

## **Keeping and using private archives: a custodian's view**

**Dr John Alban, County Archivist, Norfolk Record Office**

The term 'private archives' covers a wide range of material, encompassing any documents which are not officially-created archives. By officially-created archives I mean, for instance, the archives of central government ('public records') and local government, or of bodies such as the established church (diocesan and parish records), which make up the core of holdings of local record offices.

Private archives can include those of landed estates, families, religious bodies, businesses, charities, schools, clubs, societies, women's institutes, scout troops, antiquaries, private individuals – the list is endless. Most local record offices hold large amounts of such material, in addition to their mainstay holdings of official records.

Many private archives held in record offices contain some of the greatest archival treasures and collections which those institutions hold. That is certainly the case for the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) and it was a crucial element in the argument which we made in support of our application to the then Museums, Libraries and Archives Council for 'Designation' status in 2005. Indeed, it was a vital factor in the success of our application, which resulted in our entire holdings being 'Designated' as being of outstanding importance.

Today, I am going to look at private archives from a custodian's point of view, drawing on my experience of working as an archivist in local authority record offices since the early 1970s. In view of today's audience, my emphasis will principally be on estate and country house archives. In giving examples, I shall be drawing mainly from the practices of the NRO, as well as looking at what owners of private archives might expect from a local record office.

Since the early years of the twentieth century, local authority archive services have, understandably, been mainly concerned with the official records in their custody. However, they have also shown equal interest in acquiring, for the purposes of preservation and access, private archives held elsewhere. Most local record offices have actively welcomed acquisitions of such material and continue to do so, even in this period of straitened financial circumstances for local authorities.

2013 sees the centenary of the foundation of the first county record office in the country, Bedfordshire, which was established by a County Councillor, Dr George Herbert Fowler in 1913. The Norfolk Record Office has not been around quite that long – we are only celebrating our fiftieth anniversary in 2013. Indeed, for English counties, Norfolk was, as one commentator described it, 'late in the stakes for a county record office'. So in archives, as in almost everything else, 'Norfolk do different', as we say in the county. Many other English counties had established their county record office by the time

of the outbreak of the Second World War. We were one of the last counties to do so before the flurry of new offices which sprang up at the time of local government reorganization in 1974.

In the early days of local record offices, *deposit* rather than *donation* was the norm. In the former case, the owner retains title to the records, but places them into the record office's custody on the basis of permanent loan; in the latter instance, the accession takes the form of a gift, where title passes to the record office. This early concentration on deposit provided archivists and owners with a practical solution, because it was easier for owners to put their archives into the safe custody of a record office if they retained the ownership of them, rather than yielding up their title. Also, in the early days, record offices rarely had funds to purchase documents outright, so deposit was an effective way of ensuring that archives came into professional custody, the key driver being that, by providing proper preservation and public access to them, the records would be saved for posterity.

Ever since those early days, good negotiation skills have always been an essential requirement for head archivists, as Chris Williams's recent obituary of Geoffrey Veysey, former County Archivist of Clwyd, in the October 2012 edition of the *Journal of the Society of Archivists* shows:

'Geoffrey was not a hands-on man ... nor was he one to spend weeks or months patiently listing major accumulations of records. Where he excelled was in seeking out records from private owners. A rich stream of deposits flowed into both record offices [at Hawarden and Ruthin] throughout the 1970s and 1980s. It turned out that many collections survived in the smaller Denbighshire houses, especially in the Vale of Clwyd. Both Flintshire and Denbighshire were counties with a history of industrialization dating for the Industrial Revolution ... and iron and steel, coal and lead mining, bricks and tiles and quarrying were all well represented in the archives. Particular mention might be made of the extensive records of the National Union of Miners, North Wales Area, and the Grosvenor (Halkyn) MSS – the records of the Welsh estates of the Duke of Westminster, in which lead mining and limestone quarrying were also well documented. Geoffrey was also very successful in securing the deposit of political records of all colours, and indeed of societies and organizations generally.'

From this you can see the wide range of private deposits to which may come into scope.

