

Conservation work

Conservation work is divided into two categories: preventive conservation and remedial conservation.

Preventive conservation







This involves applying methods to reduce the risk of damage and deterioration while items are in store or are being used. Preventive conservation involves activities such as:

- Monitoring the environment in the stores and reading room for heat and humidity which accelerate the decay of paper collections
- Checking for pests in our stores, such as silverfish which feed on paper collections
- Boxing manuscripts, rare books and other items in archival boxes to protect from dust, light and buffer changes in environmental conditions
- Training staff in correct handling practices to minimise damage
- Packing and transporting Special Collections material safely
- Monitoring light levels for material on display to reduce fading of pigments and inks
- Advising colleagues on standards for care of collections, for example in designing new storage facilities
- Emergency preparedness, knowing how to react in the event of a disaster such as a burst pipe or fire that could threaten our collections.

Remedial conservation

Remedial conservation is the practical treatment and repair of artefacts. This is done either to make them safe to use or so that they look their best for exhibition or reproduction. Conservation treatment is always carried out in accordance to an international code of ethics. This work is undertaken by trained conservators in the Cadbury Research Library's Wilson Conservation Studio, a state-of-the-art paper conservation studio fitted with specialist equipment.

Examples of Special Collections conservation work

 conservationstudio-Cropped-235x130 (#)	 conservationstudio20 (#)	 Damaged WW2 propaganda (#)	 Repaired WW2 propaganda (#)	 Grime and dirt on a partially-cleaned vellum covered book from the Kelmscott Press (#)	 Halfway through repairing the unbound pages of a Book of Common Prayer, 1600 (damaged on left, repaired on right)
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