

Museum Plan 2017-20

Introduction

Over 180,000 historic objects are in the care of the museum service of Herefordshire Council. These collections give an insight into the history, identity and uniqueness of the county. As well as caring and preserving those collections for future generations the museum service also ensures access to an array of artefacts through events, the operation of sites and on-line.

This document outlines Herefordshire Council's plans for the museum service during the next few years highlighting it's role going forward and linking to the wider objectives of the council.



Beetles from the entomological collections

Outline of the service

The origins of the geological and botanical collections can be traced back to the Herefordshire Literary and Philosophical Society, founded in 1836 and the Woolhope Club founded in 1851, both several years before the opening of the County Museum in 1874.

The collection is predominately owned by Herefordshire Council with a small number of items on loan. The collections comprise of a wide variety of subjects covering archaeology, social history, costume and textiles, fine art, decorative art and furniture, documents, photographs, numismatics, arms and armour, ethnography, natural sciences including geology. The costume and textile collection itself is of national significance with items from the 17th century to the present.

The focus of the collection is based on understanding Herefordshire's social and natural history. Experiencing the collection is important with the key displays at Hereford Museum and Art Gallery, and the Black and White House Museum. As well as displays, experience to the collections is also through educational activity, special events and campaigns, and digital access. The collections themselves are housed in one of the finest dedicated museum stores in the country, which was established in 2008 supported by major investment by Herefordshire Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Documentation is an important element of the museum service in recording the vast collection to be accessed digitally and creating a comprehensive record.

In April 2017 entrance fees were introduced for the Black and White House to support the sustainability of the service and enable the care of the collections. There is also recognition that how people access heritage is changing and competing with other forms of leisure, in an existing environment of reduced funding.

Purpose and Vision

The museum service's purpose is to connect people with Herefordshire's past by creating opportunities for direct engagement with museum objects for exploration, enjoyment, curiosity and wonder. The museum sites also have a role to play in generating tourism and pride of place for local people along with other museums and heritage attractions operating in the county independently of the council.

Herefordshire Museum Service Access Policy 2016-19 outlines a vision that "Herefordshire museum service aims to develop and deliver museum services that allow people the freedom to explore, enjoy and participate in their heritage in a way that respects and attempts to fulfil their particular needs and desires. Herefordshire Museum Service aims to create equality of access for everybody by minimising or eliminating barriers to access."

There are three key elements to deliver this vision:

- Collecting and caring for objects and their stories reflecting Herefordshire life: past, present and into the future
- Enabling lifelong use, learning and enjoyment of the museum collections through interpreting and sharing our expertise and knowledge
- Fostering a sense of place and community and promoting well-being.

Objectives

1. **Care and access:** provide access to collections as widely as possible, whilst ensuring the best standards and practice in collections care as possible
2. **Sustainability:** transform the museum service delivery model to enable continued provision of a sustainable and vibrant museum service for the county of Herefordshire, with an appropriately skilled workforce and supported by partner organisations
3. **Income:** develop income generation systems that create a resilient financial base to support the museum service and its activities
4. **Engagement:** deliver engaging experiences, displays and activities with high levels of customer care
5. **Collections:** ensure the collections are relevant to Herefordshire and include a programme of digital documentation.

Links to the Council Priorities

This section looks at how the services deliver on Herefordshire Council corporate priorities.

Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives

- Volunteering opportunities for new skills, social engagement and self purpose
- Courses and classes to enliven minds and facilitate interaction
- Reminiscence work stimulating mental capacity for the elderly
- Community engagement to broaden experience and strengthen sense of place.



Events at the Black and White House used to interpret history

Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life

- Run a variety of activities for children at the different sites
- Schools education sessions available at the Black and White House and Museum Resource and Learning Centre
- Access to resources for college students and educators
- Involvement in campaigns and partnership initiatives.

Support the growth of our economy

- Museums as key attractions for tourists giving a reason to visit, stay longer and spend more (70% of visitors to Black and White House are out of county)
- Support the regeneration, identity and vibrancy of Hereford specifically the Black and White House used as an icon of Hereford
- Museums as part of the cultural heritage and leisure of the area, supporting reasons for inward investment for relocating companies
- Support the development of the new university adding value to the university offer.

Secure better services, quality of life and value for money

- Charge for visits to the Black and White House for further sustainability of the museum service
- External funding to review the future model of the museum service
- Make best use of people's interest in being volunteers for the museum service
- Extend cross service partnership working.

