



**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 6 October 2023

**Subject:** Policies for the archive collections

**Report by:** Stephen Baily, Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

---

**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce three policies for the proper care and documentation of, and access to, the city's archive collections. These policies will be submitted as part of a re-application for Archive Accreditation.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 **That the policies be approved by the Cabinet Member, in advance of the re-application process.**

**3. Background**

3.1 Archive Accreditation is the UK standard for Archive Services. A successful Accreditation application is official recognition that the archive service meets national and international standards for the care of archive collections and public access to them. Archive Accreditation was first awarded to the city archive collections in 2016. Archive services are required to make a new full application for Archive Service Accreditation six years after the initial award to retain accredited status.

3.2 The three archive policy documents will be submitted as part of this Accreditation application and must be approved by this committee before submission later this year.

3.3 There are national and international standards for the care and documentation of and access to, archives. The three policies reflect these standards, as well as showing the relevance of the strategies to Portsmouth City Council's key aims.



3.4 The relevant policies are - Collections Information Policy (Appendix 1); Collections Care and Conversation Policy (Appendix 2) and Access Policy (Appendix 3).

#### **4. Reasons for recommendation**

4.1 Corporate approval of the policies will strengthen the application to retain accreditation.

#### **5. Integrated impact assessment**

5.1 IIA attached at appendix 1

#### **6. Legal implications**

6.1 Storage of, and access to, archives is covered by legislation as follows:

- Public Records Act 1958, as amended 1967
- Manorial Document Rules 1959 and 1967
- Tithe Document Rules 1960 and 1963
- Local Government (Records) Acts 1962
- Local Government Act 1972
- The Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 (amended 1992).
- The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Current Data Protection legislation

6.2 The proposed policies will enable to Council to continue to fulfil its duties under relevant legislation.

#### **7. Director of Finance's comments**

7.1 The recommendations contained in this report will be implemented within the existing approved budget resources of the Archive Service.

.....  
Signed by:  
**Stephen Baily**



**Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Collections Information Policy

Appendix 2: Collections Care and Conservation Policy

Appendix 3: Access Policy

Appendix 4: Integrated Impact Assessment

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
-------------------	----------

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by:  
**Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development**



## Appendix 1: Collections Information Policy

### **Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services Archive Collections Collections Information Policy**

1. The relationship between Portsmouth City Council's shared aim and our collecting and recording of information.
  - 1.1 Our strategic approach, based on our mission statement, assessments of risk, stakeholder needs and interests, and showing the link with this policy and the collections development and collections access policies.
  - 1.2 Portsmouth City Council's City Vision is 'Portsmouth people value collaboration, community, equality, respect and innovation'.
  - 1.3 By collecting and recording collections information efficiently and in accordance with professionally accepted standards, we can give residents and visitors access to records of our city and the people who have helped to create it over the centuries.
2. The information we will record
  - 2.1 On transfer/deposit, when the deposit is received (either at Portsmouth History Centre or off-site) we will record:
    - a. the name, address and contact telephone number and/or email address of the depositor
    - b. a brief description of the deposit
    - c. the extent of the deposit
    - d. the condition of the deposit (good/fair/etc.)
    - e. any background information relevant to the deposit, including, in the case of digital records, any technical information pertaining to the deposit
    - f. whether the depositor is the copyright holder, and if so whether they transfer copyright to the Library and Archive Service or allow us to use the deposit for certain purposes (to be described). If the depositor is not the copyright holder, do they know who is?
    - g. whether the deposit is a donation, a long-term/indefinite loan, or a purchase
    - h. conditions of disposal (e.g. the depositor's permission to dispose)
    - i. the date of deposit



2.2 When the deposit is accessioned we will record the information set out at 2.1, and the location, the accession number and deposit number. This information will be recorded on Spydus, the Library and Archive Management System.

2.3 When the deposit is catalogue we will

- a. describe each item (or group of items) individually in accordance with ISAD(G)
- b. give each a reference which shows its relationship with the other items in the deposit (and with items in the rest of the collection, if material has already been passed to us by the same depositor)
- c. record that it is catalogued on a central record (e.g. Spydus)
- d. record who catalogued the deposit and when
- e. record the location of the deposit
- f. note any access restrictions
- g. note any copyright restrictions, including the copyright holder(s) if known
- h. any relevant notes about how the deposit has been arranged
- i. note any conservation needs

We may also record further information about the history or activities of the depositor.

2.4 On disposal

If an item is selected for disposal we will record:

- a. the reason(s) for its disposal
- b. the method of disposal, e.g. passing to another record office
- c. the date of disposal
- d. the name of the staff member making the decision and carrying out the disposal
- e. that we have permission to dispose

2.5 Intellectual property rights

Legislation regarding intellectual property rights will be monitored and implications for any collections will be recorded

3. Cataloguing standards

3.1 Legal and other requirements

We will comply with all relevant legislation, including Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, and the Environmental Information Regulations.

