

Document Handling at Glamorgan Archives

At the Glamorgan Archives we hold material that is over 800 years old and there are many ways in which you can help to preserve these documents for future generations:

- Please handle the documents as little as possible and always with great care.
- When working with documents **do not use pens, biros or erasers**. Only use a soft leaded pencil – the searchroom staff can lend you one if needed. Do not sharpen pencils at the table.
- **Do not eat or drink** in the searchroom (this includes sweets or chewing gum). As well as the possibility of causing accidental but irreparable damage, food and drink can also attract pests which damage records.
- Wash your hands before handling documents and avoid using hand cream. Oil and perspiration are acidic and can stain paper. Photographic material is particularly sensitive so cotton gloves should be worn to handle *any* photograph that is not in a protective sleeve.
- Do not lick your fingers before turning the pages of a volume as this can cause damage to the document and some paper may contain chemicals which can be harmful.
- Avoid leaning on documents. Rather than using your hands, weights should be placed round the edge of a document (avoiding the printed area) to hold it down.
- Use reading aids to support documents. Volumes should not be held in the hand and should be placed on a cushion or book cradle, which are available in the searchroom.
- Do not bend volumes back or lay them face downwards; this will damage the spine.
- If you need to mark a page in a volume, ask the searchroom staff for acid free tabs.
- Documents should never be left hanging off the edge of a table.
- Documents that are folded should not be refolded against the original fold. If any corners are folded down, do not fold them back as this may cause the material to break.
- If you are unsure about how to handle a document due to its weight or fragility, please ask the searchroom staff for advice and they will be happy to help you.
- Tell a member of staff immediately about any damage to a document.
- Although we do our best to make our records accessible at the Glamorgan Archives, this is not always possible. Occasionally we may not be able to produce a document for you due to its fragile state and conservation needs.