiled by the Institution of Structural Engineers was particularly helpful when tracing civil and structural engineering firms which have merged, been taken over, closed down or changed names.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> [www.istructe.org/resources-centre/library/consultants-tracker](http://www.istructe.org/resources-centre/library/consultants-tracker)

### 3. Methodology

3.1 Establishing a network of contacts was vital to help break into an industry with little existing awareness of, or contact with, archives and archivists. In the early stages of the project, meetings took place with information management professionals working in organisations such as the Institution of Civil Engineers, the Institution of Structural Engineers, and the Royal Institute of British Architects. Approaches were made to other individuals with experience of working with, or as part of, the construction sector, who it was hoped might be interested in helping the project. This included Fred Wellings, whose publications *Dictionary of British Housebuilders: A Twentieth Century History* and *British Housebuilders: History & Analysis* proved invaluable as sources for identifying potential companies to target.<sup>9</sup> These meetings helped to refine and extend the list of firms to approach, provided names to contact within some of these businesses, and allowed some exploration of the type of records produced by the sector which were likely to form the basis of the collections surveyed.

3.2 In the early stages of the survey the project officer visited the only professional archivist working within a construction related business that they or the project board were aware of at the time, at the architectural practice Foster + Partners. As well as providing information about the practice's collections, she was able to put the project officer in touch with another professional archivist at another key architectural practice, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, who was unknown to those involved in the project previously. This clearly demonstrated the advantages of forming personal contacts and building relationships with those working within the sector.

3.3 In view of the lack of personal contacts within the sector in the initial stages of the project, it was extremely important to promote the survey as widely as possible. It was hoped that publicity would encourage companies to get in touch, and also mean that if an approach was made to a firm at a later date, they may already have heard about the project and what it was trying to achieve. As well as targeting websites and magazines aimed at architectural practices and building firms, the survey was promoted to those working within the information management sector. Initial research had suggested that

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<sup>9</sup> F Wellings, *Dictionary of British Housebuilders: A Twentieth Century History* (2006) and *British Housebuilders: History & Analysis* (Oxford, 2006)

many larger firms employ records managers and librarians to manage their record collections. This promotion resulted in a number of approaches from interested firms and raised awareness that the project was underway.

3.4 Before the surveying began, discussions with those working within the architectural and construction sectors had been useful as an introduction to the sorts of records that the project was setting out to capture information about. Publications, such as those by Rebecca Bailey and Fred Wellings, as well as the International Council on Archives' *A Guide to the Archival Care of Architectural Records 19th - 20th centuries*, were also helpful in this respect.<sup>10</sup> It was clear that as well as the standard corporate records produced by businesses, there would be a vast quantity of material relating to the various design and construction projects undertaken by firms in this field.

3.5 The varying format of such records also posed a challenge to surveying. Of course, it was to be expected that the date of the establishment of each business would affect the format its records were held in. Clearly, companies that had been founded more recently were likely to have a larger proportion of their records held electronically, and unlikely to possess the more traditional ledgers and other paper-based records of older businesses. Previous surveys undertaken by the Business Archives Council and The National Archives largely involved traditional paper archives and necessitated physical records surveys. In the cases of some of the more historic companies on the target list, it was expected that the process of carrying out this survey would prove similar. However, a significant number of companies of interest had conducted much of their business in the digital age, therefore producing a greater variety of record formats. Many architectural practices in particular were at the forefront of technological developments in using electronic drawings and plans, and for decades have created great volumes of non-paper records. This presented some challenges in terms of surveying, as much of the information the survey sought to capture data about would not be available to actually see in a physical format. Establishing good relationships with the firms in question was therefore vital to overcome this, to encourage businesses to supply extracts from databases and spreadsheets, detailing their more recent, but still historically significant, records.

