



Joint Archives Board

Date: Wednesday, 5 November 2025
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Meeting Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 2)

Laura Beddow, Lesley Dedman, Scott Florek, Ryan Hope, Marion Le Poidevin and Andy Martin

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services Meeting Contact 01305 224710 - joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	
If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.	
3. MINUTES	5 - 6

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 05 February 2025.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below.**

Further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to Joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on Friday 31 October 2025.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- A question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- When submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- Questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- All questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to Joshua.kennedy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 08:30am on Friday 31 October 2025.

[Constitution - Dorset Council](#) – Procedure Rule 13.

6. JOINT ARCHIVES SERVICE BUDGET MONITORING AND BUDGET SETTING 2026/27 7 - 16

To consider a report from the Service Manager for Archives and Records.

7. JOINT ARCHIVES SERVICE FEES AND CHARGES 2026/27 17 - 28

To consider a report from the Service Manager for Archives and Records.

8. JOINT ARCHIVES SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2021-26) MONITORING REPORT 29 - 64

To consider a report from the Service Manager for Archives and Records.

9. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

10. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph x of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

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JOINT ARCHIVES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2025

Present remotely: Cllrs Laura Beddow, Lesley Dedman, Scott Florek, Ryan Hope, Marion Le Poidevin and Andy Martin

Also present remotely: Christine Fowler (Chair, Dorset Archives Trust)

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Hannah Brown (Service Manager (Finance)), Lisa Cotton (Corporate Director for Customer and Cultural Services), Sam Johnston (Service Manager for Archives and Records), Joshua Kennedy (Democratic Services Officer) and Matti Raudsepp (Corporate Director Customer and Business Delivery, BCP Council)

53. Apologies

No apologies for absence were received.

54. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

55. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 13 November 2024 were confirmed.

56. Public Participation

There were no public questions.

57. Questions from Councillors

There were no questions from councillors.

58. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

59. Budget and Service Update Report

The Service Manager for Archives and Records presented the budget and service update report, which recommended an uplift of approximately 3% for the budget from each council.

The board were also informed of general service updates that had occurred since the last meeting. There was progress being made with the Capital Project, with the appointment of a new Principal Archivist and it was hoped that full application would be put forward later this year. The closure period in December had allowed the team to carry out necessary work reorganising collections. Details of the different projects that the Joint Archive Service (JAS) were currently undertaking were also provided.

Members were in agreement in noting the positive updates about the work being carried out by the JAS and commended the service on the modest budgetary uplift requested.

Proposed by Cllr Beddow and seconded by Cllr Martin.

Decision: That the JAS's 2025/26 draft budget for adoption by both funding councils be approved.

60. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 2.17 pm

Chairman

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Joint Archives Board

5 November 2025

Joint Archives Service Budget Monitoring and Budget Setting 2026/27

For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Cllr Andy Martin, Customer, Communications and Culture, BCP Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report author and job title: Sam Johnston, Service Manager for Archives and Records

Hannah Brown, Service Manager (Finance)

Email: sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk hannah.brown@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Local Government Acts 1962 & 1972; Public Records Act 1958; Freedom of Information Act 2000; Environmental Information Regulations 2004; Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018.

Report status: Public

Executive summary (maximum of 500 words) The Joint Archives Service (JAS) has managed its budget prudently during the financial year 2025/26 after making an in-year reduction in spending as agreed at the February 2024 meeting of the Board. The principal costs of providing the service are those relating to maintaining the Dorset History Centre (DHC) building (business rates, energy, service contracts) and salaries. In order to operate the JAS at its current staffing level and to allow it to deliver the hoped-for major capital project an uplift of c. 5% from each council would be required. This is detailed below. The 2026/27 budget proposal is provided in Section 5.

Recommendations: The recommendations are that the Joint Archives Board:

1. Request the budget uplift from each council as detailed in paragraph 5.5 of the report noting the budgetary pressures on the service and the steps it has taken to manage its outgoings.
2. Agree to the JAS deploying the service reserve to match fund the Development Phase of the capital project, assuming the National Lottery Heritage Fund application is successful in March 2026.

Reason for Recommendation: Effective oversight of Joint Archives Service budget via the Joint Archives Board is required under the terms of the *Inter-Authority*

Agreement on Archives, 2022. The recommendation will be placed before the executives of both funding councils.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the last business meeting of the Joint Archives Board (5 February 2025), the Board agreed an uplift of approximately 3% for the financial year 2025/26. Over the past eleven years, eight budgets have been held at cash standstill. The current JAS budget stands at **£634,874**.
- 1.2 To maintain the service at its current capacity, an uplift of just under 5% is required. However, when adjusted for inflation using the Retail Prices Index (RPI), the cost of delivering the same service in 2025/26 would equate to **£948,655** — had annual inflationary uplifts been applied consistently over the past 11 years.
- 1.3 This means the service is operating with a budget that is approximately 33% lower in real terms, demonstrating a significant erosion of funding over time despite the service cost remaining broadly unchanged.
- 1.4 The budget apportionments for the two councils 2025/26 and 2026/27 are as detailed below:

Joint Archives Service – budget apportionment					
	Population (ONS estimates 2024)	Percentage split 2026/27	Agreed Contribution 2025/26	Proposed increase 2026/27	Proposed contribution 2026/27
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council	407,194	51.11	£325,054	£15,907	£340,961
Dorset Council	389,557	48.89%	£309,820	£16,331	£326,152
Total	796,751	100%	£634,874	£32,238	£667,113

2. Value for Money and Service Capacity

- 2.1 It is difficult to say with precision where the JAS currently stands in terms of value for money relative to other archive services. Many variables operate in terms of above and below the line costs and a reliable set of comparable and reliable statistics does not exist. However, in previous years, the service has consistently demonstrated value for money across the South-West and Hampshire in terms of net expenditure per 1000 population. A full audit of the service's activities and costs undertaken in 2015 by South-West Audit

Partnership acknowledged that the service had worked hard to examine and reduce every area of spend on the one hand and to increase income generation wherever possible on the other (e.g. room hire, car parking, leasing space, online content, added value public services).

- 2.2 The JAS has worked hard to reduce its costs and has managed through a combination of electricity generation via solar PV panels and a shift to passive strongroom management to reduce its overall energy costs by around 65%. Additional solar arrays were fitted to the roof of DHC in 2022 funded through government renewable energy grants. The 15-year contract with Ancestry to provide digitised material on a pay-per-view basis has expired and a new contract is currently being negotiated. It is anticipated that this will be on more preferential terms to the service than the last one.
- 2.3 The JAS's staff establishment stands at 12.37 full time equivalent posts. The National Archives' July 2024 Accreditation feedback noted that "*There are recognised challenges, with no slack in the staffing*". The JAS has been operating at a relatively low staffing capacity for some years but has been able to appoint staff to externally funded project posts as well as generate large quantities of volunteer capacity.
- 2.4 The service is currently employing **2.2 fte project** staff whose work is fully externally funded in one case until July 2026 and the other March 2027. A further **£78,000** in external funding has been secured to work on two Dorset estate collections. This funding has been increased in size from the original donation as it benefitted from Gift Aid made possible by the funds passing through [Dorset Archives Trust](#). Since 2010, the Joint Archives Service has acquired nearly **£1.040 million** in external grant aid to fund cataloguing, conservation and public engagement projects. Other funding applications are under consideration.
- 2.5 In addition to its revenue contribution, Dorset Council has to date met all capital and improvement costs associated with the DHC. Since 2010 this has amounted to more than **£1.8 million** with a significant recent investment in replacement soffits, fascias, guttering and repository roof. In recent years, the service has received £200,000 investment to create a largely passive repository preservation environment. The JAS benefits from the leasing of space within the DHC building to two other services. This currently contributes £42,000 per annum to the archive service budget. The depreciation cost on the value of the DHC building is in excess of £100,000 per year.
- 2.6 The JAS seeks to generate as much income as possible from providing 'added value' services to the public. Pricing for these services has been raised in line with inflation and/or Dorset Council expectations (see accompanying report). However, there is a limit to how much these services can yield.
- 2.7 As noted above, the two principal costs of providing the JAS are property and salary-related. Controllable budgets are minimal – e.g. the training budget for

