



VALENCE HOUSE

a place of discovery

LBBB Archive Preservation Policy

This policy was approved on 21 July 2015.
It is due for review in July 2020.

Name of the repository: Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre

Address: Becontree Avenue, Dagenham, RM8 3HT

Governing body: London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 21 July 2015

Date at which this policy is due for review: July 2020

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this preservation policy is to outline the principles that guide collections care and conservation at the Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre.

2. Context

2.1. LBBB Archive has a fundamental responsibility to ensure the continuing availability and authenticity of the records that it holds for present and future generations under the Local Government (Records) Act 1962 and the Local Government Act 1972. For further information on how this legislation relates to the work and services provided by LBBB Archive see **Appendix A**.

2.2. The records that we hold have informational, material and cultural value. The preservation of the archive and local studies collections is vital in order to safeguard the authenticity of records, whilst also ensuring that records can be accessed by current, as well as future users at LBBB Archive.

2.3. LBBB Archive adopts an evidence based approach when striving to preserve its collections. This consists of assessing the condition and preservation requirements of material on accession, which in turns informs the **Preservation Plan**. Electronic records are individually assessed on a regular basis, and the outcome of these assessments also informs the **Preservation Plan**. LBBB Archive has also developed the following procedures: managing the storage areas, cleaning documents and packaging archive material, as well as guidelines on handling collections.

2.4. LBBB Archive complies to national and international preservation standards, notably PD5454:2012. This policy has been developed in accordance with these standards, as well as existing preservation policies used by other repositories, namely The National Archives and London Metropolitan Archive. For a full list of standards and policies consulted in the process of establishing this policy see **Appendix B**.

2.6. The terms used in this document are specific to this policy and are defined in **Appendix C**.

3. Aims

3.1. The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure the preservation of archive holdings for current and future access at the Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre.
- To ensures that preservation is embedded in all activities, from acquisition through to access at LBBB Archive.

- To raise awareness among staff, users and others on preservation matters that relate to the care of collections at LBBB Archive
- To advise staff, users and others on preservation matters that relate to the care of collections at LBBB Archive.
- To guide the development preservation strategy, procedures and guides consistent with the values and goals of LBBB Archive.

4. Policy Statements

4.1. Management

4.1.1. LBBB Archive recognises the importance of having clear lines of responsibility for preservation matters.

4.1.2. Given the informational content, as well as the unique and irreplaceable nature of the collections, the loss of these asserts is a strategic risk to the organisation and this risk should be managed according.

4.1.3. The Borough Archivist, supported by the Local Studies Librarian and Local Studies Assistant, is responsible for preservation management and activities at LBBB Archive.

4.1.4. Preservation issues are dealt with through liaison with the Heritage Group Manager, and other managers, including the Heritage Properties Manager and the Senior Heritage Warden. Preservation activities undertaken are documented, as appropriate.

4.2. Training

4.2.1. LBBB Archive recognises the benefit of having staff and volunteers that are trained in preservation awareness.

4.2.2. All new staff and volunteers are required to attend a document handling training session as part of their induction to the work of LBBB Archive. Requirements for further staff training on preservation matters are assessed and provided internally and/or externally, as appropriate.

4.3. Buildings

4.3.1. LBBB Archive recognises that buildings are vital when it comes to protecting collections from fire, floods, dust, pollutants and pests.

4.3.2. LBBB Archive is located in the Visitor's Centre at Valence House Museum. There are two strong rooms within this building for the storage of archival material and rare books, which were purpose built when the site was redeveloped in 2010, and in turn conform to

the standards outlined by PD5454:2012 Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials.

4.3.3. The interior and exterior of the building are maintained by the Facilities Team at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, in consultation with the Heritage Properties Manager. Contractors are retained on standby for emergency, as well as routine repairs.

4.3.4. Preservation issues and how these issues should be dealt with are outlined in the Building Management Plan.

4.4. Security

4.4.1. LBBD Archive acknowledges the important role that security plays in ensuring the safe deposit of material.

4.4.2. Documents are consulted by staff, volunteers or users under controlled conditions in accordance with nationally recognised and agreed standards in the Reading Room. Staff, volunteers and users are expected to comply with the **Reading Room Rules**.