Let us now consider what owners of private archives might expect from a local record office. As I mentioned earlier, in view of today's audience, my emphasis will chiefly be on country house archives and I shall be drawing heavily on my experience in the NRO for examples. It is also worth bearing in mind the NRO's Mission Statement:

‘The Norfolk Record Office collects and preserves records of historical significance for the county of Norfolk and makes them accessible to everyone.’

The NRO actively encourages acquisitions of private archives (see Appendix 1: *Adding to Norfolk’s Archives*). Provided that the material falls within the Record Office’s *Archive Collecting Policy* (see Appendix 2), we would be prepared to accept it either on deposit or donation.

Our success in this respect is apparent from the breakdown of current NRO holdings. Around 38% of material in our custody has come from private sources (some 1,000 m<sup>3</sup>) and around 22% of our total holdings is material relating to estates. Since 2007, over 50% of original documents consulted in our searchroom have been private archives.

There are numerous benefits from placing private archives in the custody of the NRO. They include:

### **Preservation and Security**

We can provide optimum facilities for security and long-term preservation in our state-of-the-art repository, which is designed to PD 5454: 2012, *Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials*, with atmospheric conditions controlled at 16°C and 50% RH, automatic fire detection and extinguishing systems, together with high security systems. Where required, documents are also repackaged in archival quality packaging, e.g., pH-neutral folders and boxes, Melinex/polyester enclosures.

The Record Office has been recognized by The National Archives (TNA) as an ‘Approved Repository’, and complies with TNA’s *Standards for Record Repositories*. It is also recognized as a ‘Place of Deposit’ under the Public Records Act, 1958 and by the Lord Chancellor for tithe and manorial records.

### **Access**

We also provide supervised access to documents *via* our searchroom and can showcase them in our exhibition gallery which has been designed to comply with PD 5454. We also have the capability to digitize or microfilm material in-house to make surrogate copies or copies for access online, although capacity issues mean that this is something we currently do only sparingly.

### **Cataloguing**

Where possible, we try to catalogue the material as soon as practicable after receipt. The resulting finding aid then appears on NROCAT, our online catalogue at <http://nrocat.norfolk.gov.uk/>

### **Conservation**

If documents are in need of repair, we may include them in our programme of conservation.

For all these services above, there is usually no charge, as long as material remains on deposit, but under the terms of our *Conditions of Deposit* (see Appendix 3), if an owner subsequently opted to withdraw his or her archives, we would charge for any work which we had carried out on them, including the costs of storage.

### **Fringe Benefits**

Documents on deposit can also often benefit from the NRO's capacity for attracting external funding. For example, last year, we obtained £35k from an external grant-awarding source to produce a very detailed catalogue of a large family archive which dates back to the fifteenth century, while this year, we are currently running a £27k conservation project on a sixteenth-century manor court roll, partly supported by a grant from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust, combined with large amounts of funding from other sources

### **Recognition**

Today, most record offices continue to encourage deposits, although, of course, they will also gratefully accept donations. The NRO does both, but where we receive material as a donation, we often make special arrangements to mark the generosity of the donor (in cases where the donor wishes it, although they sometimes prefer to remain anonymous), for example, giving the accession a commemorative name, such as 'the Fred Bloggs Memorial Archive' or maintaining a special relationship with donors, including sending them invitations to relevant NRO events, such as exhibition launches.

### **Advice**

Record offices can provide facilities for preservation and access for documents in their custody, but these cannot always be guaranteed when documents are not held in custody. Our advice would be, wherever possible, put your archives with a record office – it is the best long-term solution. However, we appreciate that this cannot always be the case, so many record offices may be prepared to offer a range of off-site services to help owners, but, most particularly, to prevent archive collections falling into risk.

### **Off-Site Services**

Taking the example of Norfolk, while we have something like 1,000 m<sup>3</sup> of private archives in custody in The Archive Centre, we are aware that there still remains at large within the county a host of records. Many are retained in larger country houses, which have their own archivist. In some cases, often on the advice of their archivist, owners have also chosen to deposit some of their archives in the NRO, but have retained others in the house. Other country houses, both large and small, keep collections, but do not have an archivist, so the NRO tries to keep a dialogue going with the owners and we also have a lot of useful information available on our website.