the whole service for the year is £400. It is therefore the case that any reduction in the core budget would necessarily have to result in a review of staffing.

3. Current year financial position

- 3.1 The current forecast for 2025/26 is for the JAS to have an underspend of circa £10k at year end. Any underspend will be added to the JAS reserve unless it is required by property to cover any overspends on utilities etc. The reasons for the underspend are detailed below.
- 3.2 The JAS has deleted 0.2 FTE capacity within the post of Community Engagement Officer due to the postholder requesting to reduce their hours. This has resulted in a £9,000 saving which has reduced the budget pressure in 2026/27.
- 3.3 Premises budgets are now managed via Assets and Regeneration and are not monitored or controlled by the JAS itself. In the event of an overspend a re-charge would be made to the JAS budget.
- 3.4 Any underspend or overspend at year will be added to, or deducted from, the reserve, as appropriate.

4. Budget Strategies of the Two Funding Councils

4.1 Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council:

BCP Council continues to face challenging financial circumstances and is currently planning the actions necessary to meet its 2025/26 budget gap, in order to set a balanced budget. A range of savings and efficiencies are being identified to support this process, which will be confirmed in due course in line with normal budget setting timescales.

4.2 Dorset Council: financial forecast for current year

At the end of July, the Council is forecasting a £7.705 million overspend, representing 1.8% of the total budget requirement of £417.2 million. This pressure - largely due to the rising cost of adults' and particularly children's social care placements and packages (£6.4m) and a delay in savings from the Our Future Council (OFC) transformation programme (£5m), partially offset by £3.5m in contingency releases.

5. Budget 2026/27

- 5.1 The draft budget for 2026/27 has been compiled assuming a pay award of 3.2%; general inflation 3.4% and utilities inflation of 7%. The draft budget is outlined below:

	Archives	Original Budget 2025/26	Draft Budget 2026/27	Movement	Notes
100001	Internal Charges (Expenditure)	£62,858	£50,168	£12,690	Decrease in Internal Charges including Legal Services
100011	Pay Related Costs	£486,110	£500,665	(£14,555)	Increase in Pay Costs
100012	Premises Related Costs	£172,906	£192,300	(£19,394)	Utility & Building Cost Increases
100013	Transport Related Costs	£1,194	£2,000	(£806)	Increase in Transport Costs
100014	Supplies and Services	£26,708	£24,600	£2,108	Reduction in Supplies & Services
100017	Third Party (Contracted Out) Payments	£0	£100	(£100)	Recycling Costs
100022	Reimbursements and Contributions	(£323,928)	(£339,666)	£15,738	Increase in both BCP and DC Contributions
100023	Fees and Charges	(£59,182)	(£42,700)	(£16,482)	Realistic Income Target - lowered
100024	Internal Charges (Income)	(£55,720)	(£58,020)	£2,300	Increase in Internal Income
	Total Net Budget	£310,946	£329,447	(£18,501)	

- 5.2 In order to maintain the service at its current capacity and avoid a potential staffing review, the two councils would be required to support an uplift of c.5%. The proposal to the Joint Archives Board (JAB) outlined below would represent an increase in contribution for each council:

BCP Council	£15,907
Dorset Council	£16,331

- 5.3 It is possible for the service to reduce the uplift request on the two councils. This is through the £9,000 staff budget saving referenced in 3.2 but also through anticipated increased income from the JAS's contract with Ancestry.co.uk which expired earlier in 2025. Due to uncertainties surrounding the use of content it has not been possible to sign a new agreement although this situation has very recently changed. The likelihood is that the income level from Ancestry will rise by c. £20,000 per annum so reducing the uplift request on both councils.

- 5.4 An additional benefit is that Ancestry is offering free Library edition subscriptions to both Dorset and BCP Library Services. This amounts to a c. £20,000 saving on the current cost (£10,000 per library service).

- 5.5 Following discussion between the two councils, they have agreed to fund the salary-related element of the uplift requirement – this being:

Dorset Council	£7,116
BCP Council	£7,439

- 5.6 It is the above sums (respectively) that the Board is asked to recommend approval of to both executives.

6. Reserves

- 6.1 The reserve movements for the prior year and current balances are shown in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 The general reserve stands at £56k (previously £59k). An underspend at closedown was transferred to the reserve from Archives General totalling £6.8k increasing the reserve to £66k, but an overspend on the Property side of £9.9k had to be removed from the reserve reducing it to £56k. Despite the return of funds to both partner councils as previously agreed, the reserve is higher than the £50k that both councils previously agreed on.
- 6.2 The reserve is held by DC but is jointly owned by both Dorset Council and BCP Council, with ownership being in accordance with the population percentages set out earlier. The JAB previously agreed to retain £50,000 within its reserve with any additional funds being apportioned and returned to the two funding councils.
- 6.3 It is requested of the Board that the service reserve be made accessible to match fund the Development Stage of the capital project assuming the NLHF approve the application decision in March 2026. A total of £60,000 match funding is required for this stage of the project, some of which the JAS can raise itself.
- 6.5 The Donations reserve and Projects are ringfenced for specific purposes.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The JAS works to provide excellent value for money, generates significant income and delivers high quality work and projects. Along with all other council services, the JAS faces an uncertain budgetary future.
- 7.2 A definitive decision on the service's budget position for 2026/27 is required. If the application to NLHF is successful then the £5 million capital project will dominate the forthcoming years and staff will be fully committed to delivering it. There are clear opportunities to improve the JAS and DHC through external funding but these are contingent upon having a stable core of professional staff to manage and lead the service. The JAS will continue to strive to provide excellent value for money combined with high quality service for the funding councils, the public and the collections it manages.

Appendix 1

Joint Archives Service Reserves at 31 March 2025

	General	Repairs & Maintenance	Donations	Projects	Total
Balance brought forward 31/03/2024					
Uncommitted	£59,259				£59,259
Committed			£43,498	£37,278	£80,776
Movement in Year					
Revenue Surplus 2024/25	£6,869		£141		
Revenue Deficits 2024/25	-£9,978			-£15,652	
Donations Received					
Reserve Balance	£56,150	£0	£43,639	£21,626	£121,414
Less Commitments					
Donations (ring-fenced)			-£43,639		
Projects				-£21,626	
Repairs & Maintenance					
Capital Projects					
Uncommitted Reserves	£56,150	£0	£0	£0	£56,150

1. Alternative options considered

There is no alternative model for delivering archive services currently under consideration.

