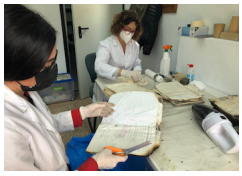

Today Ana Juan, President of the Consell de Formentera; Raquel Guasch, Councillor of Heritage, and Jahmila Canale, Director of the Formentera Archive (Arxiu), presented a new space and consultation room at the municipal archives, located at Passatge del Llaüt Verd in the same building as the Consell de Formentera.

President Juan welcomed the new consultation room and "work by the Office of Heritage to put Formentera's archives within reach of the public and make sure that this becomes a service that is available to all". Juan asserted that the Arxiu is a "a tool for research and documentation work" and insisted, "the documentation on file is part of our history and we must treat and care for it accordingly".

Rules, inventory and digitisation

The Councillor of Heritage pointed out that the Arxiu was currently analysing documentary series to finalise its classification chart and "develop a comprehensive guide and inventory". Guasch said that work was under way on rules for the service as well as on archival and preventive conservation guidelines. To that end, measures will focus on optimising documentary conditions and digitising the documentation is among the options discussed. "Essentially, moving forward we want this information to be more accessible to everyone who is interested in it", said Councillor Guasch.

Ms Canale explained that the Arxiu houses documentation related to the functions and competences of local government, particularly between 1888 and 2007, when its powers were limited to those of a town council (*ajuntament*). The building also contains documents from the Civil Registry and the Justice of the Peace, some of the oldest. All archival holdings fall essentially into two categories: historical (up to 1980) and administrative (from 1980 onwards).

A space for consultation

In 2021 the archive fielded 211 inquiries (146 of them internal) after fielding 109 in 2020. Guasch stressed that, precisely, "one of our priorities is to adapt the consultation space to make the archives more accessible to people".

Among the documents at the archive, apart from plenary minutes, licenses, motions and other documents linked to municipal government, are *amillaraments* (old registers involving land owners and easement holders), documents from the Local Probation Board of 1946 and a copy book of medical prescriptions (1936-1939). The oldest surviving item dates from 1807 and documents the purchase and sale of a property in Es Cap de Barbaria. In total, there are about 4,000 boxes, or 49,100 linear metres of documents at the Formentera Archive. In January an additional worker was hired on a six-month contract as part of the Balearic Employment Office's Reactiva programme; she is working as an administrative employee.

The current hours of operation are 8.30am to 2.00pm, Monday through Friday. Appointments can be scheduled by sending an e-mail to arxiu@conselldeformentera.cat indicating which documents are desired.

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Consell de Formentera