

<b>Local Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee 21 February 2013**

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### **Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service: Preservation and Conservation Policy**

#### **Recommendation(s)**

1. That the revised Preservation and Conservation Policy for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service, as at Appendix 1, be approved.

#### **Report of Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive (Staffordshire County Council) and Director of Adult and Neighbourhood Services (Stoke on Trent City Council)**

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

2. The review has updated the Policy to reflect changes in standards, best practice and current working methods for the Service.

#### **Background**

3. Stewardship, that is preservation and conservation, is a core function of the Joint Archive Service. These responsibilities follow from the fundamental collecting activity of the Service. The Preservation and Conservation Policy is therefore a key and underpinning policy document.

4. The first Preservation and Conservation Policy for the Joint Archive Service was drawn up and approved in 2001, with further revisions in 2004, 2009, and 2010. The revised Policy for 2013 is attached at Appendix 1.

5. A new Archive Accreditation standard is being developed with a draft version available for comment. The new standard is due to come into force in the summer of 2013. The draft standard requires archive services to have a policy on collections care and preservation to ensure the long-term preservation of and access to the collection.

6. This Policy provides the basis for the technical function of collections care, which is carried out by the Archive Service. It sets out our commitments and responsibilities to ensure that the irreplaceable archives in our care are handed on to future generations in as good a condition as we can achieve. This area of activity has remained largely unaltered and the content of the policy is largely unchanged.

7. However the Policy has been updated to take account of revisions to standards for the care of collections; new ways of working for annual work

programmes and highlighting the advice and training given by staff of the Archive Service to creators of archives.

8. The British Standard BS5454 has been changed to PD5454: 2012, Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Documents. This change is pending the development of a European Standard. The policy has been updated to make reference to this new Guidance. The main changes include a broader range of temperature and relative humidity for archive repositories. This change will allow the Archive Service to reassess its use of air conditioning in its strongrooms to reduce the impact on the environment.

9. The section on the Annual Work Programmes has been updated to reflect the fact the cleaning and care is carried out at each of the three repositories. This work has been supplemented by a new volunteer group at Staffordshire Record Office assisting with preservation and packaging projects.

10. A new section on Preservation and Owners of Documents has been added. This acknowledges the wider role that the Archive Service plays in advising owners and organisations who are the creators of archives to ensure that documents are correctly cared for. This advice can often lead to deposit of material with the Archive Service. The Service also plays a role in supporting local groups and communities carrying out their own projects which may involve the collection or preservation of archives.

11. A copy of the supporting information leaflet, In Safe Keeping, issued to all new users of the Joint Archive Service, is attached at Appendix 2. This guidance is unchanged.

**Report author:**

Author's Name: Joanna Terry, Head of Archives  
Telephone No: (01785) 278370  
Room No: Staffordshire Record Office

**List of Background Papers**

Papers	Contact/Directorate/ext number
Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive	
Service: Preservation and Conservation Policy	
In Safe Keeping Guidance	

## **Appendix 1**

### **Equalities implications:**

The underlying purpose of the Preservation and Conservation Policy is to ensure that access to original documents or to their content can be provided to as wide a range of the public as possible.

### **Legal implications:**

The Terms of Deposit for the Joint Archive Service make full reference to the preservation and conservation work of the Service, so that the owners of documents are aware of this at the time of depositing their documents.

### **Resource and Value for money implications:**

Provision is made within the Joint Archive Service revenue budget for preservation and conservation activity. The Preservation and Conservation Service is carried out from one facility for the whole of the Service offering excellent value for money.

### **Risk implications:**

The main risk is associated with not carrying out preservation and conservation work to ensure ongoing access to archival collections.

The Joint Archive Service Terms of Deposit includes a clause that depositors, who subsequently withdraw their collections from the care of the Service, may be charged for any conservation work which has been carried out on their documents.

### **Climate Change implications:**

The Policy has been updated to meet PD5454 which allows for a broader range of temperature and relative humidity within archive strongrooms. This means that the Service will be able to assess its use of air conditioning with the aim of introducing new practices to reduce the impact on the environment.

### **Health Impact Assessment screening:**

No significant implications.

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