

DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE AND DERBY DIOCESAN RECORD OFFICE

PRESERVATION STRATEGY

Introduction

This preservation strategy has been drawn up in accordance with strategies in other recognised record offices and in The National Archives. The strategy is for the information of both personal and remote users of archive collections in Derbyshire Record Office and Derby Diocesan Record Office

1. Derbyshire Record Office Service Objectives

The objectives of Derbyshire Record Office and Derby Diocesan Record Office are:

- To ensure that the archives of Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and the Diocese of Derby are preserved for present and future use by their administrations and by the public, thereby supporting these organisations in meeting their statutory requirements, and to advise these organisations on archival issues
- To locate, collect, promote and preserve irreplaceable archive collections relating to the past and present life and work of people of the County of Derbyshire, City of Derby and Diocese of Derby, thereby contributing to the national network of care for archives
- To provide and promote services to users which enable and encourage the use of archive collections held by Derbyshire Record Office
- To build partnerships which promote the informational, practical and heritage value of archives and which extend their use

2. Preservation Strategy Statement

Derbyshire Record Office will seek to ensure that

- Archival material in all formats will be stored in secure and appropriate environmental conditions
- Appropriate protective storage is provided
- Good housekeeping practices are maintained
- Staff and users are trained in safe handling procedures and that this training is regularly reviewed
- Surrogates are provided, where practicable, for archival material which is in high demand or unsuitable for production in its original form
- Prioritised archival preservation and conservation work programmes are defined and implemented

- The principles of minimum intervention are followed in stabilisation and conservation tasks
- All conservation work will be carried out in accordance with the recommendations specified in BS 4971:2002
- Archival documents and collections are assessed and recorded to inform future preservation/conservation work programmes
- Appropriate technical developments in preservation/conservation are assessed and implemented, wherever practicable

3. Preservation Strategy key objectives

Derbyshire Record Office will seek to ensure that

- Conditions in storage areas are regularly monitored in respect of temperature and relative humidity in order to seek to comply with BSI recommendations in BS5454
- All new accessions are inspected and cleaned as appropriate
- All new accessions are stored in archival quality boxes or other appropriate archival packaging
- All new accessions are assessed to identify usability in the Search Room, historical significance, intrinsic value and availability of surrogates.
- A conservation log is maintained to record fragile or damaged items requested in the Search Room. These items should be prioritised for conservation or replacement by surrogates

4. Conservation procedures

Conservation work follows the following basic principles

- The nature and extent of repair should be evident
- It should not diminish, falsify or obscure the original document
- All methods used should be reversible as far as possible
- Materials used should be sympathetic to and compatible with the original document
- All materials used should be of high archival quality
- All conservation work should relate specifically to the needs and future storage and use of the item
- A detailed record should be kept of the methods and materials used
- Wherever practicable, preventative conservation measures should be used in preference to remedial action

5 Disaster control planning

- A disaster control plan should be in place and should be reviewed at least annually

6. Good handling practices

- A leaflet outlining regulations for consulting records in the Search Room should be available to new and intending users
- Guidelines on safe handling should be visible to the user in the Search Room
- Appropriate equipment and preservation aids should be provided for use in the Search Room
- Surrogates should be used where demand is or may be high and where the condition of the original makes it unsuitable for production
- A policy on digital cameras is being developed and will be introduced
- Information on reprographics policy is visible to users of the Search Room. Postal or email enquirers should also be informed of the reprographics policy.

7. Staff training

Derbyshire Record Office will seek to ensure that regular staff training sessions are provided in, amongst other topics,

- Handling of archives
- Cleaning and packaging
- Preservation of archives
- Causes of deterioration
- Manual handling (Health & Safety at Work Act)
- Reprographics policy and procedures

8. Displays and exhibitions of archives

Derbyshire Record Office will seek to ensure that

- Guidelines are in place for exhibiting original documents
- Wherever practicable, surrogates are offered for display in place of originals
- Requests for temporary withdrawal of items from collections in Derbyshire Record Office must comply with Record Office guidelines and are subject to the prior approval of the County Archivist
- A condition of loan agreement, whether short term or long term, must be signed
- Intending exhibitors are made aware of the secure showcases Derbyshire Record Office has available for hire
- Selection of original items and frequency and duration of use for display, whether in Derbyshire Record Office or in other venues, are carefully considered
- The condition of original documents is recorded before and after display

9. Monitoring and review

This strategy will be subject to regular monitoring and review. It should be seen as a working document and may be subject to modification before a formal review. The next formal review will take place in April 2007.