3.2 The ethical code we will follow

We will follow the International Council on Archives code of ethics for archivists.



4. Information retrieval  
We will provide and maintain an information retrieval system in accordance with ISAD(G).
5. Vital records  
Maintenance of collections information in the event of a disaster is covered in the Emergency Plan.
6. Legacy issues  
The keeping of collections information has become fuller and more systematic since the Record Office was established in 1960. Where possible, collections information for individual collections will be brought up to current standards as part of the Collections Information Plan, in accordance with ISAD(G).
7. User input into collections information  
Input and feedback from users (depositors and researchers) will be used to amend and improve collections information. Any proposed changes will be recorded and assessed by staff as they are received, and any judged worthwhile will be implemented as part of the Collections Information Plan.
8. Resolving issues of collection status (ownership, intellectual property rights, relevant legislation and guidelines)  
Any assertion of changed ownership or intellectual property rights must be adequately supported in writing (including proof of identity) before it can be considered. Any such issues will be resolved by the Senior Archivist in consultation with other PCC staff and with archive institutions elsewhere (including the National Archives). All relevant records will be amended to reflect any changes.
9. Date of this policy and when it will be reviewed  
The policy was approved by Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Committee on [...] and will be reviewed and submitted again for approval in October 2026.



## Appendix 2: Collections Care and Conservation Policy

### **Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services Archive Collections Collections Care and Conservation Policy**

1. Our strategic approach
  - 1.1 Our strategic approach, based on our mission statement, assessments of risk, stakeholder needs and interests, and showing the link with this policy and the collections development and collections access policies.
  - 1.2 Portsmouth City Council's City Vision is 'Portsmouth people value collaboration, community, equality, respect and innovation'.
  - 1.3 By our care and conservation of the archive collections we can ensure that residents, visitors and remote users both now and in the future can enjoy them and learn from them about the history of our city and all who have lived here.
2. Our responsibility for the collections

The collections in our care are a unique and irreplaceable record of the lives of the people of Portsmouth from the fifteenth century to the present. It is our responsibility to make these records accessible for education and enjoyment and also to preserve them for future generations. Care and conservation are key aspect of our stewardship of these collections.
3. Care and conservation standards we will follow
  - 3.1 Storage of, and access to, archives is covered by legislation as follows:
    - Public Records Act 1958, as amended 1967
    - Manorial Document Rules 1959 and 1967
    - Tithe Document Rules 1960 and 1963
    - Local Government (Records) Acts 1962
    - Local Government Act 1972
    - The Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 (amended 1992).
    - The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
    - Freedom of Information Act 2000
    - Current Data Protection legislation
  - 3.2 We will manage the care and conservation of the collections according to the International Council on Archives code of ethics for archivists



- 3.3 In determining our approach to collections care and conservation, we will follow the guidelines BS EN 16893:2018 and PAS198:2012, and the *Benchmarks in Collection Care*.
- 3.4 We will aim to minimise the need for remedial conservation by acting to prevent damage occurring while items are in storage, being accessed by members of the public, or on display. This will underpin everything we do: from security measures and the storage of the collections to how we make them accessible, and the use of surrogates.
4. The impact of collections care and conservation on all aspects of the service:
- 4.1 Security  
Through building design and procedures to be followed by staff, public and volunteers, we will ensure that Portsmouth History Centre and the archive stores are secure against theft and damage by individuals or by 'natural' threats such as fire and flood. We will monitor the effectiveness of these measures and update and improve them as required.
- 4.2 Buildings and storage  
In collaboration with Building Services and other PCC staff we will regularly monitor the condition of the buildings where the archive collections are stored and made accessible to the public. Building Services and any other relevant authorities will be notified as soon as any issues of concern are identified and swift action sought.
- 4.3 Packaging  
When they are received, accessioned and catalogued, newly received items will be assessed and packaged appropriately. The packaging needs of existing items will be assessed when they are produced to the public and returned to storage.
- 4.4 Environmental control  
We will maintain a stable environment (temperature and humidity) within professionally accepted parameters in all storage areas.
- 4.5 Environmental monitoring  
We will monitor the temperature and humidity in the storage areas and take action if the temperature and humidity fall outside professionally accepted parameters.
- 4.6 Housekeeping  
We will ensure that storage areas are kept clean, tidy and uncluttered, and that routine maintenance of services is carried out.





