



**South West Heritage Trust  
Job Description**

<b>Job Title</b>	Senior Archive Conservator
<b>Reports To</b>	Head of Archives, Learning & Development
<b>Responsible for</b>	The strategic direction of archive conservation and preservation work for the South West Heritage Trust
<b>Team</b>	Devon and Somerset Archives & Local Studies Teams
<b>Job Purpose</b>	<p>To provide management and professional expertise in archive conservation and preservation work across SWHT, including managing staff and volunteers, developing, managing and undertaking projects and advising on conservation and preservation practices.</p> <p>The post requires sensitivity to the cultural value and context of archives, while demonstrating professional judgement and intelligent practice.</p>
<b>Working Relationships</b>	<p><b>Internal:</b> The post holder will have daily liaison with members of the Devon and Somerset Archives &amp; Local Studies Teams and volunteers, and frequent liaison with staff across the Trust, particularly the Head of Archives, Learning &amp; Development.</p>
	<p><b>External:</b> The post holder will liaise with partner agencies (e.g. The National Archives, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust) and organisations (e.g. local, regional and national heritage, cultural, tourism and business organisations), local authorities, visitors, service users, contractors and suppliers.</p>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>The Devon and Somerset Archive &amp; Local Studies Services care for the written evidence of the history of Devon and Somerset and hold millions of documents dating from the 8th century to the present day. These are cared for and made available at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter. The centre was opened in 2004. It forms part of the Great Moor House site.</li> <li>• The Somerset Heritage Centre, Taunton. The centre was opened in 2010.</li> <li>• The North Devon Record Office, situated on the second floor of Barnstaple Library. It has operated here since 1988.</li> </ul> <p>The role will include occasional evening and weekend working, at locations throughout Devon and Somerset. A driving licence and the ability to travel independently are desirable. The post holder may need to attend emergency call-outs.</p>

### **Job Description – Key Responsibilities and Tasks**

1. Develops, maintains and promotes efficient and effective archive conservation and preservation services for the benefit of the public, SWHT, Devon and Somerset County Councils, and partner organisations. Undertakes archive conservation treatments using professional conservation and preservation skills and knowledge relating to the repair of historic records, using recognised techniques and ensures that collections are packaged and stored to appropriate standards.
2. Actively engages with national and regional developments and best practice in archive conservation and ensures that new developments and techniques are promoted and embedded in SWHT practice. Works with members of the SWHT Senior Leadership Team to plan the strategic direction of archive conservation and ensures that it is embedded in forward plans and budgets.
3. Identifies and implements projects to develop and promote the conservation of archive and local studies collections, ensuring that such projects are managed efficiently and effectively throughout. Secures external funds and commissions and monitors externally provided conservation treatment.
4. Manages conservation staff (currently 1FTE Conservation Assistant), project staff and interns, ensuring appropriate training and guidance is available. Identifies and resources volunteer projects and facilitates the management of these across all sites, including necessary training.
5. Develops partnership relationships with heritage organisations and community groups and provides advice and guidance. Implements partnership projects which have archive conservation at their heart.
6. Ensures the emergency disaster plans for archives and local studies material are kept up to date and that staff have appropriate training.
7. Develops and undertakes engagement work relating to archive conservation (e.g. assisting with press releases, talks, displays, exhibitions, leaflets, guides, web content and training events).
8. Undertakes agreed conservation work on occasion for third parties, e.g. in support of a partnership project or relationship.
8. Manages and maintains collection surveys, schedules of work, records of treatment, and monitoring of projects.
10. Manages and controls the Trust's conservation studios including the safe and appropriate use of specialist equipment, materials and chemicals. Evaluates and orders specialised conservation materials and equipment within specified budgets. Manages implementation of obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act and COSHH regulations with respect to archive conservation, as well as archive disaster planning across all sites. Is a key holder and part of the emergency call-out team.
11. Ensures that environmental conditions in specialised archive storage areas are monitored and controlled in accordance with BS4791:2017 or successor standards.
12. Follows and complies with all policies and procedures of the SWHT which include the Trust's Health and Safety procedures in the workplace, ensuring personal safety and the safeguarding of the interests and safety of all staff, trainees, visitors and others using

relevant Trust premises or facilities. Upholds the working values and expectations of the South West Heritage Trust.

13. Carries out other duties relevant to the post as reasonably required by the line manager and the Management Team.

### Person Specification

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To succeed in this role you will need to demonstrate:		
	<i><b>Essentials</b></i>	<i><b>Desirables</b></i>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>Recognised qualification in paper/archive conservation</p> <p>An accredited conservator with accreditation gained via a recognised national archive conservation organisation, e.g. ICON</p>	
<b>Experience</b>	<p>Significant experience of archive conservation and preservation techniques, equipment and materials</p> <p>Experience of making professional judgements to achieve agreed results on a wide range of media including paper, parchment, vellum, maps, bindings, seals and photographs</p> <p>Experience of developing and managing projects</p> <p>Evidence of work-related continuing professional development</p>	<p>Experience of promotion and publicity of conservation</p> <p>Experience of archive collections management software</p>
<b>Skills/Knowledge</b>	<p>Excellent skills and knowledge of archive conservation and the ability to complete conservation work to a high standard</p> <p>The ability to effectively lead a team, including performance management</p> <p>Excellent skills in organisational management</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of professional standards, guidelines and equipment used in archive conservation and preservation</p> <p>Strong written and verbal communications skills, including use of IT</p>	<p>Knowledge of the heritage or cultural sectors</p>

<b>Attributes</b>	<p>A careful, accurate and methodical approach, especially when handling fragile material</p> <p>The ability to work flexibly and organise own workload</p> <p>Ability to work flexibly in a team</p> <p>An ability to interact in a helpful and professional way with the public, stakeholders, partners and colleagues</p> <p>Willingness to undertake public engagement work</p> <p>A commitment to the Trust's vision and values</p>	
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