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<sup>10</sup> International Council on Archives, *A Guide to the Archival Care of Architectural Records 19th - 20th centuries* (Paris, 2000)

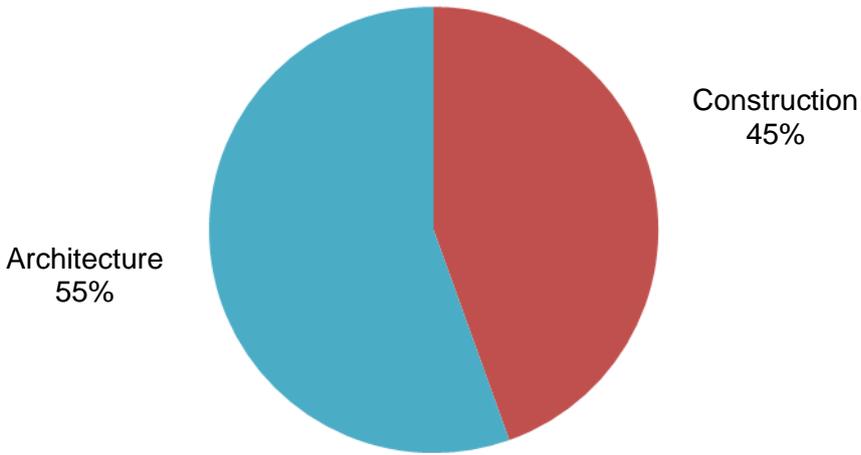
3.6 Once the list of companies to target had been compiled, a number of key businesses from that list were approached and invited to participate via formal letters from the Chairman of the Business Archives Council. These were addressed to high profile construction companies including Balfour Beatty, Bovis Homes, Costain and Taylor Wimpey. However, this method, despite follow-up emails and phone calls, was not particularly successful and it was decided that a more personal and tailored approach was required. Through information gathered from those relationships established in the early stages of the project, it was possible to make more targeted approaches via email and telephone to specific people within firms, who it was hoped would have some interest in what the survey was trying to achieve. This approach proved more successful and surveying work was able to get underway. Over the following months just under 250 businesses were contacted as part of the survey. Broadly categorised, this included a very slightly higher proportion of architectural practices than construction firms, given the difference in length of the original lists of targets.

3.7 As the survey progressed, the search area widened and the numbers of firms involved increased. This meant that it was not always practical or even possible to visit every firm which expressed an interest in the project. However, it remained important to capture data about as many businesses as possible. In order to achieve this, summaries and inventories of record collections were accepted via email for inclusion in the NRA.

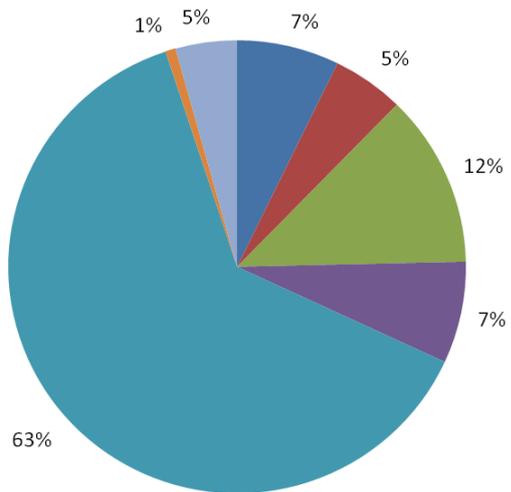
# 4. Findings

In total, 247 businesses were contacted as part of the survey between September 2011 and March 2013. The graphs below illustrate how these approaches were distributed between architectural practices and construction firms, and provide a breakdown of responses.

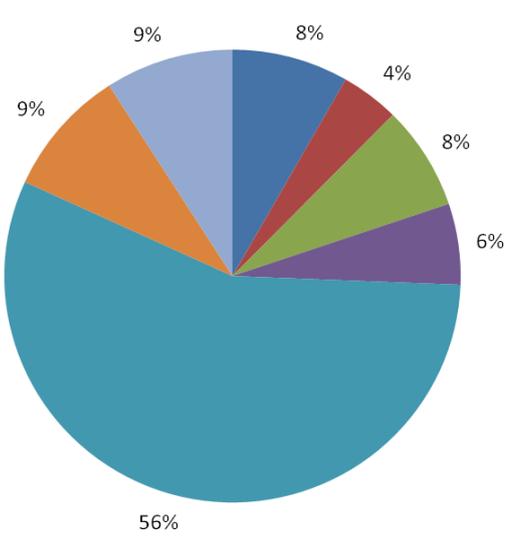
**Approaches made:**



**Breakdown of approaches to architectural practices:**



**Breakdown of approaches to construction firms:**



- Survey complete
- Survey in progress
- Agreed to participate, survey not completed