Aware of the large amount of records still held in various places throughout the county, the NRO provides many off-site services for owners of private archives in Norfolk. These include:

## **Surveys and inspections**

I should stress that staffing resources and capacity issues mean that we cannot undertake detailed listing at this stage, although we can supply the owner with a copy of the report.

## **General Advice**

- Advice on storage conditions and preservation, also to be found on our website <http://www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk/>
- General advice on access and exploitation of collections, e.g., controls on access and security, use of pencils, etc.
- Conservation advice, including a conservation leaflet (see Appendix 4). The NRO does not carry out actual private conservation although, in certain very exceptional circumstances, and if an owner were prepared to pay, we might consider it, but this would absolutely depend on issues of capacity at the time.
- Advice on suppliers of specialist goods and services
- Advising on where to go for specialist advice, e.g., TNA Private Archives Team, Capital Exemption/acceptance in lieu [we will be hearing more about this from other speakers later today], East of England Regional Archives Council (EERAC).
- Advising on archivally-related HLF bids

## **Associated with this is**

- Brokering specialist support, e.g., putting owners in touch with professional cataloguing experts, Harwell for drying, pest control firms. But note that, because of County Council rules, we cannot *recommend* anyone.

## **Practical support**

- Sale of boxes and packaging materials, where we are able to do so
- Sale/gift of surplus shelving
- Temporary Deposits of material while works are in progress at house
- Temporary Deposits of material for consultation by researchers in NRO searchroom
- Assistance and advice in emergencies, e.g., evacuating derelict or flooded premises
- Support for exhibitions, e.g., loan of cases or display panels
- Borrowing of material for exhibition in NRO
- Lectures at events at the house
- Digitization and copying of material

## **Concerted Partnership Working**

- Associating the owner/archivist/custodian in NRO events, e.g., invitations to exhibition launches
- Liaison with owner/archivist/custodian
- Treating owner/archivist/custodian as stakeholders
- Partnership working on projects
- Involving owners as partners with NRO in regional/national projects, e.g., A2A

## **Conclusion**

As I was preparing this talk, I realized that what currently holds good for the NRO might not be wholly representative of the national picture, especially at a time of difficult financial circumstances for local authorities, a situation likely to get even harder over the next few years. I therefore decided to check the position in some other record offices. Consulting their websites, in the first instance, I could see that there still appears to be a widespread active commitment to caring for private archives and to continuing to receive them into custody. I followed this up by speaking with the heads of several repositories and, while everyone to whom I spoke was concerned about current financial pressures and dwindling resources, all were still heavily committed in principle to receiving private archives and all still offered this facility.

Another potential problem is that in some places, repository space is filling up and there is little room for new accessions. However, despite financial pressures, the last decade has witnessed a spectacular increase in the provision of new archive buildings, a trend which is now slowing down, but which still continues. All these new facilities have been planned with many years' accrual space, in some cases, up to 25 years.

Most record offices regard owners of private records as potential stakeholders and are ready to talk to them. In Norfolk, we certainly do.

If you have any issues or queries about your own archives, do get in touch with your local archive service. Their details are available on TNA's ARCHON pages at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archon/> or I am sure that TNA's Private Archives Team would be happy to pass on contact details.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Norfolk Record Office Information Leaflet 50**

#### **Adding to Norfolk's Archives**

Do you have records relating to Norfolk's past or present?

Would you like these records preserved for future generations?

Would you like to make them accessible for research?

#### **The Norfolk Record Office**

We collect and preserve records of historical significance for Norfolk and make them accessible to everyone. We are a joint service of the county and district councils of Norfolk.