Major programmes

To support a comprehensive volunteer workforce to assist in the care of the collections and the operation of the sites to aid customer experience.

Reform the schools offer centred on the Black and White House and collections at the Museum Resource and Learning Centre.

Review the model of operating the museum service linked to libraries and archives including working with partner organisations on its long term sustainability.

Deliver a programme of collection care including assessment and rationalisation of social history, and improved storage for natural science, archaeological, costume and furniture collections.

Significant promotion of the Black and White house as income generation.

Run programme of activities to support interpretation of the collections and the wider heritage of Hereford and Herefordshire.

Continue with documentation and digitisation of the collection for increased access to objects on-line.

Explore funding opportunities for the Museum Resource and Learning Centre linking to improved visitor experience and access to the stored collections.



Reference to further information:

- Collections Development Policy 2016-19
- Archaeological Deposition Policy 2016-19
- Humans Remains Policy 2016-19
- Care and Conservation Policy 2016-19
- Care and Conservation Plan 2016-19
- Documentation Policy 2016-19
- Documentation Manual 2016-19
- Documentation Plan 2016-19
- Access Policy 2016-19
- Access Plan 2016-19

Archives Plan 2017-20

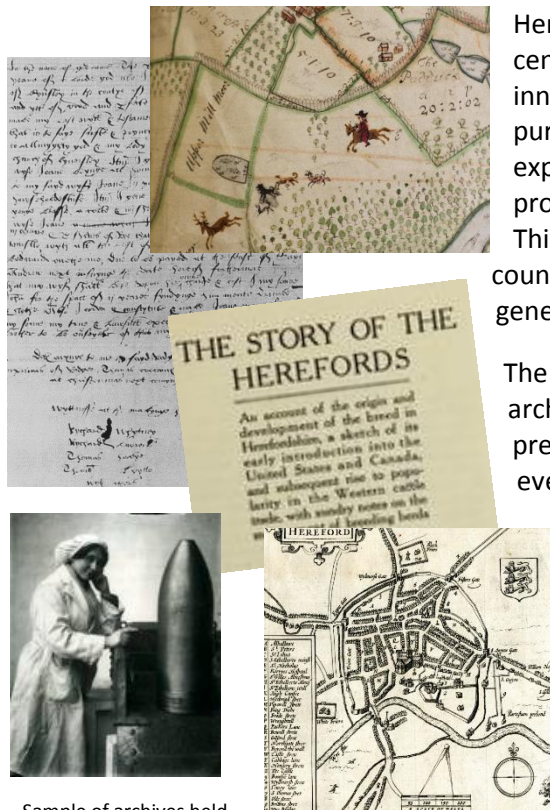
Introduction

The Archive Service based at HARC (Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre) holds in the region of 7,800 archive collections occupying over two miles of shelving, with archives dating back as far as the twelfth century. This provides an incredibly valuable resource and a rich source of historic records used for research, study, education and recreational family and social history. The creation of a dedicated passivhaus building at HARC in 2015 means Herefordshire has one of the country's leading centres for archives in terms of visitor experience and storage of the collections.



This document outlines Herefordshire Council's plans for the archive services during the next few years recognising the value to individuals and communities balanced with continued pressure of public sector expenditure which will have impact on how services will be delivered in the future.

Outline of the service



Sample of archives held

Herefordshire Council took the step to create a purpose built centre for archives, which has been recognised for its innovation and quality through numerous awards. The core purpose in creating the building was to improve the visitor experience when researching the collections along with providing the right environment for the longevity of archives. This allows the archives owned by the council and in the council's guardianship to be enjoyed now and for future generations.

The service has an important role in conservation of the archives and records, repairing damage created in the past and preventing any further deterioration. The service also runs events to raise awareness of the archives using them as a source of education and learning. Increasingly the archives are being made available on-line to support people's access if unable to travel to HARC.

HARC itself was built to support local and community engagement hosting relevant local events, exhibitions and providing the learning room for hire.

Records held fall into the following categories:

Diocesan covers parishes in Herefordshire, South Shropshire, and parts of Worcestershire, Monmouthshire and Powys. These documents date from the thirteenth century onwards and cover a wide range of Hereford Diocese's functions through to the present day. Latin was the preferred language of many of these documents until 1732. Bishop's transcripts, court books, marriage bonds and allegations, tithe maps and apportionments, and wills are available on microfilm.