	Continuing to liaise with	
	No response	
	Firms on target list which entered administration during survey	
	Declined to participate	(as of 31 March 2013)

4.1 By the end of March 2013 137 architectural practices had been contacted as well as 110 construction firms. Surveys have been completed for 20 of these. A further 45 businesses have expressed an interest in taking part and continue to liaise with the project officer and the Archives Sector Development department at The National Archives (this figure includes a slightly higher proportion of architectural practices than construction firms). 17 companies declined to participate (this included almost twice as many construction firms than architectural practices). Although these figures clearly demonstrate the difficulty of encouraging interest in such a project in this sector, the resulting survey listings provide a useful snapshot of the historical records and record keeping practices of the industry.

4.2 As approaches were made to architectural practices and construction firms, broad differences between them were revealed, in terms of their own record keeping traditions and interest in archives more generally. Many of the building firms contacted had little awareness of archives. There were of course notable exceptions to this, for example, as referred to above, the records of John Laing had been deposited with Northamptonshire Record Office to ensure their long term survival and access to the collection. The record office kindly supplied a listing of the collection to be added to the NRA as part of the survey, as previously only a very brief summary had existed in the register. However, more often than not such companies had extremely limited, or usually no, previous contact with archivists or archives.

4.3 Architectural practices were, on the whole, much more willing to participate and demonstrated a greater tradition of record keeping. As well as visiting Foster + Partners and Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (both businesses with origins in 1963), visits were made to a number of other large practices of national and international standing, such as Farrells and Zaha Hadid Architects (both established in 1980). Smaller practices based outside of London were also visited including Dennis Sharp Architects in

Hertfordshire (which held material dating back to the 1930s) and GSS Architecture in Kettering (established 1879).

4.4 It took a little longer to encourage interest from construction firms, but over the following months visits were made to, amongst others, Arup in London (established 1946), Hurst Pierce Malcolm LLP in London (established 1910), Kier Group in Sandy (which incorporates subsidiary businesses dating back as far as 1820), as well as the family owned groups Wates Group Ltd in Leatherhead (established 1897) and Shepherd Building Group Ltd in York (established 1890). Firms with more recent dates of foundation were also visited including Max Fordham LLP in London (1966) and Richard Hatton Associates in Stevenage (1973). Despite falling outside the official criteria of the survey, the involvement of these firms, which demonstrated an encouraging awareness of the importance of their collections of records, in significant projects around the country made them of interest to the project. Bylander Group Archives, which holds the surviving records of the now defunct Bylander Waddell (a firm with origins in the early years of the twentieth century), also participated. This differed from the other businesses visited, as it is run on a commercial basis, raising income from the sale of original and copied archival documents. A visit was also made to the Construction Industry Resource Centre Archive (CIRCA) Trust in Stroud, which offers a home to collections of construction records, related publications and trade literature. The collections held there include material originating from major construction businesses such as Taylor Woodrow and Wimpey.

4.5 Encouraging businesses to submit summaries and inventories of their record collections enabled various architectural practices around the country to contribute, including Architects Co-Partnership in Potters Bar (established 1939), Challice Architects in Sidmouth (established 1904), Saunders Boston Ltd in Cambridge (established 1919), Shenstone & Partners in London (established in 1920), The Tooley & Foster Partnership in Buckhurst Hill (established 1892), and Verity & Beverley in Tetbury (established 1870).

4.6 Construction firms were also encouraged to contribute lists and inventories if possible. Although more reluctant than architectural practices in this respect as well, a number of summaries were submitted, including those from key firms within the sector

such as Interserve plc in Reading (whose origins date back to the 1860s), Davis Langdon (an AECOM company) in London (established 1919) and Mott MacDonald in Croydon (established 1902).

4.7 Although some firms declined to participate, all those businesses who responded to approaches made as part of the survey (either positively or negatively) indicated that they did possess archives, or if not, were able to suggest where they had ended up following mergers and acquisitions. As the surveying work demonstrated, the completeness of such collections varied from firm to firm, as might be expected. However, it was encouraging that despite the pressures on space and resources for an industry which creates vast quantities of records as part of its everyday business, significant historical records have survived. The project acted as a prompt to many businesses to consider the future of their record keeping practices. Given the high volume of records produced by firms in this industry and the resulting ruthless retention schedules that are applied as a consequence, simply encouraging companies to think more about which records are worth retaining and preserving in the longer term is a positive result.