4.4.3. Public use areas are closely supervised by staff. Meanwhile access to the storage areas is restricted to archive and local studies staff, as well as other authorised persons. Unauthorised persons must be accompanied by a member of staff. The doors to both the storage areas are of strong construction. These doors are security code protected and have also been fitted with chub locks. The strong rooms are windowless. The only other access points are fire exits, which can only be opened from the inside.

4.4.4. Both the interior and the exterior of the building are monitored by CCTV. Heritage Wardens patrol the site during the day. Intruder detectors and alarms linked to a security agency are activated when the building and storage areas are not in use. There is also a fire detection system that is connected to the emergency services.

4.5. Environment

4.5.1. LBBD Archive recognises that the life expectancy of archive material is significantly affected by the environmental conditions in which they are stored.

4.5.2. The temperature and relative humidity in the storage areas, corridors and offices within the Visitor's Centre are managed and monitored by Hanwell Humbug Data Recorders. Information from these data recorders is regularly downloaded and analysed to ensure that the archive collections are being kept in a stable environment in accordance with PD5454:2012 Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials.

4.5.3. The larger of the strong rooms contains mainly paper collections and is known as the Archive Store. The temperature and relative humidity within this strong room are not controlled by an air conditioning system. Conditions should aim to be between 16-19C and

45-60% RH. This sort of storage, known as 'passive storage', is recognised as being both sustainable and environmentally friendly.

4.5.4. The other smaller strong room contains audiovisual material such as photographs, films and oral history recordings. The temperature and relative humidity within this strong room is controlled by an air conditioning system. The system aims to maintain conditions between 10-16C and 30-40% RH. The air-conditioning is part of the central Building Management System managed by the Facilities Team.

4.5.5. Exposure to light in the storage areas is kept to a minimum. There are no windows and artificial lighting consists of fluorescent tube lighting with UV filters and time switch mechanisms.

4.6. Storage

4.6.1. LBBD Archive recognises that well organised and appropriate storage facilities will help reduce the damage to collections.

4.6.2. The larger of the two strong rooms, known as the Archive Store has a floor area of 145m². The smaller strong room, known as the Photograph Store has a floor area of 18.5 m². These storage areas comprise approximately 120m³ of shelving.

4.6.3. The layout of the storage furniture within the strong rooms has been designed to ensure the efficient and economic use of the available space. To further optimum the use of the space, there are rolling shelves and material is organised according to format and size.

4.6.4. Oversize material is stored near the door to aid retrieval. There are also plan chests for large flat material, as well as deep shelves for rolled plans and maps.

4.7. Pests

4.7.1. LBBD Archive recognises that considerable damage can be caused by insects, rodents and birds both to building and to their contents

4.7.2. All storage areas are monitored for pests with sticky pheromone traps. There are regular assessments of the building to look for rodent damage.

4.7.3. All material entering the site is segregated in the Preservation Room and examined for infestations prior to accession by the Archivist.

4.8. Cleaning

4.8.1. LBBD Archive recognises the important that the storage environment is kept clean and tidy.

4.8.2. The storage and working areas are regularly cleaned using methods to reduce the unnecessary movement of dust.

4.8.3. Both storage areas are inspected on a daily basis to ensure they are kept in a tidy and safe condition.

4.8.4. New accessions of material are assessed, cleaned and boxed in the Preservation Room before they are placed into either the Archive Store or the Photograph Store.

4.9. Packaging

4.9.1. LBBB Archive encourages the use of appropriate packaging materials to protect the collection.

4.9.2. Stocks of standard archival boxes, folders, envelopes and polyester pockets are available for use by staff. Specialist enclosures are ordered as required. LBBB Archive has the equipment required to make bespoke boxes for oversize or particularly fragile items.

4.9.3. These protective enclosures provide a buffer against fluctuations in temperature and humidity, whilst also offering protection against damage caused by dust, pollutants, water, heat and smoke.

4.10. Handling

4.10.1. LBBB encourages proper handling of collections by staff, volunteers and users. In turn, staff and volunteers are provided with training in how to handle archive material.

4.10.2. Handling guidelines are made available to staff and volunteers, as well as users that consult archive and local studies material in the Reading Room.

4.10.3. Trolleys are available for staff and volunteers to use for the transportation of material within the building.

4.10.4. Book supports, gloves and light weights are supplied to staff, volunteers and members of the public.

4.11. Surrogates

4.11.1. LBBB Archive supports the use of surrogate copies in place of fragile original material.

4.11.2. Surrogates are produced in a range of different formats to improve access to records including digital imaging, photocopying and microfilming. These surrogates reduce the

movement and handling of records, may be designated at the accessioned record if the original is lost or damaged and can also constitute proof of condition and legal ownership.

4.11.3. Surrogates are produced for users to order depending on copyright restrictions and at the discretion of the Archivist. Reprographic orders are carried out by members of the Archive and Local Studies Team. Processes must aim to capture the maximum amount of information and should as far as possible, offer customers their desired copy format.

4.11.4. When a surrogate is generated from an original record the production of the surrogate must not endanger the original record. In turn, future copies of the record should be made from the surrogate rather than the original document.

4.12. Exhibitions

4.12.1. LBBB Archive recognises both the benefit and the risks of exhibiting original material. There are regular temporary displays of original archive material in the Reading Room. Displays run for no longer than one or two months. Items vulnerable to light such as photographs, or damaged items, are not displayed. The cabinet in which the material is displayed is locked at all times.

4.12.2. Loans to other institutions, repositories and organisation are assessed and where necessary couriered by members of staff. The guidelines and forms for exhibitions and loans are periodically updated.

4.13. Digital preservation

4.13.1. LBBB Archive recognises the importance of digital preservation. Preservation treatments for electronic records may encompass both the physical medium e.g. rewinding and cleaning, as well as the intellectual content e.g. migration to the most appropriate formats.

4.13.2. Migration of born-digital records may be required to improve the usability of the records or in response to technological changes, which threaten its continued accessibility through obsolescence. This is likely to be an ongoing periodic requirement throughout the life cycle of digital records and will always be undertaken in a controlled manner as a result of detailed preservation planning and testing. Migration must be fully documented in the form of a detailed migration history as part of the metadata associated with the record.

4.13.3. LBBB Archive makes appropriate provision for the backup of its digital collections. Backup copies are actively maintained to ensure their continued viability. Digital collections and the technical infrastructure required to manage and access them are updated and maintained to ensure they can be restored in the event of an emergency.

4.13.4. LBBB Archive recognises that further plans and procedures are necessary to support Digital Preservation.

4.14. Conservation

4.14.1. LBBB Archive recognises the need to prioritise conservation treatments in keeping with the objectives of the **Collections Management and Development Policy**.

4.14.2. Collections that are identified as needing conservation treatment are to be assessed and prioritised jointly by a professional conservator and either the Archivist or the Local Studies Librarian. This assessment is based on the physical condition and stability, the historical value, the expected frequency of use and the existence of surrogates.

4.14.3. Conservation treatments will be carried out by a professional conservator either externally, or if possible, on site in the Preservation Room. The treatments given will be sympathetic with and not detrimental to the item, and no treatment will be undertaken if it is likely to remove, diminish, falsify or obscure the evidential value of the document. In addition, detailed records of all treatments must be maintained.

4.14.4. Budgetary considerations will determine the extent and the nature of conservation treatments. As a result, it is recommended that conservation work required should be factored into projects funded by grant making trusts, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

4.15. Disaster preparedness

4.15.1. LBBB Archive recognises that advance planning, training and up-to-date reaction plans are crucial to effective responses in a fire, flood or other emergency situation.

4.15.2. Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre has smoke alarms throughout. The storage areas have high sensitivity smoke and flood detectors installed, which are connected to the central monitoring system.

4.15.3. Heritage Services maintains an up-to-date a **Business Continuity Plan**. This plan is designed to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, members of the general public and the collections in the case of an emergency.

4.15.4. In the event of a major incident, the first priority is the safety of people followed by immediate action to rescue or prevent further damage to the collections. Depending on the immediate threat, emergency response and recovery actions will take place precedence over all other activities across Heritage Services. Any document salvage operation that takes place at LBBB Archive will be lead by the Borough Archivist.

4.15.5. Detailed information on salvage techniques, emergency equipment, as well as response procedure for minor and major incidents can be found in the **Emergency Plan**. This plan has been developed in consultation with staff, and should be regularly reviewed and tested to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

4.15.5. LBBB Archive has an annual contract with Harwell Document Restoration Service.

5. Implementation

5.1. This policy is to be made available to staff, volunteers and users online.

5.2. This policy should be used together with related policies, plans and procedures that make up LBBB Archive's Collections Management Framework.

6. Evaluation

6.1. This policy will be reviewed at least every two years to make sure it remains relevant to the work and services provided by LBBB Archive.

6.2. This policy will next be reviewed July 2020.

7. Feedback

7.1. If you wish to give us feedback on this policy, please email localstudies@lbbd.gov.uk.

Appendix A

Archive Legislation

The Local Government (Records) Act 1962, as amended to 2003, confers limited discretionary powers for local authorities to provide certain archives services. It states that 'a local authority may do all such things as appear to it necessary or expedient for enabling adequate use to be made of records under its control'. The Act goes on to refer to allowing inspection and copying of records, preparing indexes and guides to them and publishing and exhibiting them. The Act refers solely to the service provision aspect of archive offices' work, not to their stewardship obligations nor any wider responsibilities and functions. In addition the Act empowers them to acquire records of local significance over and above their own administrative records, care for them and make them available for study by the public.

The Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to 'make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council of any of their officers'. In 1999 the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now the Department for Communities and Local Government) issued guidance on the interpretation of the term 'proper arrangements'. The guidance includes sections on the management of a local authority's administrative records, whether kept on paper or in electronic form, and proper arrangements for those records which have enduring historical value and which should be kept by an established archive service.

Additional requirements with regard to access to information in records and archives, affecting local and regional authorities, have been imposed through the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations. These include a statutory right for the citizen of access to information, subject to certain exemptions and conditions.

Information taken from the website of the National Archives:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/legislation/other-archival-legislation/local-government-acts/> (Last accessed February 2015)

Appendix B

Standards and Policies

Hampshire Record Office: Preservation Policy (2010)

Leeds University Library: Collections Care Policy (2010)

London Metropolitan Archives: Archive and Preservation Policy (2006)

Preservation Advisory Centre: Building a Preservation Policy (2013)

PD 5454:2012: Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials (2012)

The National Archives: Standard for Record Repositories (2004)

The National Archives: Preservation Policy (2009)

Wellcome Library: Preservation Policy for Materials Held in Collections (2014)

Appendix C

Definitions

Born-digital record: a record that has been created and accessioned electronically, as opposed to having been digitised from a paper record.

Conservation: a set of activities that aims to stabilise the physical or chemical condition of a record, to prolong the life of a record and relevant metadata, or enhance its value, or improve access to it through interventive treatment.

Conservation treatment: an interventive action intended to improve or maintain a record's physical and/or chemical stability, its appearance or accessibility. For electronic records this may entail physical or chemical intervention; however, it may also entail the manufacture of an archival master or, for electronic records, migration or other forms of transformation which result in a new manifestation of the record. It usually takes place once damage has occurred, or in anticipation of damage or obsolescence (hence inaccessibility) because of the passage of time.

Digital preservation: a set of technical processes to ensure that digital documents and records remain accessible over the long term.

Electronic record: a record produced, housed or transmitted by electronic means rather than physical means and satisfies the definition of a record.

Metadata: a set of data which conveys information about other data. For example, the information in the catalogue can be considered to be metadata. Metadata is used for records management, retrieval and use.

Migration: the process of transforming an electronic record from one encoding format to another. This may be undertaken either to translate the record into a format which is more accessible to users, or in advance of technological obsolescence of the original format. Migration techniques are active preservation methods, which constitute a change to the nature of the record, and entail a risk of information loss which must be clearly identified and managed.

Surrogate: a duplicate of an original document in whole or in part to preserve it and provide access to it.

Original record: the accessioned record, which can be in a physical or electronic format, from which a copy or surrogate can be made. In some instances the accessioned record is itself a surrogate, for example, if microfilm is accessioned. In this case the accessioned record is still considered to be the original.

Physical record: a record that exists in its original physical format.

Preservation: a set of activities that aims to prolong the life of a record and relevant metadata, or enhance its value, or improve access to it through non-interventive means. This includes actions taken to influence records creators prior to selection and acquisition.

Records: defined as including not only written records, but records conveying information by any means whatsoever. The information conveyed in records was created, received and maintained as documentation in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

