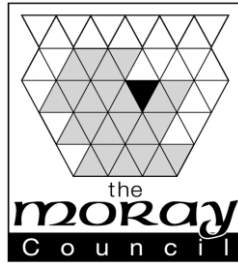


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Preservation Policy

Version 0.1

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Introduction

The primary objective of a preservation plan is to organise and promote preservation as an integral part of the management of The Archives Collection, within the Local Heritage Service, and to ensure a rational use of resources.

The purpose of this policy is to communicate the principles that determine the preservation activities for The Archives.

Scope

This policy applies to all records in The Archives irrespective of format. Archival records now include increasing numbers of electronic records with special preservation requirements. The concept of both current and long-term accessibility, and purposes for preservation are reflected in this policy.

Authorities

The authorities governing this policy are:

- The Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937
 - The Public Registers and Records (Scotland) Act 1948
 - The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
 - The National Archives Scotland (NAS)
- <http://www.nas.gov.uk/recordKeeping/default.asp>

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Preservation Strategy

Preservation is a fundamental responsibility and The Moray Council will strive to ensure the continuing availability and authenticity of archival material, that it holds in trust for present and future generations.

Records will be valued according to their qualities and value, irrespective of their format. Records will be preserved in a manner appropriate to their technical characteristics.

Different preservation paradigms apply to electronic records, where it is necessary to distinguish between the intellectual content of the record and its technical manifestation. Long-term access to a particular technical manifestation is not guaranteed, due to its dependence on specific technologies, which will become obsolete over time. Our policy on preserving digital records is therefore predicated on preserving the means of access to the underlying intellectual content and its associated evidential value. The Archives will provide for the secure storage and integrity of each record manifestation (passive preservation) and will, where resources permit, migrate records to new technical manifestations where this is required (active preservation).

All conservation treatment, in whatever format, 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.

The Archives will follow the guidelines outlined in the Local Heritage Service Recovery Plan, following the event of a disaster.

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Preservation

◆ Preservation Planning

The Archives will endeavour to produce preservation strategies, which will guide future actions, and identify all key results from development and implementation of the strategies.

The Archives will co-ordinate all preservation planning, and departments within Moray Council should be aware of the possible impact of their activities on the preservation of records.

Departments must consult with the Archives when planning any projects, which have an impact on the preservation of records.

◆ Preservation Management of the Archives

All new staff members of the Archives will be given preservation training, and appropriate refresher training will be provided.

Preservation management includes:

- Internal advice and training on preservation methods
- Preservation planning
- Preservation interventions, such as migration of digital records
- Custody, storage, integrity and security
- Reformatting
- Record format standards

Preservation management of records and their copies: storage, handling and use will reflect the intended use of the record or copy. Archival records will receive the highest rigor, and reference copies, which are intended to be used freely and replaced when needed, the lowest.

Records about preservation activities, such as data on preventive preservation and holdings maintenance, copying, treatment, surveys, loans, exhibitions and service requests, will be made and managed as a corporate asset.

◆ Accommodation, Security and Environment

The Archives will seek to ensure appropriate and secure accommodation for all its holdings. Appropriate accommodation includes environmentally controlled and monitored space, enclosures that conform to archival standards, security, pest management and disaster preparedness. In addition, the Archives will put in place adequate standards of care in regard to handling, and display of materials to reduce

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the risk of accidental damage to the stock, and to control the causes of its deterioration.

Reasonable measures should be taken to ensure that staff and readers are aware of the need for proper care in the treatment of materials.

Appropriate restrictions should be placed on the use or loan of certain collections identified as likely to warrant extra care and protection, due to age, value or condition. The general conditions to apply when such materials are loaned for exhibition purposes should be agreed, and modified as necessary.

Regular cleaning should be organised to ensure that dirt and dust on floors, shelving and materials, is kept under control.

The climate in all areas of the Archives should be monitored regularly and proper records kept so that remedial action can be taken when necessary.

The temperature in closed stack or storage areas should be maintained at a reduced level (16-19 degrees Celsius) compared with that in areas where staff or readers may need to work continuously. A reduction of only 5 degrees Celsius may halve the rate of chemical decay.

Where materials are kept in an air-conditioned environment, appropriate action should be taken to ensure that reasonable standards are maintained as to the purity or cleanliness of the air. A stable relative humidity (RH) must be maintained with a total variation of no more than 10%; and RH of between 50 and 55% must be maintained for collections containing skin materials. Modern media, including photographs and paper, may be better kept at a lower RH.

