

NIPR, the National Collection of Northern Ireland Publications

Preservation Policy

1. Introduction

NIPR, the National Collection of Northern Ireland Publications, is committed to preserve its collections through processes that reduce deterioration, and that prevent loss of material or information. The primary goal of preservation is to prolong the usable life of the collections so that Northern Ireland publications remain available into the future.

Preservation of the collection is integral to all activities from acquisition through to access, and involves the co-operation of all staff within NIPR and the Linen Hall Library as the host organisation.

2. Policy Principles

This policy sets out what NIPR will do to achieve its duty of care for the NIPR collections and takes account of the fact that the NIPR collections include material in a wide range of format and content. NIPR is committed to maintain and preserve all acquired items as having equal status. The NIPR Manager, in consultation with the NIPR Board, makes decisions about the preservation status of collection material

3. Purpose of the Preservation Policy

The purpose of this Preservation Policy is to provide direction to NIPR staff and Linen Hall Library staff in order that they carry out their collection management responsibilities relating to the preservation and conservation needs of the NIPR collections in an informed way.

4. Acquisitions

NIPR considers physical condition as one of the criteria in any decision to acquire items. Where possible NIPR acquires the best copy, and encourages the selection of items of stable materials, or in good condition.

5. Premises and Storage

NIPR recognises that appropriate accommodation for the preservation of the collections is essential. This would ideally include environmentally controlled and monitored space.

The NIPR collections will be preserved in the manner appropriate to their material and technical characteristics, as well as the NIPR requirement for access. This may include reformatting material.

Printed items will be stored in acid-free archival storage boxes.

E-Publications are currently stored on the NIPR PC and backed up on an external hard drive.

6. Access and Handling

NIPR recognises that appropriate handling of its collections by staff and users is an important means of ensuring minimal loss and damage. To assist in these requirements, the NIPR Manager will provide guidelines and appropriate training on handling special collections materials to all staff with responsibility for the care of the collection.

NIPR materials will be made available for consultation only within the Linen Hall Library. All readers should be monitored to ensure that the guidelines and procedures on use and handling are adhered to. (Please consult the NIPR Policy on Access and Handling.)

Items may only be borrowed under the following conditions:

1. Approval must be given by the NIPR Board
2. A contract and terms and conditions of the loan must be agreed and signed.

Photocopying NIPR items.

1. Photocopying NIPR items is the responsibility of the member of the public requesting the copies.
2. Photocopying may be carried out by the member of the public provided that:
 - a. The item will not be damaged by being photocopied.
 - b. Copyright legislation is adhered to.
3. Library staff should consult the NIPR manager if there are any concerns about the photocopying.

7. Risk Assessment and Disaster Preparedness

As disaster preparedness is an integral part of collection preservation, NIPR recognises its responsibilities to guard against any risks to its collections and take appropriate action accordingly.

These risks can be classified as follows:

- 1) Natural routine risks: relative humidity, temperature, light, pollution, pest infestation
- 2) Natural extreme risks: fire, flood, contamination
- 3) Man-made routine risks: handling, wear and tear
- 4) Man-made extreme risks: theft, vandalism, terrorist attack, civil unrest

The NIPR manager and Linen Hall Library staff responsible for the safekeeping of special collections, will develop a disaster recovery plan for the collection, will be trained in all aspects of the disaster recovery plan and will routinely carry out risk assessments to guard against the risks listed above.

8. Security

Security measures for the prevention of theft and vandalism to the NIPR collection is of highest priority. All storage areas, reading rooms and other areas set aside for consulting the NIPR collection, including all office areas where the NIPR collections are catalogued and processed must be secure and users consulting items must be supervised at all times by a trained and responsible member of staff.

The Linen Hall Library places security tags in all NIPR items and operates a security alarm system on both exit doors. CCTV is also used in the library.

NIPR standards for security and environmental conditions must be adhered to for all items removed from the collection for special purposes, e.g. loan exhibitions, conservation work, seminars etc.

9. Financial Policy for Preservation

NIPR is currently seeking ways to develop a preservation and conservation fund.

10. Educations and Training

The NIPR Manager will ensure that new members of staff are familiar with the NIPR preservation policy and that all staff members are updated on policy changes.

11. Promotion

NIPR will promote its role in the preservation of Northern Ireland Publications, including the development of expertise and the promotion of the value of library preservation in Northern Ireland.