4.8 The threat the current economic climate poses to all business archives, and particularly construction related collections, was recognised in the planning stages of the project and as the survey progressed, the project officer monitored cases of liquidation and administration within the sector. In the early stages of the project the historic building firm Holloway White Allom, which had already been identified as a potential target to survey, went into administration. The Crisis Management Team (a group established in 2009 as part of the National Strategy for Business Archives to co-ordinate efforts to preserve business records in such cases) acted swiftly and made contact with the administrators. This resulted in the project officer accompanying one of the team's members (Richard Wiltshire, who also served on the ABC Survey project board) to survey the records and secure the most important for deposit at London Metropolitan Archives. As the survey progressed, the project officer continued to monitor the situation in the sector, keeping a close eye on construction industry news websites and e-newsletters, ensuring that the Crisis Management Team was alerted to cases of concern as early as possible. These included the 150 year old building firm Killby & Gayford calling in the administrators in April 2012, Ibbotson Construction, one

of the country's oldest building firms, finding itself in a similar position in December 2012, and 105 year old Baggaley Construction going the same way in February 2013.

## **5. Case studies**

5.1 The following examples illustrate the types of architecture and construction archives uncovered as part of the survey. They are intended to demonstrate the range and variety of records surveyed and the differing formats in which they were held. They also reveal how the person within a company who is responsible for, or most interested in, that business's records can vary greatly.

### **5.2 GSS Architecture**

The practice which was later to become known as Gotch, Saunders & Surridge was established in Kettering 1879 by the architect and scholar John Alfred Gotch (1852-1942). Gotch designed and supervised the construction of many buildings in Kettering, ranging from houses and factories, to shops, offices, hospitals, schools and churches. In the decade following the First World War, Gotch and his partner Charles Saunders (1858-1944) designed and built over 140 branches for the Midland Bank, including the Bank's headquarters in London, in association with Sir Edwin Lutyens. The project officer visited the practice and met with one of the partners, as well as the author of a recent doctoral thesis on JA Gotch who had made much use of the practice's historical records. The firm held archives including accounts and staff records dating back to 1937, ledgers recording the practice's commissions between 1887 and 1937, as well as correspondence from 1897 onwards, and drawings and plans dating back to the early years of the business. More recent series of records included partners' minutes and project files. As with all the architectural practices who participated, the business maintained an electronic database listing all projects undertaken by the practice, including those for which records have been destroyed.

### **5.3 Shepherd Group Ltd**

The business was established in York by Frederick Shepherd in 1890. Although the initial focus was on local speculative house building, by the time the Second World War broke out F Shepherd & Son (as it was then known) was a substantial builder, with a workforce of around 700 engaged on projects across the north east of England. Its geographical coverage grew during the following decades, and the group now forms one of the largest wholly family-owned private companies in the country. This success

was driven in part by the development in the 1960s of the Portakabin unit. The project officer visited the firm's York offices and met with the Group's Community Support Advisor, who had formerly held the position of Corporate Relations Manager. The collection included board minutes and accounts dating from 1924 onwards, the papers of Sir Peter Shepherd (the first Chairman of the reorganised group 1962-86) dating from the 1950s-80s, including speeches and other industry related material. There were also deeds and related papers concerning Shepherd housing and property developments from the late 1930s onwards. In addition there was a collection of commercial literature produced by the various businesses within the group from the 1950s onwards, as well as a large photographic collection of both projects and staff.

#### **5.4 Hurst Peirce + Malcolm LLP**

The firm was established by Bertram L Hurst in 1910. Early projects of significance included the Westminster Bank Head Office in Threadneedle Street, the reconstruction of Commercial Union's building in Cornhill between 1927 and 1929, the rebuilding of Peter Jones in Sloane Square for the John Lewis Partnership in 1934, and the start of the rebuilding of John Lewis in Oxford Street. In more recent years, the firm has worked on refurbishment projects at many John Lewis and Waitrose stores, and on complex historic projects with work at the Palace of Westminster, the Royal Albert Hall, and Althorp House. The project officer visited Hurst Peirce + Malcolm's London office and met with the firm's archivist-librarian as well as with the son of the company's founder, who currently acts as a consultant and was previously a senior partner at the business. Surviving records include accounts, project files, and drawings from 1910 onwards, drawings registers and photographs from the 1920s onwards, as well as BL Hurst's notebooks of studies, revision cards and examination certificates from the 1890s. The firm maintains an electronic database covering all jobs dating back to 1910.

