

The Conservation of Wrexham Charter

To mark the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the Borough of Wrexham, staff at Wrexham Museum arranged for a reproduction to be made of the Borough Charter.

Before work could start on the reproduction, the charter had to be conserved. During June – July 2007 Mark Allen, the conservator at Flintshire Record Office carried out repairs to the charter and the seal and made a new storage box for the charter. He prepared the following report on the charter:

Owner : Wrexham County Borough Council

Contact: Wrexham County Borough Museum

Title: Charter of Incorporation

Date : 1857

Dimensions : 50.5cm x 75 cm seal diameter 15.7 cm

Physical make-up and condition :

The Charter is made up of three parchment membranes attached together at the lower edge with a large pendant royal seal. All edges have been cut .The script is in iron gall ink with red ink guide lines .There is a printed border design on each sheet .There is some cockling of the parchments and extensive staining to the left hand edge .



The outer parchment has been repaired with a parchment infill some time in the past; this has caused some tension to the sheet. There is a covering of surface dirt.

Conservation:

The inks were tested and the red colour was found to be slightly fugitive .The membranes were dry cleaned with a vinyl eraser and sable brush before being humidified between a sandwich of bondina, gore-tex and capillary matting dampened with de-ionised water. Progress was monitored during the relaxation. Each sheet was left to dry under tension.



Consolidation, to areas around the older repair, was carried out using goldbeater's skin and a small infill of new parchment with gelatine as an adhesive.



Before



After

The seal was repaired using beeswax.



Seal repair

Storage:

A bespoke housing was made using acid free materials to keep the charter under slight tension and protect the seal. The Charter can be displayed in the box.

