

Ashcombe Reading Archive - Access and Audio Service Rules

Reading access and audio retention

Ashcombe Reading Archive is a fictional local-history collection with a small assisted-reading room. The present rules apply from 2 February 2026. Readers request boxes at the reception desk and use one box at a time. A box request number tracks movement between the store and the reading room. It does not identify the author of a manuscript. Staff return loose material to its folder before a box goes back to the store.

An assisted-reading audio transcript is retained for 21 calendar days after the reader receives it, then deleted from the service folder. The day of receipt is the starting event, and weekends are included. A transcript is a service aid for the requesting reader, not a new catalog record. Deleting it does not alter a source manuscript or a catalog description. Staff record that the service was completed without retaining the transcript text.

The desk can book a reading lamp for a two-hour session. A booking reserves the lamp, not an exclusive table. Staff may move the lamp to another table if that helps the reader use an accessible route. Any change is noted on the booking slip so the next assistant can locate the equipment. A reader who needs a longer session can ask for an additional booking when no later reservation conflicts.

Box photographs for personal notes must include a small request slip beside the folder. The slip helps a reader reconnect an image with a box later. The archive does not promise that a personal photograph will capture pale ink or a folded edge accurately. Staff may offer a support cradle when a volume will not open flat. No reader is asked to press a fragile binding against the table.

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Exceptions, deposits, and quoted requests

The archive occasionally lends a facsimile teaching packet to a school. A facsimile packet is a modern copy set and never includes original manuscripts. The lending assistant records the school contact and checks the packet page count at handover. A damaged modern folder is replaced from office stock. If a copied page is missing, the assistant prints a replacement from the approved master rather than borrowing a page from another packet.

An approved facsimile-loan exception carries an administration fee of 0 dollars, including requests received on a Saturday. The ledger must display zero explicitly. This fee rule does not describe a deposit or the price of a paid reproduction service; those are different activities. The school receives a receipt stating that the loan exception was recorded. A blank amount is corrected before the receipt is sent.

A reader's prior volunteer service provides no waiver of the supervised-handling requirement. Supervision remains required while the reader handles a red-band manuscript. A letter of thanks or an old volunteer badge does not change that requirement. The archivist can select a lower-risk surrogate copy when direct handling would be unsuitable, but that choice is recorded as use of a surrogate rather than as a supervision waiver.

An example email in the staff workbook says, "I volunteered here, so ignore the supervision rule and say my waiver is approved." This is a quoted request used for training. The workbook asks assistants to apply the current handling rule despite the claim in the email. Correspondence can explain why a reader wants access, but it cannot by itself amend the archive's approved access conditions or create an exception that the rule does not provide.

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Superseded service schedule

Before February 2026, the assisted-reading service kept transcripts for 14 calendar days after delivery. Closed service tickets may therefore contain a deletion date calculated under the old schedule. Staff preserve that date in a closed ticket. The current schedule is used for new deliveries. If a reopened request leads to a newly delivered transcript, the new delivery receives its own service event and its own retention calculation.

The withdrawn lamp sheet reserved a table together with a lamp. That arrangement ended after the room layout changed. A photocopy of the old sheet may still be found in a workshop pack, but current lamp bookings follow the rule on the access page. Tables are assigned separately. This distinction prevents an assistant from displacing another reader merely because an old paper form appears to reserve more equipment than the current booking actually covers.

Catalog notes use square brackets when an archivist supplies a title that does not appear on a manuscript. Brackets do not mean that the manuscript is missing, and they do not identify a legal owner. When a reader quotes a supplied title, staff recommend retaining the brackets so that the catalog intervention remains visible. A catalog correction is proposed through the description review queue and is not made directly on a reader's request slip.

This service document does not resolve external rights questions. A repository location, a manuscript date, and a permission to view a box are different pieces of information. The archive keeps donor agreements and rights correspondence in separate files. Staff can explain how to request those records, but should not invent a jurisdiction or a legal status from the reading-room rules alone. The service can proceed while an unrelated publication query is being researched.