



Newsletter

March 2023

Registered charity 1171756

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Welcome to Damian Etheraads

We are delighted to welcome Damian Etheraads to Herefordshire. Damian took up his role as the Museum & Art Gallery lead for Herefordshire Council in January 2023. He has had a very busy first two months ensuring key deadlines for the refurbishment of the Museum & Art Gallery have been met. By the end of February both the bid for £5 million funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the formal Planning Application had been submitted (more details below).

At the end of February HMSSG hosted a welcome reception for Damian to introduce him to some of the many community organisations who have supported the museum service and the case for substantial redevelopment. Representatives of more than twenty-five community groups from the education and cultural sectors enjoyed the opportunity to meet Damian and demonstrate their continued enthusiasm to be involved. The event allowed everyone to celebrate progress made to date and think about the opportunities for collaboration during the next phases of the project leading up to the re-opening in 2025.

Prior to moving to Herefordshire Damian was the Strategic Lead for culture at Hastings Borough Council and manager of Hastings Museum & Art Gallery. Previously he was a Senior Collections and Learning Curator with Colchester and Ipswich Museums and was Curator at the Redoubt Fortress for Heritage Eastbourne. Damian has also worked with a range of museums and heritage sites as a freelancer and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. HMSSG look forward to working with Damian over the coming years.



Guests enjoying the welcome reception for Damian Etheraads (front left of picture) in the Woolhope Room, 28 February 2023.

Redevelopment of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery

The ambitious redevelopment project for the transformation of Hereford Museum and Art Gallery has reached the end of the design phase. This marks a significant milestone. A bid for £5 million was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund on 23 February with a decision expected in June. This is the final tranche of the £18.5 million budget for the project. The remainder of the funding has been secured from the Stronger Towns Fund and Herefordshire Council.

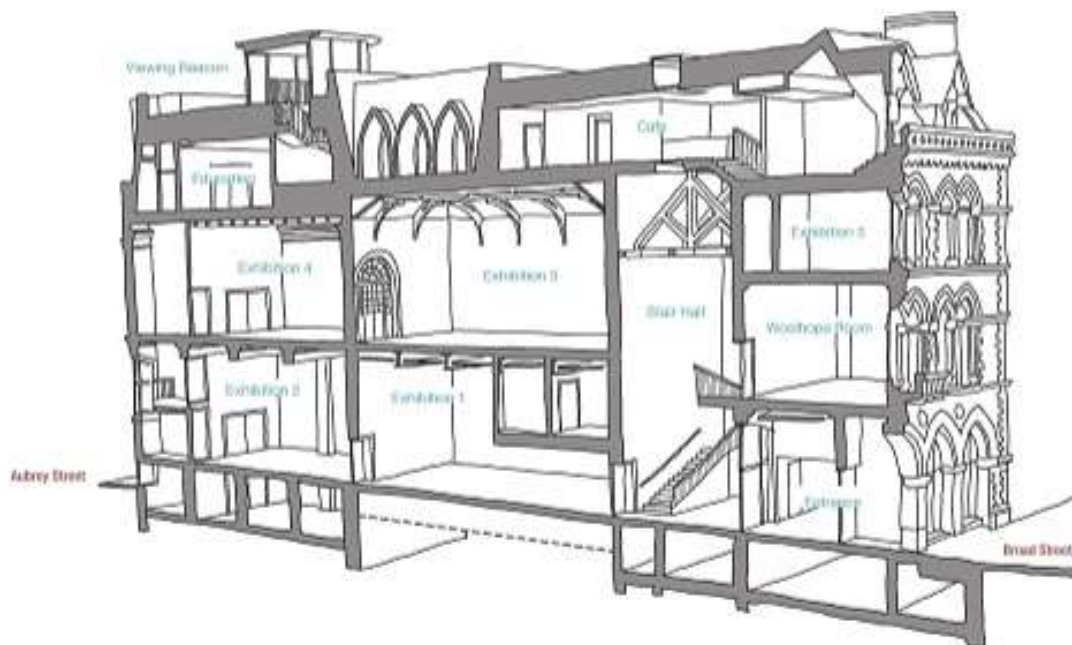
The new building will deliver a substantial increase in exhibition space with three large and three smaller permanent galleries, spaces for temporary exhibitions and special collections, education and events rooms, café and shop. The historic Woolhope Room will be refurbished to ensure it is fully accessible and can function as the Club's research

library as well as provide a space for talks and other suitable events. Building requirements mean that all areas of the building will be fully accessible for the first time.

The development of the plans has been informed by community workshops held in the period October-January. The detailed development of the gallery layout will take place from summer 2024. The new galleries will provide a significant increase to the exhibition space available for display of and engagement with the county's collections. More of the county's treasures, including the Herefordshire Hoard, will be on permanent display but the majority of the collections will continue to be securely housed in the Museum Resource and Learning Centre. Improved access to the collections largely depends on increased revenue funding for specialist staff to develop exhibits and educational and engagement activities.

A robust business model is therefore key to ensuring the museum service grows and thrives. Income from the café, shop, renting spaces and some charged-for events will be an integral part of this model. However, the Council have given assurance that entrance to the permanent exhibition galleries will continue to be free. In line with most other public galleries charges for temporary exhibitions may be made. The opening hours will be extended to include full opening at weekends and two evenings a week in order to attract increased numbers of visitors from Herefordshire and beyond.

The Broad Street building is expected to close in May 2023 with construction starting on site in November. The new museum and art gallery is will reopen in Summer 2025.