The Norfolk Record Office holds over twelve million documents, a figure which is increasing all the time. The oldest document dates from about 1090 and the most recent was completed only months ago. They are kept in optimum conditions for their long-term preservation and are managed by qualified archivists and conservators, as well as experienced searchroom, education and outreach staff. Every year, the Norfolk Record Office is visited by some 20,000 people. The collection of archives held by the Norfolk Record Office has been 'Designated' by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council as having outstanding national and international importance. It includes many exceptionally important historical manuscripts, but it is the depth and range of Norfolk's archives that makes them outstanding: you may have records which could extend their range still further.

#### **Types of records held by the Norfolk Record Office**

If you have records that provide an insight into Norfolk's past and would like them to be preserved for ever and made accessible to future generations, then please contact the Norfolk Record Office. We aim to collect documents that form a unique or representative record of a Norfolk organization, person, place or activity, and which contain evidence that might be of interest to anyone (present or future) researching the county.

Records suitable for preservation can vary greatly in size, content, quantity and age. They may also be of different formats, such as maps, photographs, papers, parchments, rolls or volumes. The vast majority of our existing holdings are traditional textual records made of paper or parchment. However, we welcome non-traditional items such as sound recordings and digitally created electronic documents.

The Norfolk Record Office's formal collection policies are available on our website. If items fall outside our collection policies we may be able to advise

on who would be able to receive them. If you are unsure whether your records are suitable for permanent preservation, please ask us for advice.

We also welcome donations of relevant books and other publications for our searchroom library.

### **Transferring documents**

If the collection is large or there is doubt over its suitability for permanent preservation we may arrange for an archivist to assess the documents *in situ*. If it is not convenient for you to bring them in, we may be able to collect them. Records can also be transferred *via* King's Lynn Borough Archives, which are staffed by the Norfolk Record Office one day a week.

### **Donation or deposit?**

You can transfer documents to us by donation or on deposit. Donation (or gift) means that ownership is granted to the Norfolk Record Office, whilst deposit (or loan) means that you retain ownership and we hold the documents according to our general conditions and terms of deposit, which are available upon request. Record Office staff can discuss with you which is more appropriate. If you want to keep personal papers for the time being, but wish to safeguard them for the future, another option is to bequeath them to the Record Office in your will.

### **Accession and receipt**

Once we have agreed to add a document, or a group of records, to our holdings, we will accession them. This means that we give them a unique accession number as well as recording their receipt, the name of the donor or depositor, the terms of deposit or donation and any known information about the collection's previous ownership, custody or content. If you already have a summary list of some or all of the records, whether electronic or on paper, this can be a useful supplement to them. Any information you have about the people or organization which created the records, such as dates and places, and changes of title are immensely helpful to us, and information about copyright can also be invaluable. We will give you a signed receipt for the records either immediately or within ten days of receiving them.

### **After transfer**

#### **Assessment and storage**

Archivists assess the physical condition of all new accessions. We refer documents in poor condition to our professionally trained conservators. All documents are kept in our purpose-built archive store, which fully complies with the British Standards Institution's *PD 5454: 2012. Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials* (London, 2012). We use archive-quality boxes, folders and envelopes to store and protect documents.

### **Terms of public access**

Members of the public can consult documents free of charge in the Record Office's supervised searchroom. Here, staff are always on hand to assist researchers and also to help ensure the security and physical safety of documents in our care.



## **Cataloguing**

Descriptions of archives held by the Record Office are added to its online catalogue, NROCAT (<http://nrocat.norfolk.gov.uk>). The catalogues comply with internationally recognized standards designed to show the archival context of documents (who created them, and for what purpose) and also to allow the national and international sharing of information about archival collections.

All new accessions are reported annually in summary form to the National Register of Archives and the descriptions are searchable on the Internet *via* their website <<http://www.nra.nationalarchives.gov.uk>>. They are also added to NROCAT as soon as practicable, either as final catalogues or as summary ones which allow for more detailed, item-level cataloguing at a later stage.

## **Sensitive or confidential information**

The Record Office provides public access to records according to current legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act. The latter controls access to and the use of sensitive information relating to living individuals. In addition, we can agree to specific closure periods being placed on particular records. We are able to discuss and advise on conditions of public access.

