

TEESSIDE ARCHIVES

CONSERVATION POLICY

SCOPE:

This policy covers principles and practices to be observed in the Conservation workshop. It aims to outline the key considerations for dealing with archives and related materials.

INTRODUCTION:

The conservation of paper, parchment and photographic based materials requires skills acquired by training and experience. These must be exercised with professional judgement at all times. It is the responsibility of those who administer archives collections to ensure that the highest standards are met and that knowledge of new processes and materials are periodically reviewed and changes made where appropriate.

PRINCIPLES

1. All methods used should be reversible.
2. All materials used should be of the highest archival standard.(see appendix)
3. No process should remove or conceal the written/visual evidence of the document. Over-repair is unacceptable.
4. All conservation methods should use compatible materials.
5. No attempt should be made to complete missing text/image, or to restore to a perceived original state.
6. All binding methods should reflect the original binding style, with full respect for the bibliography of the item.
7. No binding method should restrict access to the text.
8. All conservation work carried out must relate specifically to the needs of the object.

A detailed record of all materials and methods should be kept.

All processes for archival conservation should conform to the more detailed recommendations in BS 4971:Part 1:1988 and BS 4971:Part 2: 1980.

PRESERVATION CONSIDERATIONS

It is essential to ascertain use and storage requirements of all items before conservation work is undertaken.

Storage conditions, protective packaging, access and use of records are laid out in Teesside Archives Preservation Policy.

The risks of damage to records when being handled can be minimised through the involvement of the conservator in training users and staff.

LEVEL OF CONSERVATION

The appropriate level of conservation treatment should be determined by a systematic procedure in which due consideration is given to the views of archivists, conservator and users.

This should take account of :

1. Condition of material and required treatment
2. Importance of material – archival significance
3. Expected level of use.

Conservation priorities should be jointly reviewed by the archivist and conservator.

SERVICE STATEMENT

Turnaround times are dependent on the nature of the task, the type of material and the practical difficulties that may arise whilst working.

Best advice – to external customers and internal staff- must be given with professional judgement at all times.

OFFICE DEVELOPMENT

Personal skills and knowledge should be developed alongside current thinking. Practical work should be carried out with reasoning behind decisions made.

The conservation workshop should be updated with equipment and technical data as permissible.

APPENDIX

Materials

Paper, Tissues Boards

- handmade / machine made European and Japanese acid free, lignin free.
- 100% cotton unbuffered, unsized, sulphur and lignin free paper and board for photographs. Also to have passed the silver tarnish test.
- microchamber active archival paper with molecular sieves and alkaline buffer to trap and neutralise damaging pollutants.
- acid free blotting paper
- woodfree and lignin free buffered acid free board, Manilla and cover paper.
- acid free millboard
- acid free silicone release paper

- Acid free hand marbled paper.
 - Buffered 100% cotton rag mounting board.
- Backing and linings**
- Unbleached linen
 - Holland linen for maps
 - Mull
 - Paper and tissues as above
- Parchment**
- New parchment, high grade
 - Goldbeaters skin
- Seals**
- Unbleached beeswax
 - Resin, high grade
 - Cellulose wadding.
- Packaging**
- archival quality manilla card
 - folding boxboard
 - wrapping interleaving tissue
 - polyester "Melinex" 70 & 100gsm
 - unbleached linen
 - rigid boxes
 - portfolios
 - map boxes
 - plastazote
 - corrugated board (acid free)
 - 100% wool felt
 - polyethylene wrapping
 - cotton tying tape
 - acid free envelopes
 - Tyvek wrapping

Adhesives and consolidants

The choice of the right adhesive for each specific operation and material is very important.

- wheat starch paste
- sodium carboxymethyl cellulose
- methyl cellulose
- commercial ready made starch paste
- neutral reversible PVA
- parchment size
- gelatine
- Klucel G
- Isinglass

Deacidification

- To be ministered with caution.
- Aqueous solutions
 - Non aqueous

Solvents	To be used with correct facilities and knowledge only.
Cleaning agents	All to be used with caution and knowledge. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Vinyl white erasers- Smoke sponges- Wishab sponges- Electric eraser
Sewing Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- unbleached thread- unbleached sewing tape- 100% hemp cords, unbleached- endband cores of vellum, cord or leather- Gutermann cotton and polyester thread for endbands
Covering Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Leather – archival goatskin, pigskin, alum tawed skin, chrome tanned calf skin.- Parchment and vellum – archival goat and calf- Bookcloth – Arbelave buckram bookcloth- Marbled or handmade covering paper.