

Wandsworth Heritage Service

Preservation Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 A fundamental task of all archive services is to preserve the material in its custody for generations to come.
- 1.2 Guidance from the National Preservation Office has been consulted in writing this policy.

2 Building

- 2.1 We will:
 - Store materials in a building that offers security from theft, fire, flood to standards that aspire to meet PD:5454
 - Ensure the building is in suitable physical condition and is kept clean and pest free.

3 Storage, handling and use

- 3.1 We will:
 - Ensure appropriate handling of materials by staff and readers and tools to make both aware of what constitutes proper handling
 - Make provision of surrogates, and equipment by which to consult them, to more heavily used material
 - Retain the right to deny access to material unfit for production or to deny copying
 - Provide procedures, skills, resources and equipment to ensure appropriate packing and shelving

4 Security Policy

- 4.1 The Heritage Service is responsible to Wandsworth Council and to the owners of deposited records it holds for the care, custody and preservation of all the records that comprise the Local History and Archive collections. As well as making proper standards and provision for access, the Service must also ensure those records remain safe in its custody, available for consultation for the foreseeable future.

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- 4.2 The Heritage Service or the Library Service on behalf of the Heritage Service, will maintain a monitored intruder alarm system to protect the premises and the collections.
- 4.3 None of the Heritage Service storage areas will be accessible to anyone other than designated members of the Service's staff, or by special arrangement by members of the Heritage Service staff.
- 4.4 The storage areas of the Heritage Service will be secured against unauthorised entry at all times.
- 4.5 Documents produced for use will normally be returned to a secured storage area at the end of that period of use, unless loaned under special arrangement or requiring conservation or other treatment. A record will be kept by the Heritage Service of the location of documents temporarily removed from storage areas.
- 4.6 Users will be required to sign the Visitors' register on entry to the searchroom.
- 4.7 Users must use the lockers provided for bags and seek permission to bring coats into the searchroom. *Users* must not bring in folders or any other container that could be used to conceal documents without the permission of Heritage Service staff.
- 4.8 Users must not bring in documents of their own into the Searchroom without first identifying them to the invigilating Heritage Service staff.
- 4.9 The Heritage Service will ensure that the Searchroom is constantly invigilated when original documents are in use, and that documents will only be used on tables where there are clear sightlines, either directly from the invigilation points, or using aids such as security mirrors or CCTV.
- 4.10 The Heritage Service will provide the means for *users* to order documents using a written record and retain a record of the use of documents until an adequate audit has taken place.
- 4.11 The Heritage Service will limit the number of documents produced to an individual *user* or a group looking at the same records at any one time and ensure that all documents issued are returned when use has ceased.

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- 4.12 Documents in the care of the Heritage Service will not be used outside the invigilated area in original form. The Heritage Service will make proper provision for the consultation of an appropriate surrogate for any user unable to access the searchroom for physical reasons, subject to appropriate notice being given, and taking into account the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, 2005.
- 4.13 The Heritage Service will ensure that all documents are marked with an indication of ownership and custody.
- 4.14 In the event of the loss of any document through unauthorised removal from the Heritage Service's premises, Wandsworth Council will support all appropriate means to secure the return of the document or documents and press for the prosecution of anyone deemed to have unlawfully effected such a removal. Wandsworth Council will also seek to recover costs arising from a successful conviction.

5 Conservation

- 5.1 We will undertake interventionist conservation where necessary, in way that ensures continued access to documents with minimum intervention and which does not compromise the archival attributes of the item and which is reversible.

6 Preparation for emergencies

- 6.1 We will prepare, keep current and ensure staff are aware of a comprehensive disaster plan covering prevention, preparation, response, recovery and review.