## **Long-term preservation**

Record Office staff follow detailed handling and storage procedures to ensure the long-term preservation of documents in their care. If an item is so fragile that continued handling could lead to the loss of information, Record Office staff will mark it 'unfit for production'. This restricts access until conservation work is carried out.

The Record Office's conservation staff are professionally trained in parchment and paper conservation and have the use of a fully equipped conservation studio. Fragile documents can be conserved here so that they can be consulted or copied. We prioritize which items are conserved, taking into account factors such as their importance, likely usage and available resources.

If documents are in heavy demand or in poor condition, we may consider preservation copying. The professionally accepted format for such copies is microfilm, which we can usually do in-house. For preservation reasons, members of the public are not allowed to consult originals of which surrogate copies have been made.

## **Copying and using the records**

In most cases, provided the condition of the original permits, the Record Office supplies copies of documents in its care on request for private research and for educational and other non-commercial use. Researchers are also permitted to take their own photographs in the searchroom. People receiving or making copies sign a copyright declaration and are also required not to publish documents or supply further copies of them without consulting the Record Office.

The publication of documents within the Record Office's custody, whether printed or posted on the Internet, makes them accessible to more people and better known. Provided the publisher acknowledges the Norfolk Record Office and cites any document references, we generally waive reproduction fees for non-commercial publications.

The Norfolk Record Office has a purpose-designed exhibition gallery, designed to meet international museum standards for the display of archives, and runs a programme of changing exhibitions. It will also consider favourably requests from other institutions with similar standards and facilities for the loan of Norfolk Record Office documents as part of exhibitions elsewhere



If you need this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the County Archivist on 01603 222599 and we will do our best to help.

Published by:

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## Appendix 2

### Norfolk Record Office Archive Collecting Policy

1. This policy statement relates to the Norfolk Record Office, The Archive Centre, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DQ.
2. The Norfolk Record Office is part of Norfolk Cultural Services, within Norfolk County Council's Department of Community Services. Cultural Services also encompass the Norfolk Library and Information Service, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, Norfolk Arts Service, Norfolk Adult Education Service, Norfolk Guidance Service, and Active Norfolk. The Norfolk Record Office is a joint service of the County Council and the councils of the City of Norwich, the boroughs and the districts in Norfolk, all of which are represented on the Norfolk Records Committee, through which the Record Office is democratically accountable. Other stakeholders, with non-voting representatives on the Records Committee, are the Bishop of Norwich, the Norfolk Record Society and the *Custos Rotulorum* (i.e., 'the Keeper of the Rolls': historically, the Lord Lieutenant was Keeper of the Rolls and Records of the County) together with three co-opted members and an observer, who represent a wide range of interests within the county.
3. The Norfolk Record Office is the only public archive service in the county of Norfolk. It collects and preserves records of historical significance relating to all aspects of the county of Norfolk and makes them available to as many people as possible.
4. The Norfolk Record Office's collection has been 'Designated' in its entirety as being of outstanding international importance by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (now the Arts Council England). The Norfolk Record Office is rated by The National Archives as a four-star archive service (the highest category). Some of the Norfolk Record Office's records have been inscribed in the UNESCO UK Memory of the World Register as being of outstanding importance and value to the United Kingdom.
5. The Record Office seeks to abide by all relevant archive legislation, including the following:
  - The Public Records Act, 1958, Section 4.
  - The Manorial Documents Rules, 1959 and 1967.
  - The Tithe Rules, 1960 and 1963.
  - The Local Government (Records) Act, 1962.
  - Sections 224-9 of the Local Government Act, 1972.
  - The Parochial Registers and Records Measure, 1978 and 1993.
  - The Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985.
  - The Data Protection Act, 1998.