In the event of any review of facilities for the storage, use, or exhibition of materials, opportunities must be sought to ensure that safe display and storage systems are provided, which permit materials to be arranged in a horizontal or vertical position as necessary. Furthermore, adequate environmental standards must be maintained, with respect to air purity, temperature, humidity and lighting, consistent with the value of the materials and the use to which they may be put. Reasonable measures should be taken to reduce the risk of condensation, damp, mould, leakage etc.

◆ Collection Maintenance

It is essential to plan and co-ordinate the maintenance of the collections in a systematic manner, in line with good preservation practices.

As far as is possible whole collections or groups of material should be reviewed in terms of conducting surveys, examining individual items, and drawing up proposals for the protection and treatment of materials. Conservation projects will probably have to be phased over a considerable period of time.

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An efficient system of recording conservation surveys and treatment notes should be maintained, to ensure that adequate information is available to organise and evaluate treatment procedures, and to determine future priorities.

As safe, proven methods become available, priority should be given to the treatment of any material scheduled for conservation already at high risk due to chemical decay (such as over-acidic, brittle paper). Certain materials at risk, such as newspapers and official publications, should not necessarily be conserved as the information they contain may be adequately preserved in another medium.

Work involving the treatment of materials may be contracted out when it is too specialised, or when it is on a large scale to be undertaken in-house. In such cases contractors should be selected for their ability to meet agreed standards and specifications at an acceptable cost.

As far as it possible, all unique items and material especially at risk should be provided with copies by means of analogue and/or digital re-formatting.

◆ Disaster and Emergency Preparedness

The Archives will maintain an Archives Recovery Plan, consisting of procedures to protect its holdings by responding to emergencies.

Training should be organised for selected members of staff in procedures for the protection and salvage of materials in emergencies.

The Archives will make appropriate provision for the backup of its digital collections, including the provision of off-site security copies. The backup copies will be actively maintained to ensure their continued viability.

In a disaster or an emergency, the first priority will be the safety of people, followed by immediate action to rescue or prevent further damage to the records.

◆ Copying

All copies that are kept by the Archives have preservation value because they:

- Reduce the movement and exposure of archival records
- May be designated the archival record if that record is lost or becomes damaged
- May constitute proof of condition and legal ownership

Preservation copying will employ techniques and materials tested for longevity and cost-effectiveness.

For human-readable records the first priority is to ensure preservation of the archival records themselves in preference to making preservation copies. The concept of

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originals and copies does not apply in the same manner in a digital environment. Electronic records are not limited to a single physical instance, and may be copied in a manner, which makes it indistinguishable and fundamentally identical to the original. Copying of electronic records may be carried out to meet requirements for media refreshment, security, disaster recovery and access. The integrity of all copies of electronic records will be verified as part of the copying process.

Customer copying must not endanger the archival record.

Digital copies of records may be created to provide surrogates for access purposes. These copies have value both in terms of investment of resources required to create them, and by minimising handling of the original records.

For all copies kept by the Archives, specific reference to the archived record must be maintained for research, access, preservation, and control purposes.

◆ Conservation Treatment

Preservation and Conservation actions taken on behalf of all records in the Archives will be in accordance with nationally recognised and agreed ethical technical standards.

For traditional records, conservation treatments proceed in a progressive sequence from stabilisation and structural consolidation to cleaning and repair to more intrusive methods of remedial action.

All conservation examinations and treatments will be recorded, including photographic documentation, where necessary, and a formal system established for maintaining and communication such information.

Migration of electronic records entails the creation of a new technical manifestation of a record. This may be required to improve the usability of the record, or in response to technological changes which threaten its continued accessibility through obsolescence. Migration may involve the conversion of digital objects to new formats, and other forms of intervention, which alter the encoding, structure or content of the record. Migration is likely to be an ongoing periodic requirement throughout the life cycle of the record, and will always be undertaken in a controlled manner, as a result of preservation planning. Migration must be documented in the form of a detailed migration history, as part of the metadata associated with the record.

◆ Access

Whenever documents are produced to either readers or staff, this will be done with nationally recognised and agreed standards.

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In some cases, valuable or fragile material may only be consulted within The Archives conservation staff.

◆ Preservation Training

The Archives will use tested and known methods for the preservation or conservation of the records.

