

Historic Environment Record: Data Access and Charging Policy

Historic Environment Team, Shropshire Council. her@shropshire.gov.uk 01743 25 4619

With effect from April 1st 2018, Shropshire Council Historic Environment Record (HER) will be formalising our procedures and policies with regards to HER data requests.

The guidance below provides a clear statement on how to obtain information from the HER, the procedure and charges associated with commercial requests, and how information should be reported back to the HER.

Introduction

Shropshire Council maintains the **Historic Environment Record (HER)** for the historic county of Shropshire covering the Unitary Authority areas of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin. The HER is the primary source of information about the historic environment of the county. It is based around a database holding more than 36,000 records, covering archaeological sites, finds and features, historic buildings, structures and landscapes. We also are the repository for all reports on archaeological work and historic building recording carried out in the county, which form a core part of the HER collections.

The HER is based around a relational database linked to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping. It holds detailed data for each site or building including location, type, period, date and includes an index to sources held in our library and by other organisations. The GIS holds geographical depictions of all sites on the database, ranging from simple points to complex area polygons.

We hold extensive supporting collections of ground and air photographs, survey reports and plans, and a library of unpublished, 'grey literature' reports, mainly generated by the planning process.

Access to the HER

The HER can be accessed in person, by phone, post or by email.

Visiting

By visiting the HER in person, you have the most direct access to assistance and resources. The HER is based in our offices at Shirehall, Shrewsbury. An appointment is required due to limited space and staffing. Please email her@shropshire.gov.uk or tel: 01743 25 4619 to arrange this.

By phone, post or email

If you can't visit in person, you can ask us to search the system on your behalf. You can contact us by phone, post or email. We can then send you the results of the search as hard copy or in electronic format.

When you make an enquiry, you'll usually need to say 'where, what and why' with respect to your enquiry.

- what location or area are you interested in (national grid references are a great help!)?
- what type or type(s) of information are you interested in?
- why do you want the information?

Knowing why will help HER staff pitch their response to your specific needs, and also helps to protect the county's archaeology and historic buildings.

Please always include a phone number or email address in case anything needs to be clarified.

Over the internet

The HER is one of the partners in a website called *Discovering Shropshire's History (DSH)*, alongside Shropshire Archives, the Museums Service and a range of local history groups. You can search and access records via a [map based search](#), or using [advanced search parameters](#).

In addition, monument records are searchable on [Heritage Gateway](#), alongside other local and national heritage records.

Please note: Our online records are supplied for information purposes only, and are not suitable for commercial, planning or land management purposes. They are updated quarterly/biannually, with information on some sites withheld from publication. The HER holds an extensive archive of material which has not been digitised. For commercial purposes, please contact the HER directly to arrange for a full search to be undertaken (see below).

Commercial Enquiries

A search fee is normally payable where the enquiry is for **commercial or profit-making purposes**. The fee is to cover staff time and will vary according to the nature of the enquiry. **For most other users, such as members of the public and students carrying out personal research, there is no search fee** unless the enquiry is particularly complicated or time consuming to deal with. In such cases any charge will be agreed before the work is carried out.

It is still possible to visit us to collate HER information for commercial purposes. We don't usually charge for this as long as it doesn't tie up large amounts of staff time. **You will be allocated an IR number when you come in – please quote this in your report.**

HER information is only valid, for a given area, for a maximum period of 6 months. After this period the HER information becomes invalid. Enquirers should be aware that HER enhancement projects are continually adding to the number of already known and recorded archaeological sites.

Step 1: Contact the HER to request a commercial search.

Prior to contacting the HER, it is advisable to contact the relevant Conservation Officer or Archaeological Advisor within the Historic Environment Team (see <https://shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/meet-the-historic-environment-team/>) to ensure that the data you are requesting is suitable for assessment purposes.

Our preferred method of contact for an HER search is by email (her@shropshire.gov.uk). There is no form to send, but please ensure that you include:

- Clear details of the area to be searched. This may be a radius around a central NGR, a buffer around a development area, or supplied as a .shp/.dxf file. **It is the responsibility of the contractor to ensure that the search area requested is appropriate to the purpose of the request.** The HER can provide outline guidance to assist with this process.
- The purpose of the search request (e.g. heritage statement, background to archaeological fieldwork etc.).
- What information you require. Our 'standard' supply is Monument and Event data (database records and mapping), but we can also supply HLC data (as mapping only).
- The formats you require search results in (records are supplied in .pdf format as standard with mapping supplied as GIS .shp files or .pdf maps).
- The timetable for the return of the search results (see below).

Step 2: The HER provides a quote for the search. The HER officer will provide a quote for the amount of staff time required to fulfil the search request. The vast majority of requests can be dealt with inside an hour. Our current fees are:

Standard search: £100+VAT per hour, or part thereof.

Turn-around time: up to 7 working days.

Priority search: £150+VAT per hour, or part thereof.

Turn-around time: guaranteed 2 working days.

At this stage you will be supplied with an Information Request Number (IRxxx) which you should **quote in all**

correspondence. If you are requesting GIS data, we will also issue a data sharing agreement which licenses the supply of this data – this should be signed and returned electronically.

We will clearly indicate when data will be supplied.

Step 3: The HER will issue all search data within the agreed timescale. We will supply you with database records, and mapping data in the format requested. Mapping will be supplied as either GIS .shp files, supplied subject to the data sharing agreement, or as a .pdf map.

We will also advise on the nature of sources held by the HER, which will be available for consultation by appointment in the HER office.

Step 4: We will issue an invoice for the agreed amount. Please provide us with full invoicing address, including a purchase order number if appropriate.

Reporting to the HER

The HER, as a continuously expanding resource, accepts a wide range of contributions on features of archaeological or historic interest in the county.

Contributions from personal research or local history/archaeological groups are particularly welcomed.

Submitting your data and research to the HER helps improve collective knowledge of Shropshire's historic environment and allows the data to be incorporated into the overall historical and archaeological record. This is especially useful to aid further research, highlight ongoing work or have your findings included in the planning process.

Reports from personal and group research can be submitted by email to her@shropshire.gov.uk, with hard copies accepted to the HER at Shirehall. Digital reports are ideally submitted in PDF format, with photographs supplied as .jpg or .tiff.

Commercial reports (generated by the planning process)

Reports generated through the planning process will need to be submitted via the usual channels to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

All reports should meet the appropriate standards (as, for instance, set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa)¹ or Historic England²), and meet with the requirements of the project design or brief.

Once a report has been approved by the appropriate member of the Historic Environment Team, it should be submitted to the HER. All reports submitted should contain the IR number of the HER search request, and the planning reference to which the work pertains.

For all desk-based reports only (heritage statements or desk-based assessments), only a digital copy of the report is required.

For all other reports we require submission of **one hard copy** (sent to the HER at Shirehall) and **one digital copy** (sent to her@shropshire.gov.uk).

For building recording, in addition to the report, we require the submission of high quality .tiff or .jpg files on DVD.

Shropshire HER participates in the OASIS Project (<http://www.oasis.ac.uk>) providing on-line access to archaeological grey literature reports. You are strongly encouraged to upload your work to the [ADS](#) via [OASIS](#). Doing so will secure digital preservation of the fieldwork report and increase access to your organisation's grey literature.

Shropshire Historic Environment Record, April 2018

Email: her@shropshire.gov.uk | Tel: 01743 25 4619

Shropshire HER Officer, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

¹ See <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa>

² E.g. <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/heag099-understanding-historic-buildings.pdf/>