2. Legal considerations

None

3. Financial implications

All activities described in this report are covered by either the JAS revenue budget, reserve or an externally-sourced grant.

4. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

DHC has significantly improved its energy performance through a major project to reduce consumption whilst ensuring the maintenance of high-quality environmental controls. This, combined with the generation of solar energy through PV panels on roof elevations has rendered the building highly energy-efficient.

5. Well-being and health implications

The JAS contributes to wellbeing outcomes for both councils and improving the quality of life for residents of BCP and Dorset Council areas and attracting visitors to the county lie at the heart of its work.

6. 6. Other implications

None

7. 7. Risk implications

HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium (due to pressure on archive accommodation).

8. 8. Equalities

The JAS has completed a full EQIA. Areas for further consideration include working with younger people and with black and ethnic minority groups and religious minorities. Improved digital provision will also assist in providing greater access to collections for people living at some distance from Dorchester.

9. 9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Joint Archives Service reserves at 31 March 2025

10. 10. Background papers

None

11. Report sign-off

This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

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Joint Archives Board

5 November 2025

Joint Archives Service Fees and Charges 2026/27

For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Cllr Andy Martin, Customer, Communications and Culture, BCP Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report author and job title: Sam Johnston, Service Manager for Archives and Records

Email: sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Local Government Acts 1962 & 1972; Public Records Act 1958; Freedom of Information Act 2000; Environmental Information Regulations 2004; Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018.

Report status: Public

Executive summary (maximum of 500 words) The report provides a review of fees and charges with recommendations for changes in the Joint Archives Service's fees and charges to take effect 1 April 2026.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the revised fees and charges (set out in Appendix 1) be recommended to the executive bodies of the two funding councils for implementation from 1 April 2026.

Reason for Recommendation: To sustain the Joint Archives Service's budget and income levels and meet the inflationary income target set as part of the budget building process.

1. Background

- 1.1. The Joint Archives Service's fees and charges were last reviewed at the Joint Archives Board meeting on 13 November 2024 and came into force on 1 April 2025.
- 1.2. It is proposed that the revised fees and charges set out in the Appendix be implemented with effect from 1 April 2026.
- 1.3. At its meeting in May 2006, the Board agreed to give the Service Manager for Archives and Records the discretion to set and vary initial prices and to negotiate discounts as appropriate for new products or services between reviews and that these should be reported and recommended to the Board in the following review of fees and charges. Recent additional or revised charges are included in Appendix 1.

2. Review

- 2.1. As in previous years, it is not proposed to raise all charges where the Service is still in line with the market and comparable organisations. The charges have been compared with some services in the longstanding Benchmarking Group; Surrey History Centre, West Sussex Record Office, and Hampshire Archives Service, as well as comparison with other archive services in the South-West.
- 2.2. Evidence of increased customer resistance encountered by the service to some of the charges and the above market comparisons suggest that these service levels are at the upper end of what the customer base will tolerate, and different approaches to income generation may need to be considered in future.
- 2.3. Income from fees and charges is as follows:
 - 2.3.1. 2024/25: £12331.41 (sales) and £15474.92 (fees and charges) total £27,806.33
 - 2.3.2. April-October 2025: 4,923.74 (sales) and 12,865.10 (fees and charges), total £17,788.84 so far.
- 2.4. Therefore, all charges have been reviewed in an attempt to broadly meet the income target increase of 3.4% in line with Dorset Council guidelines whilst seeking to ensure that public willingness to meet the charges is maintained.
- 2.5. As previously reported the significant changes to the method of delivery of some services in recent years has enabled the service to deliver copying through electronic transfer or email in preference to printing or copying to CD and posting.
- 2.6. The commercial reproduction rates introduced in 2022 are now well embedded in the fee charging structure.

2.7. There will be new rates of charging for video material based on length of the film or recording. This is to off-set the occasional expenses in off-site digitisation of such material.

2.8. Car parking charges at Dorset History Centre are regulated through a Traffic Regulation Order in force since 2018 and are changed in line with the charges levied by Dorset Council. There was no income raised through the car park between April 2024 and May 2025 due to building works. Any income received would be taken by Assets and Regeneration as part of the Effective Property Services arrangement.

3. Conclusion

3.1. This report has set out proposals for various amendments to the Joint Archive Service's schedule of fees and charges. Increases have been proposed only where it is felt that they are realistic, are linked to inflationary pressures and where there have been improvements or changes to the method of delivery and standard of provision.

**Appendix 1: Dorset History Centre Fees and Charges from 1st April
2026/2027**

	2025/26 Price	2026/27 new price (changes in bold)
<u>Photocopies/ Microform print out ordered and supplied during visit</u>		
Photocopies/MF printout (B&W) (A4 or A3)	£1.20	£1.30
Photocopies/MF printout (colour) (A4 or A3)	£2.50	£2.50
Minimum charge for photocopies/MF ordered and supplied by post, includes up to 4 A4 or A3 sheets	£9.00	£9.00
Postage and packaging	From £3.25	From £3.25
<u>Digital copying services - supplied by email/electronic transfer</u>		
TIFF images	£10.00	£10.00
JPEG images	£6.50	£7.00
Additional consecutive pages in bound volumes	£2.00	£2.50
Sound files	From £10.00	£10.00
Video files [below 10 minutes]		£10.00
Video files [between 10 minutes and 30 minutes]		£20.00
Video files [over 30 minutes]		£30.00
Tithe maps and apportionments	£20.00	£20.00
Supply of files on CD	£8.00	£10.00
<u>Public self-service copying</u>		

Photocopying (B&W) (A4 or A3)	£0.50	£0.50
MF printout	£1.00	£1.00
Printout from computers	£1.00	£1.00
Photography permits (day)	£8.00 for half day £14.00 for whole day	£9.00 for half day £15.00 for whole day
Photography permits (week)	£35.00	£40.00
<u>Certification services</u>		
Certification of copies (including searching for specific entries, copies and certification)	£19.00	£20.00
Baptism or burial certificate from a parish register entry*	£36.00	£37.00
<u>Research/consultation and advice services</u>		
Enquiries (30 minute look-up)	£18.00	£18.00
Research service (per hour)	£38.00	£38.00
One-to-one surgery - research topic consultation (per hour)	£33.00	£33.00
Commercial research (inc. consultation/advice) (per hour)	£80.00	£80.00
Magistrates (per hour)	£42.00	£45.00
<u>Conservation services</u>		
Treatment proposal (where items assessed at DHC) (per hour)	£38.00	£40.00