- The Freedom of Information Act, 2000.
6. The Norfolk Record Office is appointed by the Lord Chancellor as a place of deposit for public records and is recognized by The National Archives: Historical Manuscripts Commission in respect of tithe and manorial records. The Norfolk Record Office is also a 'The National Archives approved repository' under The National Archives' inspection régime.
  7. The Norfolk Record Office is designated by the Bishop of Norwich as the Norwich Diocesan Record Office in respect of diocesan and parochial records (including Lothingland deanery in Suffolk) and by the Bishop of Ely as the Diocesan Record Office in respect of diocesan tithe maps for Norfolk parishes in the Diocese of Ely and parochial records from parishes in the deanery of Feltwell and Fincham. The Norfolk Record Office also collects records relating to other religions and beliefs.
  8. 'Records' are documents of any date created or accumulated by organizations or individuals during the conduct of their affairs. They may include manuscript, printed, typescript and computer-generated text, musical and other notation, maps, plans, drawings and photographs, and documents in digital formats.
  9. The Record Office will acquire and preserve records of any date assessed as being worthy of permanent preservation. These include, but are not limited to the following:
    - Norfolk County Council and its predecessors.
    - Local authorities in respect of which the County Council is the statutory archive authority.
    - Statutory bodies operating within Norfolk
    - Public records offered to the Norfolk Record Office under the Public Records Acts.
    - Manorial and tithe records.
    - The Diocese of Norwich.
    - Ecclesiastical parishes in respect of which the Record Office is the Diocesan Record Office.
    - Organizations, businesses, families and individuals.
    - Sound recordings and related material, in connexion with the Norfolk Sound Archive (which has its own Collecting Policy).
  10. The Record Office recognizes that people from many different cultural backgrounds have played a significant rôle in the history and culture of Norfolk and will bear this in mind when collecting material.
  11. Records will be accepted by transfer from the constituent authorities of the joint records service and by donation, deposit or purchase. Priority in acquiring records will be given to those which are at risk of loss, destruction or damage.

12. Records relating to places which, during the period when the records were created or accumulated, were not in the county of Norfolk nor created by bodies or individuals based in Norfolk will only be acquired if they are part of an archive group which does relate to such a place, body or individual. The Record Office recognizes that the integrity of archival groups should be preserved as far as practicable, and will consult, where appropriate, with other record repositories in respect of archives which relate partly to other counties, in seeking to ensure that they are housed in the most appropriate repository.
13. Records are acquired with the intention that they shall be preserved permanently, but, exceptionally, they may be reviewed at a later date: for example, in relation to subsequent accessions of or relating to the same body or individual. No deposited records will be destroyed or transferred to another repository without the permission of the owner or depositor.
14. It is a condition of acceptance that records will be available for public access (subject to their being fit for production) either immediately or from a specified date, which may be at the end of a statutory period of closure or agreed in respect of non-official records between the County Archivist and the depositor.
15. The Record Office does not actively seek to acquire copies or transcripts of documents, historical and genealogical notes and pedigrees. It may, however, accept such material as part of a larger archival group or if it complements another archive held by or likely to be acquired by the Record Office. Copies or transcripts may also be accepted if the original is unavailable or is believed to be at risk.
16. The Record Office does not seek to acquire paintings, prints, engravings, newspapers, published material<sup>1</sup> including ephemera or films, but will accept such material if it was created or collected by an archive-creating body or individual, usually, though, not exclusively, as part of a larger archival group.
17. The Record Office will not normally acquire records in a format or language which require for their preservation, consultation or interpretation, storage conditions or specialist skills or equipment which the Record Office does not, or does not plan to, provide. If such records are at risk of loss or destruction, however, they may be accepted on a temporary basis until a suitable repository for them can be identified.
18. When assessing potential donations or deposits, the Record Office will, when appropriate, advise owners and custodians of other record repositories and of museums and libraries with relevant collecting policies. In particular, films will be referred to the East Anglian Film

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<sup>1</sup> The Record Office does acquire published material for its own reference library.

Archive, published material to Norfolk Library and Information Service, and paintings and objects to Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service.

19. This policy statement was approved by the Norfolk Records Committee on 11 January 2013. It will be reviewed as necessary and not later than five years from this date.

