

Collection Care and Conservation Policy

Hull History Centre is a partnership between Hull City Council and the University of Hull. The City Council's obligations to the partnership are administered and delivered on its behalf by Hull Culture & Leisure Ltd a wholly owned Hull City Council company. The partners aim to provide a seamless service to stakeholders and the following should therefore be read as applying to both partners unless otherwise stated.

1. Aim of the Policy

Hull History Centre is a purpose-built building that conforms to the required standards for the storage of, and provision of access to, the unique collections in its custody. The Centre has a duty to preserve, protect, provide access to, and care and conserve the collections for present and future generations.

This policy is a statement of the principles and procedures that underpin the processes required from initial acquisition of archive material to user access, and it will encompass all aspects of preservation and conservation, which is the responsibility of all staff and users of the collections.

2. Building and Environment

2.1 Fabric and maintenance

A building management plan has been implemented. It includes a programme of routine maintenance for the building fabric and the systems controlling the building structure, building protection, and the storage environment.

2.2 Security

An assessment has identified risks to building protection, access, use, and the security of the collections. This has informed the Centre's Security Policy. The systems and equipment identified as being required and essential for the security of the building and the collections have been installed according to mandatory standards and insurance requirements.

2.3 Storage and Environmental control

The Hull History Centre provides and maintains the appropriate storage areas and equipment, which conform to standards, for the long term preservation of the collections. The environment is controlled and monitored, and systems are installed

that continuously monitor the temperature and humidity, and generate data that can be preserved indefinitely.

2.4 Good housekeeping/cleaning

The Hull History Centre has established a cleaning programme for the building that includes special requirements for the storage areas, and all areas in the building where archival material is used and consulted. As part of this, all staff are trained in good housekeeping procedures.

2.5 Monitoring/Assessment of collections

Provision has been made for the assessment of newly acquired material for mould, pests, water damage and any other contamination. Material is quarantined, when necessary, before being moved into the storage area.

2.6 Pest monitoring

All areas of the building, particularly the storage areas and rooms where archive material is consulted, are regularly monitored by conservation staff for signs of pest infestation. All staff are trained in the identification of pests and the procedures for alerting the conservation staff if they see any signs of pest activity.

3. Conservation

3.1 The Hull History Centre has a conservation unit staffed by qualified conservators who maintain awareness of current ideas and developments. It is adequately equipped to undertake all anticipated conservation processes, and resources are made available for identified preservation and conservation work.

3.2 All preservation and conservation work adheres to the appropriate standards, primarily PAS 197:2009, BS 4971:2017, EN 16893:2018, BS EN 1782:2023.

3.3 A conservation and preservation management programme has been implemented that includes identifying priorities for conservation and preservation, repackaging, surveys and recording interventive treatments.

4. Handling and use

4.1 Policies are in place for the safe and correct means of handling and consulting archive material and the provision of protective packaging.

- 4.2 Equipment and materials is provided for, and staff are trained in the safe transportation and protection of archive material around the building and offsite.
- 4.3 Guidelines are readily available for researchers in the Searchroom. Staff ensure that these guidelines are enforced, and offer guidance where necessary.
- 4.4 Supports and weights are available for staff and public use in rooms where archival material is consulted.
- 4.5 All original archive material used in exhibitions is managed according to the appropriate standards, and exhibition display cases and supports are used which meet the required standard.
- 4.6 A Loans Policy is in place for items that are loaned out to other institutions or borrowed from other institutions by the Hull History Centre.
- 4.7 All archive material is correctly labelled and marked to best practice.

5. Surrogates

- 5.1 Staff have investigated the latest and alternative methods for the safe copying of archive material and the provision of surrogate copies. They implement appropriate systems and processes, supported by policies, guidelines and training. The methods used are monitored for any technological improvements or advancements and upgraded when and where necessary.
- 5.2 All copying and access equipment is kept in good order and maintained according to the manufacturers' warranties and recommendations.
- 5.3 For collections and material that is heavily used and/or in poor condition, surrogate copies are made available in a format that has longevity and is easily accessible.
- 5.4 The correct storage environment is available for master and preservation copies according to their format and the relevant standard.

6. Media

Modern media formats, such as photographs, CDs and video tapes, are stored in the correct storage environment according to its format. Regular checks are made to ensure they still useable and accessible, and the data accessible.

7. Emergency preparedness

- 7.1 A written emergency plan is in place, and is tested and reviewed on a regular basis.
- 7.2 Equipment and materials are available on site and in nearby buildings to deal with small incidents, with provision made for access to further supplies in the event of an incident on a large scale.
- 7.3 The Hull History Centre has investigated the availability of disaster response companies and facilities who can be called upon in the event of a major incident.
- 7.4 A recovery plan is in place that includes details of processes required for business continuity.

8. External support and communication

The Hull History Centre provides advice and guidance on best practice and the importance of collection management and care to other institutions, outside organisations, owners of private archive collections, community groups and the general public.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Last updated: October 2024

To be reviewed October 2026