Cross section through the building, showing the profile of new facilities on the roof top - café, education and events space and viewing beacon. The foyer will include a shop.



The roof will provide an open area which can be used for functions or exhibitions and provide an opportunity for views across the city and countryside.

There will also be flexible events space which can be arranged to suit a variety of activities and functions.

Artist's impression of viewing beacon.

Planning Application Museum and Art Gallery – deadline for comments 23 March 2023

Details of the planning application can be found on the Herefordshire Council portal under **Application number P230385**. Comments can be made through the planning portal until Thursday 23rd March 2023.

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/.../planning_application_search

Hereford City Library

Hereford Library will move out of the Broad Street building in Spring 2023. Its new permanent home will be in Maylord Orchard, opening Spring 2024. The planning application was approved on 13 March. The library will operate from temporary premises between Spring 2023 and Spring 2024- possibly from the Museum Resource and Learning Centre in Friars Street.



Artist's impression of the new children's library in Maylord.

King Offa Penny donated to Herefordshire Museum Service

A rare silver penny dating back to the reign of King Offa, the famous eighth century ruler of Mercia, has been donated to Herefordshire Museum Service by its owner, Dr Jerry Davis. The 'King Offa' penny was found in February 2022 in a field in Marden by a metal detectorist who ensured it was correctly recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme, as all archaeological finds in England and Wales should be. Dr Davis purchased the coin at auction and then offered it to the museum at a minimal cost. Helped by public donations received through HMSSG the museum service seized the chance to purchase it.

Judy Stevenson says 'We are delighted to acquire the penny, which was minted in Canterbury by coin-maker Babba between the years 783-792. Considering its age, it's in very good condition. Its association with King Offa makes it of huge interest to Herefordshire, given his historical significance in the county'.



The Marden and Sutton area was the location of 'Offa's palace', the royal estate that continued to exist for centuries after the time of the kings Offa and Ceolwulf II, whose head appears on other coins that form part of the Herefordshire Hoard. It's the same area where Offa is said to have murdered King Ethelbert of East Anglia and where Ethelbert's decapitated body was laid in Marden Church before being transported to Hereford in 794. A shrine to St Ethelbert remains in place in Hereford Cathedral.

The coin is on display in the Museum and Art gallery in Broad Street.

Herefordshire Hoard update – the exploration continues

As you will all know by now, we brought the Hoard Home to Herefordshire, 'we' being national grant bodies, individual public donors, local trusts and clubs who combined to meet the target to acquire the treasures for the people of Herefordshire and wider area who've shown great support. Any donations since late 2022 specifically for the Hoard are being used to help fund the research, conservation, upkeep and display of the artefacts. On 7th December the Council held a celebratory event to thank the larger bodies and the trusts who made up the bulk of the funding total, for many of whom it was their first chance to see the artefacts close up. I've not yet had a comment from anyone disappointed!

Much has happened since late last summer and we hope you've been able to visit and see the artefacts in the MRLC in Friar Street on one of the open days or attended one of the many talks and events around the county. Further opportunities to see the original objects, as well as the replicas and hear updates to the story, are detailed below.

DROP IN EVENTS - NO NEED TO BOOK IN ADVANCE

Thursday 23 March 10-1

MRLC

Wednesday 12 April 10-3

MRLC Family activities day, with dressing up, coin stamping etc.

The museum team continues to work on planning how the Hoard will be made available for the public to see and enjoy during the period of the redevelopment of the Museum and Gallery in Broad Street. Ultimately the treasure will relocate along with all the other collections to the improved Museum and Art Gallery, opening in mid-2025. All of us are very keen to keep the Hoard treasures and the story alive for the public prior to them being housed in their long term home.

Further details and links to the planning applications and drawings for the redevelopment are elsewhere in this newsletter. Do please give your feedback on the plans by 23rd March.

Schools are very keen to see and hear more about the Hoard and its context as part of their history studies and feedback from the initial workshops has been very positive. Some successful grant applications have been made to fund these events so the team are now busy preparing these.

These are the headlines to date. If you have any queries please contact me on dzn20@aol.com

Denise North

Black and White House Museum, High Town



Tuesday - Saturday 10am - 4pm
 Sunday 12 noon - 3pm
 Bank holidays 10am - 4pm

**Open Good Friday 7 April and
 Easter Monday 10 April**



**Experience life in the
 17th century at our
 magnificent Jacobean
 house in the heart of
 beautiful Hereford**

We've got some great hands
 on Easter activities for all
 the family, including a special
 children's trail.

We're open on **Good Friday**
 and **Easter Monday**, so
 come and join the fun.

**High Town, Hereford,
 HRI 2AA**

Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 4pm
 Sunday 12pm - 3pm

Children free

Hereford Museum Gallery, Broad Street

Don't miss your chance to spend time in this well-loved permanent exhibition prior to the planned refurbishment. See the King Offa coin!

Open Tuesday - Friday 10-4pm
 Saturday 10 -12.30
 Closed Good Friday

Meet the HMSSG Committee



From the left:

Denise North
Christy Bolderson
Jacki Addis
Jane Adams
Ian Lewis
Sue Edwards
Chris Bucknell

Membership

Please consider joining HMSSG. Membership is £10 individual and £15 joint. See our website, pick up a membership leaflet at one of the museum venues or email membership@herefordmuseumsupport.org.uk.

Help to run HMSSG

HMSSG needs more people to help with administration, newsletter, events and social media. We can use your skills! Most tasks can be done from home at a time to suit you. Interested? Please contact us at

herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk

Thank you from the HMSSG team