## Appendix 3

### **Norfolk Record Office Schedule of General Conditions for Deposit of Archives**

1. The Norfolk Record Office accepts records of public interest relating to Norfolk for care and preservation, and for the benefit of research, either as a gift or on deposit. Where records are on deposit, the depositor retains the right to withdraw all or part of the collections deposited by them upon reasonable notice and at their own charge, subject to the conditions following, or to any special conditions agreed upon at the time of the deposit.
2. Records accepted by the Record Office will be produced for study by any *bona fide* researcher under conditions of supervision similar to those provided for the Record Office's own records and during normal opening hours. Special conditions may be agreed between the Record Office and the depositor at the time of the deposit.
3. All reasonable care is taken of records placed in the custody of the Record Office, but no liability for loss or damage to documents on deposit is accepted.
4. The Record Office may take such measures for the administration of deposited or loaned records, as are professionally acceptable. This includes marking or numbering documents, arranging, packing or sorting them, and their disposition in storage areas as may be suitable or convenient.
5. Records in need of conservation treatment may be included in the Record Office's conservation programme.
6. In the case of records being permanently withdrawn by owners or depositors, the Record Office reserves the right to claim reimbursement of expenses incurred in storage, conservation, listing or administration of those records.
7. Records produced to searchers are so produced in accordance with the Record Office's rules for the public use of records and archives.
8. Records may be reproduced for purposes of study, subject to copyright restrictions. Where records are reproduced by mechanical, photographic, or other means, the office will decide what means are appropriate and permissible.
9. Records may be removed from the office by:
  - i) the depositor, under the conditions laid down here or in any special agreement made at the time of the loan

- ii) staff of the Record Office for any of the following purposes:
  - a) for conservation treatment
  - b) for the making of photographic or other facsimile copies for the purpose of preservation, exhibition or otherwise, the records remaining in the custody of a member of staff, or in the custody of some body or person appointed for this purpose by the Record Office.
  - c) for the purpose of exhibition arranged by the Record Office, the records remaining in the custody of a member of staff, or in the custody of some body or person appointed for this purpose by the Record Office
  - d) for deposit in other institutions offering similar standards, for the purposes of exhibition, etc., subject to the consent of the depositor.
  - e) for production in a court of law, subject to the consent of the depositor.



## **Appendix 4**

### **Norfolk Record Office Information Leaflet 5**

#### **Caring for your books and documents at home**

All of us own books, periodicals, photographs, maps, certificates and various papers of sentimental, intellectual or family interest, some of monetary value. We may wish to keep these just for record purposes or to hand them down within the family. Here are some suggestions for keeping them in good condition.

#### **Handling and Storage**

The factor that most affects the condition of books and documents is mechanical damage caused by usage and mishandling. Every time you handle a document you shorten its life just a little, handle it roughly and you shorten it a lot. Tightly packed shelves reduce air circulation and encourage excessive tugging on spines to remove a book. Articles in contact with other items of a poorer quality will be affected by them, for example, acid migration from a cheap folder may affect even the best quality paper, and photographs stored in albums of poor quality may tarnish and discolour.

##### **Suggestions:**

Wash and dry your hands before handling books or documents.  
Place fewer books on a shelf to reduce damage.  
Large volumes may benefit from being laid on their sides.  
Avoid folding papers if possible; fold only once if you must.  
Keep smaller items together in good quality envelopes, folders and albums.  
Do not use self adhesive tapes on anything you wish to keep.

#### **Light**

Light, especially direct sunlight, may cause fading of inks and photochemical deterioration of paper. Photographs and coloured materials are particularly susceptible to this kind of damage.

##### **Suggestions:**

Place books, documents and display framed articles away from direct sunlight and provide some shade in the room.  
A bookshelf facing a window could be fitted with a roller blind or simple curtain to protect valued books.  
Display copies rather than originals, that way, if they fade, they can be replaced by another copy.

#### **Heat, Humidity and Moisture**

Temperature and humidity (the water content of the air) are related. Heat accelerates chemical processes within paper and leather, especially in moist

conditions. Rapid changes in temperature cause expansion or contraction, change in water content and, worst of all, condensation. Excess moisture encourages fungal growth and may weaken adhesives or cause staining. Too little moisture makes paper, leather and parchment shrink and become brittle and distorted. The boards of a book may warp so badly that they tear away from the textblock.

