

# Top tips: Salvaging flood-damaged books and paper

Following these steps will minimise the loss of flood-damaged book and paper items, preventing further damage.

Mould can develop within 72 hours, but with quick action you can increase the chance of a successful recovery.

## 3. Create a drying area

Work in a dry environment, increase air circulation with fans and open windows. Use a dehumidifier if possible.

## 1. Create a plan

Take a moment to assess, survey, and develop a plan. Consider which items may take priority, weighing between levels of value and damage by sorting according to wetness (light, medium, heavy).

## 4. Aid the drying process

For books that are moderately wet, stand them upright with fanned pages to dry. Evenly intersperse absorbent paper taking care not to bulk it out. Lay larger or very wet items open flat, turning pages periodically, so the exposed sheets can dry. Do not use a hair dryer, as this can cause further damage.

## 2. Handle with care

Exercise extra care when handling items. Soaked paper can be extremely fragile; do not open and close wet books, as further damage could occur.

## 5. Freeze to stop mould

Freezing can prevent mould developing, and/or buy time until drying begins.

Wrap and label items with baking paper, cling-film, or plastic bags. Highest priority items can be frozen until a conservator can treat or advise.