Parish - registers and records of Church of England parishes within the county of Herefordshire, as well as those of several parishes outside the county. Many churches have deposited their pre-1900 registers of baptisms, marriages, burials and banns, which are mainly made available to the public in microfilm format.

Local Government - the historic records of Herefordshire Council, and its predecessors; also Hereford City and Leominster Borough, as well as district and parish councils. Records of pre-1889 county government are within Herefordshire Quarter Sessions (part of the public records collection). School and Board of Guardians (workhouse) records, where they have survived, are also deposited as part of the local government collections.

Private – these form a large portion of the holdings and relate to all aspects of the history and development of the geographical county of Herefordshire, and its inhabitants. Collections include the archives of non-conformist ecclesiastical bodies, businesses, estates and manors, private individuals, and a wide range of societies.

Public - The National Archives has designated Herefordshire Archive Service as a Place of Deposit for public records. Generally, public records are created by a central government department or their predecessor. These include Church Commissioners records, coroners' records, constabulary records and magistrates' court records.

Purpose

The purpose of the service is to provide access to the archive collections and preserve them for future generations. This creates a research and resource base for understanding the individual and collective heritage of the county through the evidence of source documents.

There are four key principles influencing the delivery of the archive service:

- To comply with the requirements of all relevant legislation and local government acts regarding the safe-keeping and democratic accessibility of records.
- To enable the collections to be accessed and enjoyed as a source of inspiration and education without compromising the care of the archive.
- To sustain the operation of the service through maximising earned income, sponsorship and charging.
- To make the most of partnership with business, community, friends group and volunteers to promote, utilise and develop HARC and the archive collection.

Objectives

1. **Care:** preserve collections through an ongoing programme of conservation, to include prevention activity that addresses risk of further damage
2. **Engagement:** to support people's well-being, learning and enjoyment using the collections as a route to history through exhibition, talks and events including sessions specifically for children
3. **Multi-use:** to encourage the varied use of HARC to maximise the building and forge links to the community, council departments and the visitor market
4. **Digital:** to support digital access to the finding aids and collections, including cataloguing and indexing of the archives to enable world wide access
5. **Community involvement:** to work in collaboration with friends, other stakeholders and interest groups to shape the service going forward and improve the offer through funding and support; along with volunteers as a valued resource to assist the service
6. **Council needs:** to meet the local authority's statutory and service needs with the archives being a resource for planning, development, enforcement and education teams
7. **Finance:** use the resources available to best effect and generate income through a range of means, whilst creating savings in the operation of the services.

Links to the Council Priorities

As well as public access, the council itself will access the archives for planning, enforcement and development. This section looks at how the services deliver on Herefordshire Council corporate priorities.

Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives

- Opportunities for research which keeps the mind active and engaged, including family and local history
- Network of volunteers engaged in a number of projects including preservation, cataloguing and digitisation
- Community events, workshops, activities and exhibitions for all ages
- Developing HARC as a Dementia Friendly venue.

Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life

- Formal education sessions available for schools to support understanding of many curriculum subjects, but especially history through the archive material
- Informal learning via community classes and workshops available for children to participate in
- Link with museums and library with joining promotion and projects for children
- Project work with community groups such as SHYPP.

Support the growth of our economy

- Attract visitor economy through reach of the unique archive and family history tourism
- Contribute to the regeneration of the Rotherwas enterprise zone
- Provide property and land information for developers.

Secure better services, quality of life and value for money

- Repository for the Council's own records as the "corporate memory" of the organisation which can be used within audits, litigation and inquests for example
- Itinerary of charging for services and use of HARC facilities
- Create efficiencies through shared site at HARC with other services of the local authority, including provision of meeting and event space
- Review the opportunity for management of the services through commissioning.

Major programmes

Acquire and develop electronic archive management system.

Develop volunteer programme for digitising Bustin photographic collection and uploading onto Herefordshire History website.

Submit application for service accreditation by The National Archives.

Support Rotherwas ROF Front Line Duty Heritage Lottery Funded project to engage with the community to commemorate the contribution of the munitions workers.

Support phase 2 of "Herefordshire Life Through a Lens" project (Derek Evans photograph collection) to engage with volunteers to catalogue and digitise elements of the collection.

Develop and promote programme of regular talks and workshops at HARC to raise awareness and generate an income.

Develop marketing strategy for commercial use of Learning Room.

Develop income generating archive conservation, preservation and consultancy.

Explore working with commercial web-based providers to supply access to digitised collections.

Assess the future governance arrangement of HARC.

Participate in projects with schools and community groups for children and young people.

