

THE BARING ARCHIVE  
**Preservation Policy**

**10 March 2017**

# History of Changes

Version	Date	Author   Reviewer	Changes
1	2013	Lara Webb	Original policy
2	10 March 2018	Clara Harrow	Amendment to policy principles, purpose; Removed general statement on policy as an accountability document Renamed Conservation and Preservation Strategy to Archive strategy Removed reference to Guidelines for handling as these are included in Conditions of Access Roles and responsibilities: removed reference to Trustees and approval as incorporated in this cover sheet Amended statement relating to budget Preservation Management removed statement on annual review of strategy. Conservation: amended statement on status of deposit

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# Preface

Preservation is a fundamental responsibility of The Baring Archive Limited in order to ensure the continued availability and authenticity of the archives in its care, so that they are available for present and future generations.

The Baring Archive recognises that the use of and access to its collection is the prime purpose of its existence. This links with the charitable objects of The Baring Archive which are registered with the Charity Commission.

The purpose of this policy is to present the high-level principles that guide the preservation activities of The Baring Archive. It is intended to define the Archive's preservation responsibilities, to guide the Trustees and staff of The Baring Archive as they make decisions and undertake activities that may have an impact on the collection, and to plan for this financially.

The preservation policy is a general statement complemented by the following detailed documents:

- Archive Strategy
- Disaster Control Plan
- Conditions of Access to The Baring Archive
- Loan agreement for exhibitions

## 1. Definitions

- 1.1. *Conservation* is the treatment of artefacts by minimal interventive procedures in order to stabilise and retard further deterioration
- 1.2. *Preservation* refers to all managerial, technical and financial considerations applied to retard deterioration and extend the useful life of collection materials to ensure their continued availability.
- 1.3. *Preservation management* refers to the long-term safe-keeping of collection material
- 1.4. *Surrogate* is a copy of a vulnerable item which replicates as far as possible the characteristics of the original as required by most readers, thereby helping to protect and preserve the original items, while not replacing the original item.

## 2. Benefits

- 2.1. Supports decision-making and prioritisation when allocating resources for the maintenance of material in the collection
- 2.2. Provides evidence that the Trustees of The Baring Archive are seeking to meet one of their declared charitable aims
- 2.3. Defines the work that The Baring Archive is already doing in this area
- 2.4. Assists and supports the development of preservation approaches and methodologies, as well as a coherent conservation and preservation programme
- 2.5. Reinforces accountability
- 2.6. Helps to meet the demands of potential project funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. All staff of the Archive assist in implementing the preservation policy as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

## 4. Finance

- 4.1. Conservation is one element of The Baring Archive's budget plan.

## 5. Preservation Management

- 5.1. All new members of staff will be given preservation training, and appropriate refresher training will be provided for existing staff.
- 5.2. The Archive will conform to relevant standards and best practice guidelines as far as possible, including:
  - PD5454:2012 Guide to the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials
  - BS4971:2002 Recommendations for Repair and Allied Processes for the Conservation of Documents
  - PAS197:2009 Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management.

## 6. Access and Handling

- 6.1. Public access to original documents will be in the controlled conditions of an invigilated study room.
- 6.2. Readers must sign the Conditions of Access to The Baring Archive and read the Handling Guidelines in the study room before being issued with documents. Readers

are required to observe these guidelines and will be given additional guidance and advice, if required, on consulting archive materials safely.

- 6.3. Supports, such as cushions, and other handling equipment are provided in the study room and other areas for use by readers and staff.
- 6.4. Procedures have been developed to ensure that material in transit within the building, or on loan for exhibitions, is well protected and carefully handled.
- 6.5. Badly damaged or vulnerable material may be restricted. Reader demand for such material will increase its priority for conservation treatment

## 7. Copying

- 7.1. While the first priority of the Archive is to ensure preservation of the archival records themselves, all copies kept by the Archive have preservation value also as:
  - they reduce the movement and exposure of archival records
  - they may be designated the archival record if the original is lost or damaged
  - they may constitute proof of condition and legal ownership.
- 7.2. Preservation copying should use techniques and materials tested for longevity and cost-effectiveness. The Archive will use digitisation as the preferred preservation copying method, to the standard set out below:
  - 24 bit Tiff file
  - No higher than 300 dpi colour and no lower than 200 dpi grayscale for textual documents
  - No higher than 600 dpi colour and no lower than 400 dpi grayscale for photographic images
  - Stored online and on a portable hard drive
  - Ensure resources are made available for migration of digital information as technology changes.
- 7.3. Copies can only be made after seeking permission from the copyright holder. In order to preserve the archival record, reader copying is not permitted. Digital photography (without flash) is permitted by readers in the study room as a non-invasive copying method.

