



**SW**  
SOUTH WEST  
HERITAGE TRUST

**BUILDING  
ON SUCCESS**



2017 - 2022

# WHO WE ARE

**We've been on an exciting journey at the South West Heritage Trust since our creation in 2014.**

We're now a leading heritage organisation in the South West and work with many local and national partners.

We've got six main sites and provide a wide range of heritage experiences for people of all ages and backgrounds. Our aim is to celebrate and protect our rich heritage, helping everyone to enjoy it now and in the future.

The South West Heritage Trust is an independent charity supported by Somerset and Devon County Councils and by other generous funders. We are also very grateful to our wonderful volunteers, Friends and Supporters.



**THE TRUST IN NUMBERS** – the First **3** Years

# WHAT WE DO

## MUSEUMS

We run the widely-praised Museum of Somerset in Taunton, Somerset Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury, and the Brick and Tile Museum in Bridgwater. At these sites you can begin to discover the remarkable story of Somerset and the South West. We care for over 3 million museum objects, from outstanding geological, Iron Age and Roman collections, to textiles and fine art.

## ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES

We provide access to over 10 million archives dating from the 8th century to the present day. They are cared for at our centres in Taunton, Exeter and Barnstaple. More than 350,000 printed reference works about Somerset and Devon are also available in the Local Studies collections. These immensely rich resources are fundamental for anyone wanting to find out about the history of the South West. They are increasingly available on-line.

## HERITAGE LEARNING

We provide many opportunities for people of all ages to discover the heritage of Somerset and Devon through events, workshops, talks and sessions for schools. Authentic heritage objects are loaned to schools, and every year pupils can get close to their heritage through special projects using some of the amazing items in our collections.

## HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT & ESTATES

We give support to people, local authorities and partners through our planning-related advice on Somerset's archaeology and built heritage. We also care for over 400 acres of historic landscapes including the much-loved Cothelstone Hill and Deer Leap in the Mendip Hills. Our Historic Environment Record is an amazing source of on-line heritage information.



# WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED

## SOME EXAMPLES...

### DISCOVERY

A community archaeology project found evidence of a 5th-century monastery at Beckery, near Glastonbury. It's one of the earliest monastic sites in Britain.

### ENTERPRISE

Working with EDF Energy near the site of the new Hinkley C power station we provided archaeological monitoring as well as outreach to local communities. The remains of a Roman villa and a Dark Age cemetery were discovered.







## SOME EXAMPLES...

### LEARNING

Primary school pupils from across Somerset have enjoyed workshops at the Museum of Somerset. Each workshop is closely linked to the National Curriculum and really brings learning to life.

### EVERYONE

Our collections help to promote well-being. Reminiscence sessions have enabled older people to touch and handle real objects and to use their senses to stimulate memory.

### INNOVATION

The Museum of Somerset's spotlight loans have brought nationally significant objects to the county. In 2017 an extraordinary portrait of Henry VII was lent by the National Portrait Gallery.

### RESILIENCE

The North Devon Record Office now has a bright future. A sustainable service has been created thanks to partnership funding from local councils and community supporters.

## SOME EXAMPLES...

### CREATIVITY

In a project developed by us eight artists have been inspired by unique collections in Devon and Somerset's community museums. Working with local groups they have created wonderful art in a range of craft media.

### DEVELOPMENT

The Trust has been at the centre of a partnership to recreate Weston-super-Mare's much-loved museum for 21st-century visitors.







## SOME EXAMPLES...

### COLLECTIONS

Remarkable photographs of post-war Somerset were rescued as part of a major digitisation project. Over 60,000 fragile images from the Kenyon collection have been made accessible for the first time.

### COLLABORATION

Volunteers from across Devon have worked with us to discover stories about the county's experience of the First World War. Through micro-projects, arts programmes, research and events the volunteers have been bringing Devon's wartime history vividly to life.

# WHAT COMES NEXT?

We are committed to providing excellent and varied experiences, to looking after collections and enabling people and communities to enjoy their heritage.

We aim to be:



# Enterprising...

..We will use our sites, collections and resources in new ways, working with communities, businesses, charities and public sector partners on innovative projects. Use of new technology will be at the heart of what we do, through initiatives including digital preservation for the long-term care of digital archives.



# Resilient...

...By providing strong and responsible leadership we will champion heritage in Somerset and Devon, contributing to the prosperity of the region. We will seek new sources of funding and use digital means to develop and improve our services. We will stand up for the heritage of Somerset and Devon.

# Collaborative...

...We will work in partnership with many stakeholders to expand access to heritage through new exhibitions and by bringing collections to communities. We want to work with cultural partners locally, regionally and nationally to ensure that heritage and the arts make their full contribution to well-being, prosperity and community identity.





## Inclusive...

... We will reach more people through temporary and touring exhibitions, pop-up events, open days and outreach. We will work with them to understand what they want and to help them engage with a wide range of heritage stories and experiences. We will communicate in clear and accessible ways.

## Inspiring...

...We will care for, record and interpret our collections so that they are available to inspire people. Through the passion and expertise of our staff and volunteers we will tell heritage stories in ways that are challenging, engaging and enriching. We will strengthen and extend our work with school-age children and families to capture their imaginations and provide unforgettable experiences.



**THEN, NOW  
AND FOREVER**





## CONTACT US

Head office:  
Somerset Heritage Centre  
Brunel Way  
Norton Fitzwarren  
Taunton  
TA2 6SF

**01823 27805**

[info@swheritage.org.uk](mailto:info@swheritage.org.uk)

[swheritage.org.uk](http://swheritage.org.uk)

See our website  
to find out more  
about volunteering for  
the Trust or becoming  
a Trust Supporter.

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