Links to further information:

- www.herefordshire.gov.uk/HARC
- www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/projects-and-programmes/strategic-vision-for-archives/>



Purpose building archive centre opened in August 2015. The award winning building is energy efficient based on 'passivhaus design'.

Library Plan 2017-20

Introduction

Libraries in Herefordshire have in the region of over half a million visits every year and over 30% of the county's population are regular library users. Libraries are part of the nation's cultural and heritage landscape and have transformed over the years to become community resources catering for changing needs and expectations. Though the main reason people visit a library is to loan a book, the scope of what people can do is increasingly diverse. Library services extend beyond the fabric of buildings to provide a multitude of opportunities for people of different walks of life and different ages to benefit from.

This document outlines Herefordshire Council's plans for library services during the next few years; recognising the value to individuals and communities along with opportunities to support the wider objectives of the council.

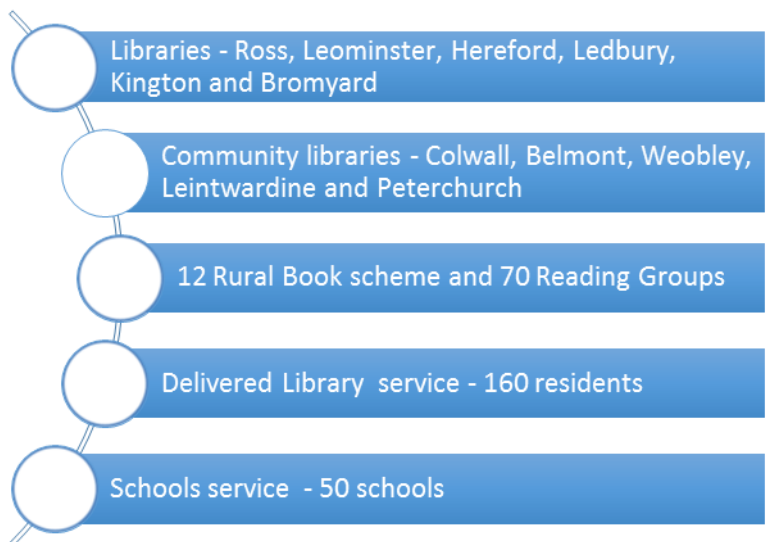


Ledbury Library in the Masters House as part of major development in 2015

Outline of the service

Herefordshire Council, along with many other councils, has had to review how it operates its library service. This includes responding to technology changes, digital access and how people access books and the wider use of libraries as community venues.

The authority has managed to maintain all the county's libraries, working closely with communities in many instances supported by volunteers, parish councils, service users and local groups. Each of the 11 libraries has its own character and will operate differently to meet local needs, with co-ordination and development by a central county library team. As well as the libraries, the service runs a host of activities including supporting a network of reading groups, reaching out to housebound residents with targeted delivery, visits to home and day care centres, schools library service, e-books, books on prescription, books for babies, along with special campaigns and programmes.



Purpose

The purpose of the library service is to promote wellbeing and enrich lives for people through different stages of their life. Libraries are ideally placed to be safe places that the community feel comfortable

using, which have no barriers to age, background or income level. The range of services provided are particularly relevant to children at the foundation of their learning and for people of different ages that want to feel connected to others and their community. Libraries are also resource centres with access to technology and advice, often shared with other support services, and used by voluntary groups for community activity.

There are four key principles influencing the delivery of the library service:

- Provide and enable a free core library service across Herefordshire, supporting social interaction and reducing isolation.
- For centres to provide shared spaces as part of the community life of an area, fostering local regeneration and local identity.
- Promote reading for all ages and access to books, supporting learning and discovery.
- Work with the community to provide the level of library service want through support of community-run libraries and volunteering.

Objectives

1. **Children First:** support the learning and development of children through dedicated spaces and specific programmes for children, fostering the education, attainment and employment opportunities of future generations, showing that reading is a pleasure from an early age to any age.
2. **Multi-use:** to encourage the varied use of the library for different purposes, make the most of the library buildings, including a range of partners providing like and supportive services that generate an income for the services.
3. **Wellbeing:** to support people's wellbeing by developing the libraries as places for information, engagement and activities. To use the wider library services to aid people's mental health through reading, interaction with others and involvement in activities.
4. **Digital inclusion:** to help break down the barriers to going on-line by providing free-to-use PCs and wifi, often acting as an introduction to using the internet to access goods and services.
5. **Community involvement:** to work in collaboration with friends groups, town and parish councils to aid access to libraries including fundraising for projects and extended opening; operation of the community libraries and programmes to aid learning and engagement.
6. **Reaching further:** to encourage the use of libraries by people who would benefit most from the services, often reflective of generations of families who have not used libraries but would benefit from the opportunities they present. This to be achieved by collaboration with different parts of the council services, promotional campaigns and targeted activity.
7. **Safe places and safeguarding** – for the libraries to provide safe havens for people, with staff trained to respond to the need for help and to recognise a potential safeguarding issue and act on it.

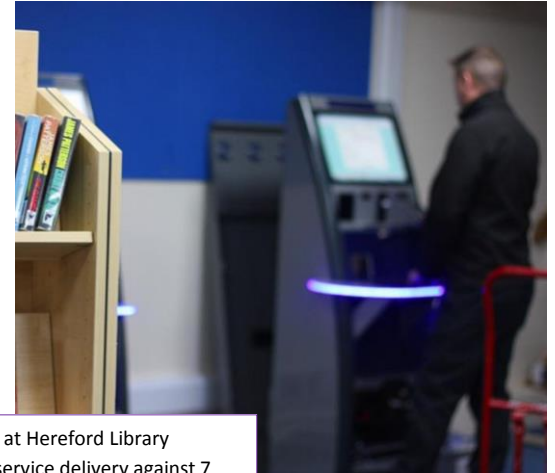


Photo: self-serve at Hereford Library (above); Library service delivery against 7 outcomes “Library Delivery” Libraries Taskforce 2017.

Links to the Council Priorities

This section looks at how the services deliver on Herefordshire Council corporate priorities.

Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives

- Run the delivered services reaching housebound residents, residential homes and sheltered housing with reading choices
- Provide information on wellbeing at libraries and operate books on prescription scheme in partnership with GPs
- Collaborative with MIND including book club and exhibition in Hereford of art work
- Specific “access” membership for older people, vulnerable adults, residents with physical and mental disabilities, and carers
- National Reading Well offers for people with dementia, adult mental health, long-term conditions
- Books in alternative formats for visually impaired residents

Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life

- Family friendly libraries providing a safe, welcoming environment
- Ceasing fines for children’s books
- Booktrust’s bookstart programme for children to have their own reading resources
- Resources and events to support literacy and learning
- Staff trained in “making every contact count”
- Schools Library service to primary school and library service to high schools
- Links with children centre services, including using libraries for activities
- Summer reading challenge; bounce and rhyme, schools visits
- National Reading Well offer supporting young people’s mental and physical health
- Targeted school events for improving and reluctant readers
- Workshops to stimulate interest in creative writing
- Special reading collections foster families

Support the growth of our economy

- Free wifi and public use PCs for job searches, plus IT courses
- Shared facilities at Ross Library for Job Centre+
- Volunteer work placements to improve skills
- Rural book schemes in shops and community venues
- Resources and classes improving language and functional skills
- Promote local authors and artists through sales and exhibitions
- Support and promote local festivals and cultural events

Secure better services, quality of life and value for money

- Introduction of self-services points to reduce the need to queue
- Shared sites with external organisations, departments and hire of venues
- Regional consortium for stock purchases to reduce purchase costs
- Increased income generation opportunities including online access to local history resources supported by sales
- Fundraising partnerships and projects to support the objectives of the library service
- Review and develop library online systems
- Working with parish councils and library friends / user groups to operate community libraries

Major programmes

Consider options for developing and maximising the use of Hereford Library.
Improvements to Ross Library linked to children centre provision.
Improvements made to the use and layout of Leominster Library.
Create wellbeing areas at libraries for easy access to resources and information.
Operate and promote adult events programme and school Book Festival, involving community organisations and partners.
Explore models for future delivery of the library service linked to archives and museums.
Extend the offer for e-books.
Promote schools library services and delivered library service.
Develop Herefordshire History website, improving online access to local history resources.
Publications programme and merchandising.
Involved in heritage and culture partnerships and projects e.g. Derek Evans Studio project, ROF project, Traveller collection, Dymock poets, Ross Gazette, etc.
Review and develop library management systems (move to cloud-based LMS, explore self-service printing, etc.)
Targeted projects with vulnerable adults, children and young people.



Children's author Tom Palmer
at a library event

Further information: Profile of Hereford Library service: www.herefordshire.gov.uk with the following links:

- Library Facts and Figures
- Books for Health
- Friends and Development Groups