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 A great deal of progress was made within the limited timescale of the project in mapping the archives of architectural and construction businesses in England and Wales. However, there is clearly opportunity for further work on the records of architectural practices and firms operating within the construction industry. There is scope to conduct a more targeted survey, focusing on architectural practices in England and Wales perhaps, or on a specific type of firm within the construction sector. Although Rebecca Bailey's survey of architectural practices in Scotland is an extremely useful source of information, it would be helpful to conduct research into the wider construction industry in Scotland as well. A recent report by the British Records Association highlighted the importance of surveying undeposited collections of records at a regional, national and sectoral level, and such efforts would help address this concern.<sup>11</sup>

6.2 The survey demonstrated that, despite pressures on space and resources, many firms within the architectural and construction sectors do possess significant collections of historical records. However, record keeping procedures, and consequently the completeness of collections, varied greatly and there is clearly a need to raise awareness of archival functions and promote best practice in record keeping. The project acted as a prompt to many of the businesses contacted to consider how they could better manage the records they create. This is particularly crucial in an industry which produces such a high volume of records and requires ruthless retention schedules. The greatest focus should be on the construction industry, which proved more difficult to encourage involvement from than the architectural sector and demonstrated a lack of awareness of archives and the archival profession. The Business Archives Council and The National Archives must maintain the connections and contacts established as part of this project and continue to promote best practice to businesses operating in the architectural and construction sectors.

6.3 It is hoped that the project and its findings will benefit historians and other academics and researchers. The addition to the NRA of details of business records previously unknown about should assist in a range of research, and increase

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<sup>11</sup> The British Records Association, *Records at Risk: A Report on the BRA Survey of Risks to Historical Records in the East of England and London Regions*, Autumn 2010 (2012)

awareness of the importance of records created by the architectural and construction sectors. As well as documenting information about records, the survey has helped raise awareness of professional archivists and records managers working within the sector. For example, following the visit to architectural practice Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, that business's in-house repository details were added to the ARCHON Directory.<sup>12</sup>

6.4 As the project developed and contacts were made with firms working within the architectural and construction sectors, it became clear that the survey also offered many advantages to them. Many commented that often, when undertaking work on existing buildings and structures, it can be extremely frustrating to be unable to track down any previous records that have been produced about the site. They hope that the addition of the whereabouts of such collections to the NRA will make it a useful resource for businesses as well as researchers.

6.5 As the ABC project neared completion, another related survey got underway focusing on local authority building control plans. This initiative, being conducted in partnership between English Heritage and The National Archives, seeks to establish the survival, location, and condition of such plans. It is hoped that this survey will also bring to light records which are not already in archival custody, but would be suitable for deposit.

6.6 The ABC project has enabled a start to be made in documenting the archives of the architectural and construction sectors, and has helped raise awareness of the importance of such collections. However, there is clearly much more that could be done. Despite the survey officially drawing to a close at the end of March 2013, the Private Archives Team within the Archives Sector Development department at The National Archives will continue to follow-up any subsequent expressions of interest or requests for help and advice from those businesses operating within the architectural and construction sectors.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon)

## Appendix

The following are some of the businesses which participated in the survey. Details of their records have been added to the [National Register of Archives](#):

[Architects Co-Partnership](#)

[Broadway Malyan](#)

[BSRIA](#)

[Bylander Group Archives](#)

[Chalice Architects Ltd](#)

[Davis Langdon \(an AECOM company\)](#)

[Max Fordham LLP](#)

[Foster + Partners](#)

[GSSArchitecture](#)

[Richard Hatton Associates](#)

[Hurst Peirce & Malcolm LLP](#)

[Interserve plc](#)

[John Laing plc](#)

[Mott MacDonald Group Ltd](#)

[Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners](#)

[Saunders Boston Ltd](#)

[Dennis Sharp Architects](#)

[Shenstone & Partners](#)

[Shepherd Building Group Ltd](#)

[The Tooley & Foster Partnership](#)

[Verity & Beverley](#)

[Wates Group Ltd](#)