The recommended levels for storage of archives are 45-60 per cent relative humidity and 13-19 degrees Celsius temperature. This may be difficult to maintain in the home, but cool, dry, well-ventilated conditions are best.

**Suggestions:**

Do not store materials in kitchens, bathrooms, cellars, attics, garages or conservatories which are subject to rapid changes in heat and humidity. Keep materials away from direct heat sources such as radiators and storage heaters.

Do not situate bookshelves against a damp wall - avoid outside walls if possible. Dry lining can help.

Provide air space behind shelving.

Avoid paraffin or portable gas heaters which produce moisture as well as heat.

Glass fronted shelves protect against dust, but can seal too well, containing humid air and providing a 'greenhouse' environment. Drill ventilation holes and cover with gauze, or leave doors open a little.

## **Pollution, mould, insects and vermin**

Rats, mice and some insects can damage archival materials. Dust and dirt encourage growth of mould and insect infestation. Dust also contains aerial pollutants from the combustion of fossil fuels. The sulphur reacts with moisture to produce weak but persistent sulphuric acid. Acids will degrade all materials. Dust and soot from domestic fires are also harmful.

**Suggestions:**

A vacuum cleaner is best for cleaning shelves and boxes, as the dust is contained rather than re-distributed. Dust volumes closed, using a soft brush to direct dust towards the nozzle. A very powerful vacuum may damage materials, so exercise caution. When 'spring cleaning', wash down empty shelves with a mild detergent and dry thoroughly before replacing items.

## **Photographs**

Photographs are, by nature, unstable and difficult to preserve for long periods, however, these basic suggestions for storage and display can greatly enhance their effective life.

**Suggestions:**

Handle photographs with clean hands and avoid touching the face of prints, negatives, transparencies or plates except by the edges.

The best protection for prints and negatives is polyester enclosures. This material is clear, strong and chemically inert.  
 Albums with polyester pockets are far superior to 'sticky back' varieties.  
 Traditional photo-corners are fine if the page is of good quality.  
 Negatives should be stored in sleeves and placed in an envelope or folder; they are an original and irreplaceable item.  
 When it is necessary to write on prints, use a soft (2B) pencil on the back and press lightly to avoid embossing the surface.  
 If displaying prints use copies where possible, that way, the original may be properly stored and preserved.

## **Useful Addresses**

The National Archives  
 Kew  
 Richmond  
 Surrey TW9 4DU  
[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

The Archives & Records Association  
 Prioryfield House  
 20 Canon Street  
 Taunton  
 Somerset TA1 1SW  
[www.archives.org.uk](http://www.archives.org.uk)

The National Museum of  
 photography, film and television  
 Bradford  
 West Yorkshire BD1 1NQ  
[www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk](http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk)

Conservation Register  
 c/o Institute of Conservation  
 3rd floor, Downstream building  
 London Bridge  
 London SE1 9BG  
[www.conservationregister.com](http://www.conservationregister.com)

The Institute of Conservation  
 Unit 1.5 Lafone House  
 The Leathermarket, Weston Street,  
 London SE1 3ER  
[www.icon.org.uk](http://www.icon.org.uk)

Preservation Advisory Centre  
 The British Library  
 96 Euston Road  
 London NW1 2DB  
[www.bl.uk/blpac](http://www.bl.uk/blpac)

These suggestions are for information purposes only. They are not intended as, nor should they be taken to be, a substitute for obtaining independent professional archival or conservation advice. Norfolk Record Office does not and cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage howsoever caused as a result of any person acting or failing to act on the suggestions made.

Unfortunately, the Norfolk Record Office Conservation Department is unable to undertake any work on a commercial basis, but is happy to advise holders of archives in Norfolk about its methods of storage and repair.



If you need this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact the County Archivist on 01603 222599 and we will do our best to help.

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