The Archives will ensure all staff will receive training in preservation to enhance understanding and application of preservation principles throughout the Archives.

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Communication and Liaison

The Archives should seek to raise awareness of the importance of preservation for its collections, and of the need to identify priorities for preservation. This will involve discussions with departments and seeking the professional advice from subject specialists, so that specific recommendations can be put forward regarding the selection of materials of significant historical or aesthetic value which should be preserved for the benefit of research in the longer term.

External funding and sponsorship should be sought to support the Archives' efforts to conserve selected materials. The wishes of individual sponsors should be respected, but should not prejudice good preservation practice and the relevant official standards.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, with the next review due in February 2009.

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Appendix A

Glossary

Access copying refers to the process of copying an archival record to be accessed by the public, often when the archival record cannot be accessed directly by the public due to its fragility, high value, or conservation requirements. Digital copies are created for distant access.

Acquisition copying refers to the manufacture of copies to produce an object to acquire, for instance copying records held in other locations, or to satisfy donor, vendor or source requirements as a result of acquisition or selection decisions.

Archival record refers to a record selected and acquired for permanent retention, and is defined as such through an archival valuation decision. It may be designated an original record or a copy record, and may include metadata.

Client copy refers to a copy made for users at their request. It is usually made from a reference copy.

Conservation refers to treatment actions for the long term.

Conservation (or preservation) copying refers to the manufacture of a copy that reproduces the maximum number and quality of the attributes of the archival record and their interrelationships, in a medium with a high level of permanence comparable to that of the archival record. Conservation copying produces records of archival record on loan, ensures long-term accessibility of archival records in some form when original records are inherently fragile, or dependent on rare or obsolete technology.

Copy refers to a replication on an archival record in whole or in part to preserve it and/or provide access to it.

Copying refers to all methods of manufacturing a reproduction of a record to create a second record in the same or a new medium or media with its own attributes, including history of creation, metadata and requirements for preservation and access.

Custody refers to the guardianship and management of archival records (including electronic records and certain copies)

Electronic record is a record produced, housed or transmitted by electronic means rather than physical means, and satisfies the definition of a record.

Human-readable record refers to a record that is intelligible without the assistance or mediation of a machine.

Manifestation is an instance of an electronic record, which requires a specific technological environment in order to be able to access it.

Metadata originally referred to technical data about electronic records essential for rendering them understandable. The term has been expanded to apply to data or

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information, which may be considered part or related to archival records in either traditional or electronic media. The data may be administrative or descriptive or may relate to a record's preservation or use.

Migration is the process of transforming an electronic record from one encoding format to another. This may be undertaken either to translate the record into a format which is more accessible to users, or as a result of future technological obsolescence. Migration techniques are examples of active preservation methods, which constitute a change to the nature of the record, and entail a risk of information loss, which must be clearly identified and managed.

Permanent custody refers to ensuring the physical integrity of the holdings. This includes: responsibility for relevant standards, policies, procedures and regulations; holdings assessments and surveys; ensuring proper accommodation, storage containers and handling techniques; the management of holdings in storage or other locations; environmental and pest control; secure use and access to, retrieval and loan of archival records.

Preservation is defined as all actions that can be taken with the aim of ensuring the current and long-term survival and accessibility of the physical form, informational content and relevant metadata of archival records, including actions taken to influence records creators prior to acquisition or selection.

Preventive preservation refers to a specific set of non-intrusive preservation actions without actual physical intervention or chemical treatment of archival records. Preventive preservation attempts to prevent or halt deterioration or retard its progress. Preventive preservation includes establishing and implementing a holding maintenance plan, appropriate enclosures and boxes and handling techniques, storage and processing environments, packing and transport procedures, and certain copying techniques.

Record; a record is information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person in pursuance of legal obligations, or in the transaction of business.

Reference copy refers to a copy made available to archive users to prevent frequent handling and transportation of either archival records or archival masters, and it also serves to make client copies for users.

Refreshment is the process of exactly copying the content of an electronic storage media instance to another medium of the same or different type. This may be undertaken as a result of physical damage to the medium, or in advance of technological obsolescence.

Technology-dependence record refers to a record that is dependent on the mediation of a machine and/or other technology such as software to be accessed or rendered intelligible.

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Transformation refers to any form of active preservation of electronic records, which result in a change to the means by which information content is represented as a bitstream. Format migration is the most common type of transformation.