Conservation - collection condition survey and written report (at customers site) (per hour)	£38.00	£40.00
Conservation treatment fee (per hour)	£68.00	£70.00
<u>Community engagement, outreach and education services</u>		
Offsite talk, lecture (standard talks)	£78.00	£78.00
Online talks by DHC staff for other organisation (standard talks)	£65.00	£65.00
Onsite talk/lecture; introductory tours and visits	£68.00 (for groups up to 12 people)	£68.00 (for groups up to 12 people)
Online events (talks/workshops) organised by DHC	£6.00 per person	£6.00 per person
Onsite workshop/training session (oral history or family history)	£130.00 (for groups up to 10 people)	£130.00 (for groups up to 10 people)
Offsite workshop/training session (oral history or family history)	£140.00 (for groups up to 10 people)	£150.00 (for groups up to 10 people)
Full day workshop	£16.00 per person	By negotiation
Outreach taught session at school (incl. copies of documents, transcripts and session plans) (2 hours)	£90.00 (plus travel expenses)	£90.00 (plus travel expenses)
Outreach taught session at DHC (incl. copies of documents, transcripts and session plans, lecture room hire and original records (2 hours)	£90.00	£90.00

<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
Coffee/tea in common room	£2.00	£2.00
<u>Hire of lecture room</u>		
Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm (2 hour booking minimum) (external organisations)	£21.00	£21.00
Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm (2 hour booking minimum) (Dorset Council)	£19.00	£19.00
Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm (2 hour booking minimum) (charity rate)	£15.00	£15.00
Saturday - when DHC is closed	On request	On request
Evenings	On request	On request
Cancellation fee (less than 3 days notice)	£25.00	£25.00
<u>Car parking**</u>		
Monday-Sunday 8am-6pm		
Up to 30 mins	£0.50	£0.70
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.20
Up to 2 hours	£1.50	£1.70
Up to 3 hours	£2.20	£2.40
Up to 4 hours (no return)	£3.50	£3.70
Disabled badge holders maximum stay of 3 hours	Free	Free
<u>Commercial fees and charges</u>		
<i>Publication of DHC material in: Books, periodicals, journals, exhibition catalogues</i>		

One country, single language publication (print run <1000)	£25.00	£30.00
One country, single language publication (print run >1000)	£35.00	£40.00
E-book	£45.00	£45.00
International publication	£55.00	£60.00
Local author/society	£18.00	£18.00
Academic dissertation/ thesis	£15.00	£15.00
<i>Newspapers, magazines</i>		
Local (Dorset)	£32.00	£32.00
National	£55.00	£55.00
International	£105.00	£105.00
<i>Film, TV</i>		
Single image in television programme, national or worldwide	£60.00	£70.00
Broadcast and film rights, national or worldwide	£210.00	£210.00
TV, film or radio company filming/recording on site (to include venue hire, staff time, set-up time for filming etc)	£175.00	£180.00
<i>Lectures, talks, exhibitions (non-DHC)</i>		
Educational/ temporary	£10.00 per image	£15.00 per image
Commercial/ permanent	£55.00 per image	£60.00 per image

<i>Internet use</i>		
Personal blog, including YouTube/other video websites	£15.00 per image	£15.00 per image
Commercial website	£55.00 per image	£60.00 per image

*This fee is set by the Church of England

** Fees subject to Dorset Council prices and may change

1. Alternative options considered

There is no alternative model for delivering archive services currently under consideration.

2. Legal considerations

None

3. Financial implications

None other than those referenced in the report.

4. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

DHC has significantly improved its energy performance through a major project to reduce consumption whilst ensuring the maintenance of high-quality environmental controls. This, combined with the generation of solar energy through PV panels on roof elevations has rendered the building highly energy-efficient.

5. Well-being and health implications

The JAS contributes to wellbeing outcomes for both councils and improving the quality of life for residents of BCP and Dorset Council areas and attracting visitors to the county lie at the heart of its work.

6. 6. Other implications

None

7. 7. Risk implications

HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium (due to pressure on archive accommodation).

8. 8. Equalities

The JAS has completed a full EQIA. Areas for further consideration include working with younger people and with black and ethnic minority groups and religious minorities. Improved digital provision will also assist in providing greater access to collections for people living at some distance from Dorchester.

9. 9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Dorset History Centre Fees and Charges from 1st April
2026/2027

10. 10. **Background papers**

None

11. Report sign-off

This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

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Joint Archives Board

5 November 2025

Joint Archives Service Development Plan (2021-26) Monitoring Report

For Decision

Cabinet Member:

Cllr R Hope, Customer, Culture and Community Engagement

Cllr Andy Martin, Customer, Communications and Culture, BCP Council

Local Councillor(s): All

Senior Leadership Team:

J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report author and job title: Sam Johnston, Service Manager for Archives and Records

Email: sam.johnston@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Statutory Authority: Local Government Acts 1962 & 1972; Public Records Act 1958; Freedom of Information Act 2000; Environmental Information Regulations 2004; Data Protection Act (GDPR) 2018.

Report status: Public

Executive summary (maximum of 500 words)

This report provides an update to both funding councils via the Joint Archives Board of the current and future work of the Joint Archives Service (JAS). The updated Service Development Plan appended to this report carries detailed information on the service's activities and the report will highlight work undertaken against the JAS's key objectives. Since the last report (February 2025), the service has:

- Raised **£36,000** in partnership with Dorset Archives Trust and the William Barnes Society to catalogue the Dorset poet's archives from October 2025;
- Completed work on the **£70,000** project to catalogue the archive of Thomas Hardy
- Completed work on the Yellow Buses archive project
- Made good progress on work on the externally-funded project to catalogue the archives of Wessex Water PLC
- Acquired **£55,000** from a Dorset estate to commence work on cataloguing and conserving their archives.
- Engaged with Bournemouth's Jewish community over the preservation and transfer of their archives to Dorset History Centre (DHC) with financial assistance from the **Rothschild Foundation**
- Developed a major bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) to support a £5 million project to extend and improve DHC and promote public engagement with collections and the wider cultural heritage.

The current service development plan will expire in 2026. The strategic direction of the JAS will be largely determined by the outcome (expected in March 2026) of the application to NLHF. A new service development plan will be created based on the direction of travel adopted by the service subsequent to this decision.

JAS priorities for 2021-26 are:

- Actively acquire archives relating to Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole and to work through all available means to preserve, conserve and promote access to them to optimum effect
- Design and deliver digital preservation services across both authority areas
- Provide efficient, innovative and quality digital and place-based services which deliver rewarding experiences for all JAS customers and value for money for the two funding authorities
- Engage a wide variety of audiences with digital and physical resources and events, recognising barriers to involvement and working actively to dismantle these
- Encourage and sustain on-site and remote volunteering so adding value through delivering targeted programmes of work
- Develop and maintain partnerships with a range of organisations both public and private and to pursue project opportunities which both enhance funding to the JAS and deliver positive outcomes and mutual benefits to all parties
- Efficiently manage and enhance the DHC building including the provision of sufficient long-term archival storage space, so increasing value for money for customers, collections and staff

1. **Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that the Joint Archives Board:

1. Endorses the implementation of the 2021-2026 service plan appended to this report as demonstrating the quality, variety and value for money provided by the Joint Archives Service;
2. Supports the Joint Archives Service's ongoing work to ensure the safe and effective transfer of appropriate physical and digital records from both BCP and Dorset Councils to ensure the preservation of the corporate memory and to deliver council efficiencies;
3. Endorses the Joint Archives Service's application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to facilitate major capital improvements to Dorset History Centre.