- 4.7 Access (handling, surrogates, reprographics, exhibitions, etc.)  
We will only allow access to the collections if this will not compromise their safety and preservation.  
When documents are produced to the public or used in exhibitions, all necessary steps will be taken to ensure that they are not damaged or lost.  
Where possible will use surrogates (e.g. photographs, photocopies, microfilm, and digital copies) to reduce the risk of damaging the original items.
- 4.8 Digital preservation  
Wherever possible we will ensure that 'born digital' and other digital records in our care remain accessible, collaborating with others and sharing knowledge and experience in this fast developing field.
- 4.9 Disaster recovery and continuity  
We will address any 'disaster' using the Emergency Recovery Plan. This plan is intended to ensure a swift response to any disaster so that damage to collections is minimised and service to all users is resumed as soon as possible.
- 4.10 Remedial conservation  
We will assess the need for remedial conservation by regular surveys and by monitoring documents requested by the public. We will prioritise documents for conservation by assessing the degree of damage and the need for production.
5. Professional conservation support
- 5.1 We will seek professional conservation support as appropriate in order to ensure the long-term care and conservation of the collections.
6. Communicating collections care and conservation issues to staff, users, and other interested parties
- 6.1 We will train new staff in the care and conservation of the archive collections, and brief all staff about new developments in this field as they occur.
- 6.2 We will induct all users into our procedures for handling the collections, and the reasons that underlie these procedures.
- 6.3 When giving talks and presentations about the collections we will include information about care and conservation issues.
- 6.4 We will advise members of the public who contact us about how to care for any archives in their possession.



- 6.5 Date of this policy and when it will be reviewed
- 6.6 This policy was approved by Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Committee [...]. The policy will be reviewed and submitted again for approval in October 2026.



## Appendix 3: Access Policy

### **Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services Archive Collections Access Policy**

#### 1. Introduction

1.1 Portsmouth City Council's City Vision is: 'Portsmouth people value collaboration, community, equality, respect and innovation'. By our care and conservation of the archive collections we can ensure that residents, visitors and remote visitors both now and in the future can enjoy them and learn from them about the history of our city and all who have lived here.

#### 2. The community we serve

2.1 We serve a diverse community of users:

- those who deposit records with us;
  - those who visit Portsmouth History Centre - the people of Portsmouth and visitors from all over the world;
  - those who seek our help by email, post, and telephone;
  - schoolchildren and students on-site and off-site;
  - community groups;
- Portsmouth City Council staff who use the archive collections in the course of their work.

#### 3. Legislation

3.1 In our provision of access to the archive collections (and possible restrictions on access) we will comply with all relevant legislation, including Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation

#### 4. Customer care

4.1 We seek to welcome all users and potential users, whatever their level of education, religious beliefs, ethnicity, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation.

4.2 We will respect the different needs of all our stakeholders: depositors, researchers, and others.

#### 5. Access



- 5.1 We will provide access to the archive collections at Portsmouth History Centre and off-site at other locations in Portsmouth. We will develop new ways for people to access the collections remotely as technology allows.
- 5.2 We will facilitate access to the collections by the production, and maintenance, of catalogues, lists, and guides to the material.
- 5.3 We will regularly consult users to assess their opinions of our services, and how we might develop these in the future. We will seek the opinions of non-users as opportunities allow, for instance when staff give talks and when we participate in events off-site.
- 5.4 When consulting with users and non-users we will seek to identify any barriers to access, and will explore ways to address these, and implement as opportunity allows.
- 5.5 In order to make people aware of the archive collections and to promote our services we will encourage and facilitate the use of the archive collections in publications, exhibitions, outreach, on-site, off-site and on-line.
6. Access and the need to ensure the long-term preservation of the archive collections
  - 6.1 The archive collections are unique and irreplaceable. We will preserve them so that future users will enjoy them as we do, but also to make the collections accessible to users now.
  - 6.2 We will enforce measures to prevent theft and damage to the collections whether in storage, produced to the public in Portsmouth History Centre or elsewhere, or used in exhibitions or displays.
  - 6.3 Provided that copying will not damage the document or infringe legislation in any way, we will provide copies (photocopies, photograph, digital copies, etc.) of the collections requested by members of the public.
  - 6.4 Where appropriate we will issue surrogate copies, rather than the original documents, to users in Portsmouth History Centre or elsewhere, in order to minimise the risk of damage to the original documents.
  - 6.5 We will make all users aware of these regulations and the reasons underlying them.
7. Other access restrictions
  - 7.1 When archives are deposited with the Library and Archive Service we will agree any access restrictions with the depositor.



7.2 We will enforce any access restrictions resulting from legislation, e.g. Data Protection legislation.

7.3 We will communicate all access restrictions to users.

## 8. The opening hours of Portsmouth History Centre

8.1 We will advertise the opening hours of Portsmouth History Centre, and any closures for Bank Holidays etc., on-site, off-site and on-line, including the PHC website and social media.

8.2 We will monitor feedback from our users on all access issues, including opening hours, in conjunction with feedback on the Central Library.

## 9. Fees and charges

9.1 We will charge for the provision of copies in any format, and for responding to email, telephone and postal enquiries.

## 10. Approval of policy

10.1 This policy was approved by Portsmouth City Council Culture, Leisure and Economic Development Committee on [...]. The policy will be reviewed and submitted again for approval in October 2026.