## 8. Conservation

- 8.1. Based on an assessment of the preservation needs of the collection, priorities for practical conservation are determined using the following criteria:
  - Public demand, both expressed and anticipated
  - Historical significance
  - Degree of existing damage and potential future deterioration and degradation
  - Suitability for use of surrogates
  - Status of deposit (whether it is owned by a party other than ING eg. Northbrook Papers).

- 8.2. Conservation work must be undertaken with care and according to principles that will maintain the integrity and authenticity of the material. Careful consideration and consultation with experts must be employed in each instance.
- 8.3. The Archive uses minimum intervention to support and stabilise material. The intervention should not harm an item and repairs should be reversible. Materials used for intervention should be of archival quality and all actions should only be undertaken by trained personnel who have been accredited by Icon (the Institute of Conservation) or ARA (Archives and Records Association).
- 8.4. Treatments commissioned by the Archive will be in accordance with nationally recognised and agreed ethical and technical standards including:
- 8.5. BS4971:2002 – Recommendations for the Repair and Allied Processes for the Conservation of Documents
- 8.6. European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer's Organisations (ECCO): Code of Ethics (1993).
- 8.7. All conservation treatment will be undertaken with the intention of preserving the maximum degree of evidential value and with the minimum impact on the authenticity of the record.
- 8.8. All conservation examinations and treatments will be recorded and the records of this kept for the long-term.

## 9. Storage Accommodation, Security and Environment

- 9.1. The Archive will seek to ensure appropriate and secure accommodation for all its holdings, whether they are stored, being processed or in use.
- 9.2. Appropriate accommodation includes environmentally controlled and monitored space, enclosures that conform to archival standards, security, pest management and disaster preparedness. In this, the Archive adheres as far as possible to PD5454:2012.
- 9.3. Monitoring and maintaining the correct environmental conditions in which to store material is a key element of preservation management, in order to minimise and mitigate risk to the collection. This includes:
  - using appropriate containers – archival quality boxes, sleeves, tape and similar materials to protect collections and ensuring all containers are clearly labelled to identify content
  - monitoring temperature and humidity to ensure they are stable and within recommended guidelines by taking regular readings from monitoring devices
  - maintaining cleanliness in the storage areas and endeavouring to clean collections on a systematic basis using appropriate methods
  - ensuring security measures are in place to protect against theft and vandalism
  - implementing a system to prevent pests by monitoring for their presence. New acquisitions must also be examined carefully and quarantined if any infestation is found.

## 10. Loans

- 10.1. Each loan of archival material will be assessed on its suitability on an individual basis.
- 10.2. Each item will be photographed or copied before a loan to establish a record of its condition.
- 10.3. Loans of original material must be approved by the Trustees of the Archive.
- 10.4. Requests for loans will only be approved if the host body can show that the standards of care in the temporary location are similar to those in the Archive and meet the requirements of PD5454:2012 as far as is possible.
- 10.5. A loan agreement will be signed by both parties, detailing preservation requirements for the duration of the loan. If feasible, the Archivist will also undertake a site visit prior to the loan

## 11. Disaster and Emergency Preparedness

- 11.1. The Archive will update and maintain a Disaster Control Plan to protect its holdings in the event of an emergency.
- 11.2. In a disaster or emergency, the first priority will be the safety of people, followed by immediate action to rescue or prevent further damage to the archives. Emergency response and recovery actions will take precedence over all other archive activities.

## 12. Sources

- Bell, N, Dungworth, N, Eden, P, and Matthews, G, A model for assessing preservation needs in libraries (London, 1998).
- British Standards Institution, Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials PD 5454:2012 (London, 2012).
- Kitching, C, Archive Buildings in the United Kingdom, 1993-2005 (Chichester, 2007).
- Icon, Conservation Register guidance (2013), at <<http://www.conservationregister.com/PIcon-Guidance.asp>>.
- The National Archives, The National Archives' standard for record repositories (2004), at <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/standard2005.pdf>>.
- Preservation Advisory Centre, Cleaning books and documents (2011), at <<http://www.bl.uk/blpac/pdf/clean.pdf>>.
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