2. **Reason for the recommendation(s)**

Effective oversight of the regular service delivery element of the service plan by the Joint Archives Board is required under the terms of the Inter-Authority Agreement on Archives, 2022.

3. The report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Joint Archives Service (JAS) is Accredited by [The National Archives](#) and holds the corporate archives of its funding councils and their predecessor bodies as well as thousands of individual physical and digital collections dating from 965AD which collectively make up the written heritage and memory of Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole. In addition, DHC holds Public Records on behalf of HM Government.
- 1.2 The JAS provides services to the public in three principal ways:
- On-site - public access at Dorset History Centre (DHC);
 - Off-site - learning and community engagement;
 - Online – a large and growing market for web-based resources, particularly given the JAS's relationship with Ancestry.co.uk, its online catalogue and digital engagement work.

2. Context and challenges

- 2.1 The foundation of this Service Development Plan is an externally-led full-service review was undertaken in 2020 and the subsequent [consultancy report](#) published in March 2021. The report was approved by the Joint Archives Advisory Board (JAAB) at its April 2021 meeting and a new five-year (2021-26) service development plan was written. This drew upon some of the key findings of the consultants' report, particularly in relation to the efficient acquisition of corporate records and the growth of digital services. The service plan has also adopted and integrated the key messages of the national strategy for archives developed by The National Archives (TNA) *Archives Unlocked* (2020), namely Trust, Enrichment and Openness.¹
- 2.2 The two most important priorities for the service that emerged from the report are and remain:
- **Capital investment:** the continuing search for an affordable and long-term solution for the future additional collections storage required by the service. Opened in 1991, DHC is now approaching full capacity with c. 1,900 empty box spaces (of a total 56,000) which is less than 4% of the total. This has developed into a revised capital project plan (see update later in report).
 - **Corporate records:** the JAS wishes to deliver on one of its key priorities which is to be the corporate memory of both funding councils. There are significant challenges associated with the transfer of relevant archival material and the service is keen to find ways of ensuring that this happens in both physical and digital formats.

3. Service Structure, capacity and building management

¹ <https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/projects-and-programmes/strategic-vision-for-archives/strategic-priorities/>. This strategy is currently under review by TNA.

- 3.1 The service's core Archives capacity is currently 12.37 fte posts. Since the last report to the Board additional capacity has been added to the service through project funding. This relates to the funding provided by Wessex Water PLC. A Project Archivist and a Collections Assistant are both working on 0.6 fte basis until 31 March 2027. The capacity of the post of Community Engagement Officer has reduced from 0.8 fte to 0.6 fte at the postholder's request. The consequent underspend has been taken as a saving and deleted from the establishment.
- 3.2 A project archivist joined the service in March 2024 on an 18-month fixed-term contract to complete the catalogue of Thomas Hardy's archive. Following a fundraising campaign, this role will be extended by 10 months to undertake the cataloguing of the archive of William Barnes. Both projects are fully externally-funded.
- 3.3 The JAS continues to support two of its staff who (along with a third from the Dorset Council Records Management team) are undertaking the Level 7 (Masters equivalent) Apprenticeship in Archives and Records. All three are progressing well and have now commenced the third year of the three-year programme.
- 3.4 Work on the DHC building (replacement soffits, fascias, guttering and repository roof) was finally completed in August 2025 after a significant overrun. The work represents a major investment (£800,000) in DHC by Dorset Council and should help ensure the integrity of the fabric for many years to come.

4. Public Services

- 4.1 The Public Services team have continued to operate a booking system for customers visiting the searchroom alongside a drop-in system for library, computer or microform users. This is well-established now and has been working well.
- 4.2 In November 2024 a fifth History Centre Assistant to the team to help us manage workloads and to cover the reception desk following a staffing restructure. They have quickly become an important part of the team adapting well to the procedures and processes of DHC and fully embracing the challenges which occur on a day-to-day basis. Beyond the normal business, they have taken responsibility for cataloguing parish magazines and aiding with promotion of DHC events.
- 4.3 The period October 2024-September 2025 saw a total of 1,430 visitors to DHC. Encouragingly, the service produced a total of 14,342 records to customers in the searchroom in this period (an average of 10 records per visitor); a number higher than the 13,714 records produced in the October 2023-September 2024 period (average of just under 9 records per visitor); and the 11,174 records we produced in the year before that (at an average of just over 7 records per visitor). This continues observable longer-term trends which have seen fewer visitors coming into DHC, but those who do visit viewing more material whilst they are with us. In the main this can be attributed to more material being identifiable online via our catalogue as a result of the various large cataloguing projects we have undertaken in the last few years and more digital copies being taken.

- 4.4 Collections catalogued in the last decade continue to be popular with customers, D-BKL (Bankes), NG-HH/CMR (Herrison) and DC-PL (Poole Borough) continue to rank highly amongst those requested by customers. The Thomas Hardy project has seen significantly increased interest in the collection throughout the period, and the launch of the catalogue in early September 2025 has already seen increases in people wishing to access the archive. Other uncatalogued collections such as D-TWA (Sylvia Townsend-Warner), D-BAR (William Barnes) and D-FSI (Earls of Ilchester) continue to be frequently requested, though they can be problematic for staff due to poor listings for these collections.
- 4.5 DHC received a total of 2,590 remote enquiries, received via email, telephone or letter. This figure is slightly lower than the same period for the year before. In the 12-month period we received a total of 226 reprographics orders, drawing in £6,616.00 in the period. The average value of each order is now £29.27. These are all figures which are improved on those reported for October 2023-September 2024. The research service significantly increased in use, seeing 41 instances of research being requested in the last 12 months, a number higher than both the 27 requests reported in the last period, and the 30 of the year before that.
- 4.6 The latter-two points reflect a shift in the approach of our clientele to requesting more material remotely. Consideration is being given as to how we can make further material accessible remotely in different ways, either through making digitised images available through our catalogue, or utilising a visualiser to digitally show records to customers.
- 4.7 Staff time has been used in a number of ways over the last 12 months. Most notable has been the work to repackage and re-list the D-SHA (Sherborne Almshouse) collection, building upon work begun during the November 2024 Collections Fortnight. There has also been work undertaken on D-PTH (Peter Thomas Collection), and on cataloguing a backlog of parish magazines. HCA staff have also been involved in helping with outreach and marketing for various events throughout the year.
- 4.8 The apprentices continue their studies, and have been involved in leading and developing two major outreach events during the year – Rail 200 in July, and Heritage Open Day in September. Both events will aid their personal development and add material to their portfolio of evidence as part of their final assessment in 2026.
- 4.9 DHC blogs are published on average one a week. Highlights of the past 12 months include blogs about DHC's oldest document – the King Edgar Charter; the Dorchester Peace Rally of 1936; a look at some of Dorchester's heritage for World Radio Day; and a look at changing attitudes to gender evidenced in our collections. Newsletter subscribers are now around 9,300, with an open-rate averaging around 41%. The DHC newsletter continues to be published once a month.

5. Museums Advisor for BCP & Dorset Councils²

5.1 Current Projects & Initiatives:

- **A Dorset Museum Development Advisory Group** was established earlier this year to adopt and progress key elements of the work programme previously undertaken by the Dorset Museums Association (DMA), a longstanding coalition of Dorset's 30+ Accredited museums. The work of the Group is focused on shaping future activity plans and providing feedback on strategic priorities and programmes.

Activities for 2025/26 include organisation and delivery of the Dorset Museums Annual Conference during November 2025, coordination of Volunteer of the Year Award scheme, negotiation of group deals for emergency collections cover and representation on the Visit Dorset website and delivery of initiatives relating to effective governance and volunteer management.

- **Organisational Health Checks 2025- 26**
The Organisational Health Check (OHC) is an improvement tool for museums which is delivered with support and input from Museum Development. The programme has been created in partnership with our museum development colleagues across England (MDUK). To date, six Dorset museums have benefitted from this scheme, and over the next four months, the Museums Advisor will work with Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust and Bridport Museum to roll out the programme with these independent museum trusts.
- **Volunteering Fit for the Future Programme**
This is a bespoke programme of support for museums across the South to future proof volunteer involvement at individual museums and ensure appropriate frameworks and processes are in place to enable volunteers to thrive and support the museum to deliver its goals.
Over 2025, Swanage Railway Museum have been supported with an MDSW grant to participate and the next cohort for this scheme is currently being selected, with interest from Bournemouth Natural Science Society, Beaminster Museum and Blandford Town Museum.
- **Hazards in Collections Project**
This is a collaborative MDSW led project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to help museums in the South West identify, make safe, monitor and manage hazardous objects in their collections. To deliver this project we will be working alongside conservation teams at [Wiltshire Conservation and Museum Advisory Service](#) (CMAS), [Royal Albert Memorial Museum](#), [Bristol Museums](#), and [Hampshire Cultural Trust](#). Russell Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, the Tank Museum, Dorset Museum & Art Gallery and Weymouth Museum have all gained places on this competitive programme.

5.2 Targeted Support Projects

² This role is not part of the JAS funding model, but similarly covers both council areas. It is funded by BCP and Dorset Councils along with South-West Museum Development. Museums development and archives are closely linked and mutually supportive.

A number of targeted support projects have been progressed during the past six months including:

- **Keep Military Museum** supported to successfully access £20k VE/VJ grant & £110k NLHF resilience grant
- **Shaftesbury Abbey Museum, Portland Museum & Nothe Fort** all supported to access Dorset Council's Small Capital grant scheme – approx. £30k funding in total
- Advocacy for **Blandford Fashion Museum's** application to Dorset Council Capital Leverage scheme
- Formulation of **Weymouth Museum Trust's** bid to Dorset Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (£300k requested) and advocacy for a CIL contribution from Weymouth Town Council
- **Beaminster Museum, Russell Cotes Art Gallery & Museum** and **Gold Hill Museum** supported to successfully secure DCMS/MDSW *On Display* grants
- Support and input into **Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust** NLHF Resilience Bid
- Progression of **Jurassic Coast Museums Group** collaborative work in preparation for funding bid
- Re-accreditation mentoring support for **Nothe Fort**, including policy formulation and business planning
- Contributing toward **Lyme Regis Museum** Designation application for geology collection
- Guidance for **Gillingham Museum** on governance and CIO conversion process
- Support for **Langton Matravers Museum** on development options for museum building and collections storage
- Contributing to start up process for **Nothe Fort** for the MEND4 capital investment

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1 Volunteering at DHC has continued to add an enormous number of hours, goodwill and capacity to the service. We currently have 23 volunteers on the books performing roles as varied as oral history recording and supporting fellow volunteers with additional needs. Between January and September 2025 over 1380 hours of volunteer time have been recorded at DHC. Using NLHF calculations as our multiplier this equates to over £28,000 in in-kind value to the JAS.
- 6.2 Currently, our most popular off-site talks are delivered by a volunteer. Both older and younger volunteers are represented in our cohort, and several volunteers have disabilities. We have a range of incomes, and both male and female volunteers, but still struggle to diversify our cohort in terms of ethnicity. We continue to welcome students on placement in the summer but are increasingly concerned that this opportunity is unpaid as this is becoming out of step with educational institutions who wish to see equal opportunities for their students, and with students who need a summer income to support their study.
- 6.3 The Community Engagement Officer has delivered or supported a range of activities:

- The completion of Frink-related oral history recordings
- Projects supported for development, funding and research include;
- A project led by Salisbury diocese's seeking to install information points in churches (Hardy).
- A World War Two recording and children's outreach project which resulted in wonderful experiences for children and new recordings for DHC.
- Bournemouth's Hebrew and Reform Synagogues' listing and transfer project ahead of their moves to new premises supported by funding from the Rothschild Foundation.
- Research support for new information boards about Dorchester's industrial heritage.
- Collaboration and support for the new statue of Sylvia Townsend-Warner which will be unveiled by 'Visible Women' just before Christmas this year.
- Our offer for children has continued with a small number of school visits, membership of BCP's Cultural Hub and day activities for the Virtual School (looked-after children).
- As a partner in the 'Sounds of the South West' project, we not only digitised a large quantity of material but also used newly digitised and listed materials to engage a local group of young people with learning disabilities. The project culminated in a sing-song at the Square and Compass pub, Worth Matravers. We look forward to the continuation of this project in 2026.

6.4 We have continued in our mission to diversify the records held at DHC so that they better represent Dorset now for the generations to come. We have continued to foster productive relationships around collecting and sharing with the BCP Indian Community, the Jewish congregations and Kushti Bok, Dorset's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller-led charity. A large new accession of recorded material from DEED's 'A Place We Can Call Home' project is heading our way and will tell the stories of incoming communities to BCP from overseas during the last 25 years.

6.5 In terms of outreach, DHC has provided archive material to 2 exhibitions and hosted 14 visits and workshops, provided 5 offsite talks, 2 online talks, and 6 onsite talks. Our new, monthly '**From the Stacks**' sessions were introduced – casting a spotlight on a particular document or collection each month. In addition, the service held two full-day public events. These were Rail 200 in July and Heritage Open Day in September.

7. Records of Dorset Council and BCP Council

7.1 The JAS continues to work with colleagues across both councils to try and ensure that records that should be permanently preserved are transferred to DHC to maintain and build the corporate memory. In recent weeks a large transfer of BCP Council's Planning and Registration Services records have come to DHC. In addition there have been discussions with colleagues from BCP's Children's Services in respect of adoption records and their possible need to digitise them. Much more remains to be done in order to ensure that the Council's corporate memory is preserved.

7.2 Work is underway with DC's Children's Services to better manage their records and to ensure that adopted and care experienced people can access their records in the future. In addition and in conjunction with the Records

Management team a longer-term goal is to structure Microsoft Sharepoint so that retention periods and document categorisation is built in at the point of creation. All of this will help to ensure that the corporate memory is better curated in the future.

8. Digital Preservation

8.1 During 2025, DHC has overseen the return of 150 digitised and at-risk audio materials from regional Sounds of the South West project, with 95 hours of volunteer time spent on listening to and cataloguing audios.

8.2 Digital preservation activity also resulted in:

- 430 ingests of material into Preservica since 1st Nov 2024 (19,283 ingested files which are now preserved equating to 267 GB), this will include born-digital records, as well as digital surrogates.
- Digital accessions this year have accumulated over 80GB of digital files, with some being from Kushti Bok, some oral history collections with Bournemouth University and Cranborne Chase AONB, and digital photographs from the Queer As Dorset exhibition at Lighthouse, Poole.
- Dorset Museum and Art Gallery (DMAG) deposited their archaeological slide collection and parish photograph collections with DHC in Dec 2024, with enquiries for these photographs now coming to DHC and an MoU being agreed on their access and reproduction.
- The consortium for local government using Preservica continues until June 2027.

9. Conservation

9.1 The JAS's conservation officer has continued to maintain high preservation standards within DHC's repositories and to conserve archival materials within the studio. Work in the last year includes:

- The provision of conservation support for local museums including Dorset Museum and Art Gallery and The Keep Military Museum.
- Conservation treatments for external clients such as Arts University Bournemouth, Portland Port Authority and the Earl of Shaftesbury.
- Preparation of items for loan to Kingston Lacy and DMAG including Thomas Hardy's original manuscript of the Mayor of Casterbridge, as well as material for the recent Jane Austen 'Down to the Sea' exhibition.
- Working in collaboration with Poole Museum to facilitate loans for a new permanent gallery focusing on Poole Pottery along with the display of the 1285 Longéspee charter.
- An important condition survey has been completed on the Quarter Session Court Rolls for a potentially large conservation project as part of the capital project. These rolls (dating from 1709), despite their significance as a vital part of Dorset's legal and social history, remain largely inaccessible due to their format and condition. This project would ensure the Quarter Session Rolls are much more accessible and help to bring the stories held within them to light.
- Receiving for salvage archive material damaged at the fire on South Street at the end of last year.

10. Collections Management

- 10.1 The JAS continues to receive regular, significant accessions of physical archives and has received over 200 accessions in the last year. The most notable recent material to be deposited includes:
- Archives of the Bournemouth Hebrew Congregation and Reform Synagogue
 - William John Bankes Egypt Drawings
 - Poole Borough Architectural Plans
 - Bournemouth non-conformist marriage registers
 - HMP Guys Marsh Chaplaincy journals
 - Diaries and correspondence of Major Bell relating to his work and duties with the Avon and Dorset River Board
 - Cosens and Co of Weymouth ship plans and glass plate negatives
 - Estate records of the Goodden and Gollop families
- 10.2 Over 20,000 entries have been added to the public archive catalogue this year. These additions have included the externally funded catalogues for Thomas Hardy archive, and Bournemouth Transport Limited (Yellow Buses). Altogether there are now over 420,000 individual catalogue entries available to search online.
- 10.3 Work on the externally-funded project (**£103,000**) to catalogue and conserve the archives of [Wessex Water](#) continues successfully. The archive consists of several hundred boxes of material covering a 200-year span. The ownership of the collection will transfer to Dorset Council. An archivist and a collections assistant, both working 0.6 fte will be employed until the end of March 2027.
- 10.4 The externally-funded project to catalogue the archives of Bournemouth's Yellow Buses was successfully completed in March 2025 and this is available to view [online](#).
- 11.5 The service is involved in a range of other projects and fundraising activities to attract more investment into the collections. After a successful fundraising campaign led by the William Barnes Society and Dorset Archives Trust **£36,000** has been raised to catalogue the archives of the Dorset dialect poet. In addition, **£55,000** has been received from the owners of a Dorset estate to catalogue its archive. This is in addition to **£23,000** received from another estate. All three sums benefitted in part from our ability to receive Gift Aid on donations via Dorset Archives Trust. Staff at DHC have little spare capacity to work on larger collections so funding of this type is incredibly welcome. DHC makes every effort to encourage owners of collections to contribute to their preservation, cataloguing and conservation.

12. Thomas Hardy archive project

- 12.1 The Hardy archive project completed in October 2025 after 19 months. It was fully externally-funded and has resulted in a complete [online catalogue](#) of the great author's archive which is now available to view and search.
- 12.2 A successful internship by a National Trust employee has also concluded. This has led to strong relationships with the NT at Max Gate and the Bockhampton cottage where the archive will be used to assist interpretation and display.

- 12.3 A launch to mark the project's completion attended by funders, stakeholders, staff and volunteers was held at DHC on 4 September. Author Tracy Chevalier delivered the keynote address.
- 12.4 A contract extension for the project archivist means that they will be working at DHC for an additional 10 months on the archives of Dorset dialect poet William Barnes. This has been made possible due to fundraising (crowdfunding, trusts and foundations, S106 funding) and a strong collaboration between Dorset Archives Trust and the William Barnes Society.

13. Dorset Archives Trust

- 13.1 Dorset Archives Trust (DAT) remains an important part of the means by which the JAS is able to raise funds and acquire new collections and to raise the profile of what the JAS does. During 2025 DAT:
- Collaborated with the Barnes Society to raise over £36,000 project funding
 - Funded the purchase of a range of archive material at auction
 - Funded the production of four large panels for the DHC searchroom
 - Sponsored the Hardy catalogue launch
 - Pledged support for the JAS's fundraising campaign for the capital project.
- 13.2 The charity is working to strengthen its governance with a range of appropriate policies and is planning a substantial annual newsletter for 2026 sponsored by local businesses.

14. Capital project

- 14.1 The JAS is currently fully engaged in preparing an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). This has to be submitted before 12 November. A decision on the application would be made in March 2026. The request of NLHF will be just under £4 million and the total project cost is c. £4.83 million. The request of the Lottery will be just under £4 million. Dorset Council has pledged £540,000 in match funding meaning that the JAS will have a fundraising target of c. £280,000. Trusts and foundations will be approached along with a public appeal as well as active fundraising support from Dorset Archives Trust.
- 14.2 NLHF allocates funding based on the ability of projects to meet its [investment principles](#) which fall into four broad areas. If the application is successful a second stage 'development' application will need to be generated. This will take 18 months to build. A decision on that bid if successful would allow the project to commence in Spring 2028. It would complete three years later in 2031.
- 14.3 The project will deliver three things:
- 1) A two-storey repository extension providing 22,000 additional box spaces which should provide sufficient space for at least 30 years' accommodation as DHC continues to operate in the mixed economy of physical and digital archives.

- 2) A new entrance and reception area for DHC which will help to draw visitors into the building and will explain what archives are and how they can be accessed. There will be in addition other small, but very practical improvements to the building.
 - 3) A four-part 'activity plan' which will be focused on diversifying DHC's collections to better reflect the communities living here and to raise awareness of archives and their uses. The four strands are:
 - **Digital Leader** – developing digital preservation skills in the community – focussed on community and charitable organisations so that they understand what to retain as part of their corporate memory and how to transfer it to DHC for long-term preservation. The intention is to develop a toolkit that will be transferable and scalable depending on the context in which it is used. A related element of this activity is to turn DHC into a centre of excellence for oral history.
 - **Life and Crimes** – focussing on the rich and as yet untapped resource that is the Dorset Quarter Session Court rolls. These cover a 200 year period and include detail of the administration of criminal justice and civil affairs. The rolls require conservation and digitisation as well as cataloguing. The intention is to work with Dorset museums to interpret the history of their towns as narrated in the rolls.
 - **Archives for Art's Sake** – working with a range of arts organisations and artists (starting with Poole Lighthouse) to encourage the preservation of their archives building on a successful collecting strategy pursued by DHC over some years. There will also be a number of engagement activities built on using artistic archives.
 - **Mind the Gaps** – this strand focusses on the absent elements from the DHC archives – those communities not represented in the archives. This might relate to a religious, ethnic community or a geographical area. We intend to employ a peripatetic archivist whose role will be to go out and work with organisations to understand their archives and build links with DHC to develop skills and to encourage public access to these collections.
- 14.4 Clearly, much depends on the JAS submitting as strong an application as possible. There is currently no 'Plan B' in terms of funding the capital improvements to DHC. If successful, the whole service will be heavily committed to delivering a successful project, one that will equip the JAS with the means to deal with the next phase of its role as host of the county's recorded heritage.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 As the JAS approaches the end of the current Service Development Plan, its aspiration is to acquire funding for a major project that will provide the strategic direction and resourcing to take the service well into the next decade. A new Service Development Plan predicated on the project's viability will be composed as soon as the result of the application to NLHF is known. More generally, the JAS continues to work hard to deliver the service priorities and to balance its commitments and aspirations against the funding provided by the two councils supplemented by significant externally-generated income.

Sam Johnston
Service Manager for Archives and Records

1. Alternative options considered

There is no alternative model for delivering archive services currently under consideration.

2. Legal considerations

None

3. Financial implications

All activities described in this report are covered by either the JAS revenue budget, reserve or an externally-sourced grant.

4. Natural environment, climate & ecology implications

DHC has significantly improved its energy performance through a major project to reduce consumption whilst ensuring the maintenance of high-quality environmental controls. This, combined with the generation of solar energy through PV panels on roof elevations has rendered the building highly energy-efficient.

5. Well-being and health implications

The JAS contributes to wellbeing outcomes for both councils and improving the quality of life for residents of BCP and Dorset Council areas and attracting visitors to the county lie at the heart of its work.

6. 6. Other implications

None

7. 7. Risk implications

HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium (due to pressure on archive accommodation).

8. 8. Equalities

The JAS has completed a full EQIA. Areas for further consideration include working with younger people and with black and ethnic minority groups and religious minorities. Improved digital provision will also assist in providing greater access to collections for people living at some distance from Dorchester.

9. 9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Joint Archives Service Plan 2021-26 (updated October 2025)

Appendix 2: Joint Archives Service Strategic Financial Risk Register

10. 10. Background papers

- The National Archives benchmarking data 2025
- JAS accession records, service statistics and records.
- Accreditation data, 2024
- Archives Unlocked, The National Archives, 2020
- JAS policies, revised 2023
- Previous reports to the JAB

11. Report sign-off

This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer), the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer) and the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s)

Joint Archives Service

Service Development Plan

2021-2026

DORSET
HISTORY CENTRE

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1

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

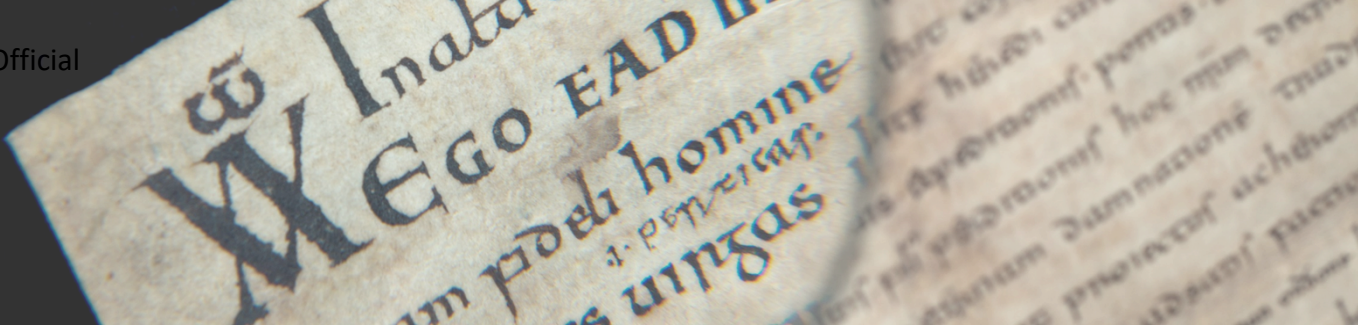
The Joint Archives Service (JAS), based at Dorset History Centre (DHC), is operated on behalf of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council and Dorset Council. Partnership between the two authorities as delivered through the joint service sits at the heart of JAS activities and underwrites all aspects of its operation as detailed in the service plan.

The JAS is the county's only accredited archive service as designated by The National Archives. Records Management, HER, Museum Development and Local Studies Library services are operated on behalf of Dorset Council via separate, discrete budgets.

PURPOSE

The Service Development Plan will:

- Articulate the JAS's ambition to excel in its role as custodian of the county's physical and digital archives and records
- Clarify the core functions or 'business as usual' activities of the JAS
- Describe planned projects and/or workstreams over the period 2021-26
- Demonstrate how the service contributes towards the corporate outcomes of the two funding authorities
- Provide key information about the service to enable evaluation and analysis of its performance
- Build on the analysis and recommendations of consultancy report A [*Review of the Dorset Joint Archives Service*](#) by Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan and Associates (February 2021)
- Be regularly updated to reflect the current status of particular activities.



2

VISION, MISSION, & GOALS

OUR VISION

The archival heritage and authentic record of Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole will be preserved by the Joint Archives Service and used to inform, educate and inspire our communities through collaboration and innovation.



OUR MISSION

To acquire, preserve and make accessible the archives of Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole and so promote cultural, economic, educational and social well-being; to act as the corporate memory for the two funding bodies.



OUR GOALS

We will:

- Be an open and innovative organisation, known and trusted by all
- Lead in developing systems and services which enhance the management and care of archives, records and local studies materials
- Increase the use of and access to archives and other heritage assets through a wide range of digital and public engagement activities
- Constantly improve what we do through partnership and collaboration
- Actively promote equality of access to services and the diversity of collections held by the JAS.



3

KEY PRIORITIES

The key priorities of the JAS are to:

- 1** Actively acquire archives relating to Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole and to work through all available means to preserve, conserve and promote access to them to optimum effect
- 2** Design and deliver digital preservation services across both authority areas
- 3** Provide efficient, innovative and quality digital and place-based services which deliver rewarding experiences for all JAS customers and value for money for the two funding authorities
- 4** Engage a wide variety of audiences with digital and physical resources and events, recognising barriers to involvement and working actively to dismantle these
- 5** Encourage and sustain on-site and remote volunteering so adding value through delivering targeted programmes of work
- 6** Develop and maintain partnerships with a range of organisations both public and private and to pursue project opportunities which both enhance funding to the JAS and deliver positive outcomes and mutual benefits to all parties
- 7** Efficiently manage and enhance the DHC building including the provision of sufficient long-term archival storage space (capital project), so increasing value for money for customers, collections and staff

Selected corporate priorities of the funding authorities to whose outcomes the JAS contributes:

BCP Council - A Shared Vision 2024-2028

- