

Historic Environment Record: Information and Recording Policy

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The aim of the Historic Environment Record is to bring together information and sources related to the archaeology, historic buildings and structures and landscapes of the historic county of Shropshire. The information has been compiled from a wide range of digital and paper-based sources. This document provides an overview of the scope of this information resource.

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We hold extensive supporting collections of ground and air photographs, survey reports and plans, and a library of unpublished, 'grey literature' reports, mainly generated by the planning process.

Geographic coverage of the HER

The HER collects information and material related to the historic county, now covered by both the unitary authorities of Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council. The HER is based within the Historic Environment Team of Shropshire Council, which provides archaeological planning and conservation advice across Shropshire. We also provide archaeological planning advice to Telford and Wrekin Council under a service-level agreement.

Subject coverage

The table below provides a summary of the sources that the HER holds. It is indicative only; please contact the HER directly for further advice.

Resource Type	How held	How to access	Further information
Monument Records – core records of prehistoric/historic sites, finds, buildings and structures. Uniquely identified by a Primary Reference Number (PRN).	Database; GIS data.	Remotely on Discovering Shropshire's History ¹ or Heritage Gateway ² ; By email – her@shropshire.gov.uk ; In the office.	Monument records exported from the database will contain multiple links to other sources.
Event Records – core records of archaeological investigation, buildings survey etc. Uniquely	Database; GIS data.	Remotely on Discovering Shropshire's History; By email – her@shropshire.gov.uk ;	Event records will contain links to online reports, where available. Hard copy/digital

¹ <http://search.shropshirehistory.org.uk>

² <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

identified by a reference prefixed with ESA.		In the office.	reports available from the HER directly – see below.
Historic Landscape Characterisation	GIS data.	Overview report available online ³ ; By email – her@shropshire.gov.uk ; In the office.	HLC data supplied in GIS format only.
Research and fieldwork reports - including 'grey literature' reports, as well as student and local history society reports.	Hard copy reports; Digital reports.	Some reports available online, via ADS Library ⁴ ; By email – her@shropshire.gov.uk ; In the office.	Copying of various reports limited by copyright restrictions – please contact us for information.
Aerial photographs: 1950s-2000s oblique aerial photography taken by, for instance, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust, Cambridge University, Jim Pickering etc. Post 2007 oblique digital aerial photography taken by Shropshire Council. 1983 vertical aerial photographs (Cartographic Services) providing county-wide coverage. 1999-2012 vertical aerial photography held on corporate GIS.	Hard copy photographs; Oblique aerial photography, post c.2007, available digitally.	Some photographs can be sent by email- her@shropshire.gov.uk ; In the office.	Hard copy photographs collated and stored by 1km grid square. Some thumbnail digital versions of imagery available via Discovering Shropshire's History website. Information/references extracted into Monument Records.
Detailed Record Files (DRF) – correspondence, photographic material, plans and site visit reports.	Hard copy files.	In the office.	Often identified in Monument record. Stored by Primary reference number (PRN).
Ground photographs	Hard copy slides; Hard copy film negatives; Hard copy prints.	In the office.	Usually identified in Monument record. Stored by Primary Reference Number (PRN).
Local Archaeological Journals	Hard copy library.	In the office.	Small library of <i>Transactions of Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society</i> (post 1965); <i>West Midlands Archaeology</i> (complete) and assorted other journal runs (incomplete).
Historic Environment library – Small library of local interest, and wider interest publications	Hard copy library.	In the office.	Catalogue held, so can be searched for relevant material.
Other material	Hard copy library. Assorted GIS datasets.	In the office.	Some material has been catalogued, but also includes a backlog of material, for instance, related to the Industrial and Mining Heritage of the County. We will assist in assessing this material if relevant to your search.

The subject coverage of the record corresponds to the recommendations outlined in: English Heritage/Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (2002) Historic Environment Records:

³ <https://doi.org/10.5284/1032953>

⁴ <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/greylit/>

Benchmarks for Good Practice (v1.1), 2.1b, p6 and Department of Culture Media and Sport (2008) Historic Environment Records (HERs): Draft guidance for local authorities in England, 24, p9. These state (respectively) that: **“Coverage should aim to be inclusive of subject and period for all archaeology and aspects of the historic environment”** and that **“There should be no temporal limits on the information recorded in an HER: it should include data relating to all periods, from the earliest human activity to the present day”**.

It should be noted, however, that there is a tremendous disparity in the volume of evidence across the range of prehistoric and historic periods with which the record deals. Consequently this has often necessitated a variety of approaches to recording and a correspondingly varying level in the detail made available within the record. Similarly it should be remembered that **an HER can never be a definitive record**, and the scope of the information that it contains will vary according to the area covered, the extent of the archaeological research undertaken, and the character of the local historic environment (Institute for Archaeologists, 2012, Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Advice by Historic Environment Services, 6.4, p7).

Designated assets information

The table below summarises information held on designated assets by the Historic Environment Record.

Designation Type	Information held
Conservation Areas	Database entries providing outline information; GIS boundary data (maps can be viewed at https://shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/conservation-areas/) ; Conservation Area appraisals (many held digitally).
Listed Buildings	Information accessioned into the HER and referenced in appropriate Monument records. Please note: authoritative dataset held by Historic England, available via the NHLE⁵ and for download⁶.
Scheduled Monuments	Information accessioned into the HER and referenced in appropriate Monument records. Please note: authoritative dataset held by Historic England, available via the NHLE and for download.
Registered Battlefields	Information accessioned into the HER and referenced in appropriate Monument records. Please note: authoritative dataset held by Historic England, available via the NHLE and for download.
Register of Historic Parks and Gardens	Information accessioned into the HER and referenced in appropriate Monument records. Please note: authoritative dataset held by Historic England, available via the NHLE and for download.
World Heritage Sites	Information accessioned into the HER and referenced in appropriate Monument records. Please note: authoritative dataset held by Historic England, available via the NHLE and for download.

Accessing the HER

You can access the HER in person or remotely. Contact us using the details below:

<p>Shropshire Council Historic Environment Record Email: her@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 25 4619 Shropshire HER Officer, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND</p>

For full details, please refer to our [Data Access and Charging Policy](#).

Reporting information to the HER

As a constantly developing resource, the HER welcomes contributions on historic buildings and monuments of archaeological interest, as well as research projects on aspects of the county’s historic environment.

Please contact us in the first instance to discuss appropriate formats for deposition. Although we have no standard HER deposition form, we can advise on data format, and key information that the HER officer might require to create records of an appropriate standard.

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

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/historic-environment-record/>

⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

⁶ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/>

Appendix 1: Other key data sources for Historic Environment information in Shropshire

Shropshire Archives: Formerly known as Shropshire Record Office and Shropshire Records and Resources Centre, Shropshire Archives are based in Castle Gates, Shrewsbury SY1 2AQ. Their website contains extensive advice and guidance to the records they hold, including an online catalogue. It also details their opening times. Key collections they hold, which might be relevant to topics of local archaeological and historical research, include *cartographic material* and *photographic material* as well as an extensive library of local studies publications. <https://www.shropshirearchives.org.uk/>

Many of the historical documents referred to in the HER are held at Shropshire Archives.

Shropshire Museums Service: Shropshire Council runs five museum sites, as well as Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. They are the only repository for archaeology archives within Shropshire⁷ as well as curating nearly 120,000 archaeological objects covering prehistory to the present day, as well as archive and photographic, geological and social history collections, amongst others. See <https://shropshire.gov.uk/museums> for further information.

Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust: IGMT's Research Library based at The Long Warehouse, Coalbrookdale include extensive archive material related to the industrial heritage of the Ironbridge Gorge. See <https://www.ironbridge.org.uk/learning/museum-collections/> for further information.

Portable Antiquities Scheme: The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a voluntary recording scheme, recording many thousands of archaeological objects found by the public each year. The scheme website makes available detail of many thousands of finds recorded for the county at <https://finds.org.uk/> and local information can be found here: <https://finds.org.uk/counties/shropshire/>

Appendix 2: Understanding a HER monument record

Each HER monument record is compiled from a range of sources; whether you are looking at a record online, or as a database extract, the following information will be included:

HER Number (PRN): A five digit reference number, to be quoted in all correspondence. It is how we organise all our digital and paper resources.

Protected status: Linked designated assets will be identified in the record. For Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens, this will include a Grade. All designated assets will be identified with their NHLE reference number.

Monument Type: A standard monument type and date range. Recorded in line with the Historic England Thesaurus of Monument Types⁸, to allow thematic and cross-boundary searching.

Civil Parish and **National Grid Reference** information.

Related interventions/events: A record of associated episodes of investigation of the site, ranging from desk-based analysis, to excavation.

Description: Text in the description is separated into sections/paragraphs indicating where certain pieces of information have been extracted/summarised from. These are linked to the list of sources below with numbers in brackets.

Sources: A bibliography of all sources used in the compilation of the record, together with page references where relevant. Where particular pieces of text are summarised in the description, the number of the source can be used to identify the link.

Please note, the vast majority of these sources are held in the HER – please contact us to consult the original.

⁷ See their Collection Policy at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/7127/collections-policy-2017-2020.pdf>

⁸ http://thesaurus.historicengland.org.uk/thesaurus.asp?thes_no=1&thes_name=FISH%20Thesaurus%20of%20Monument%20Types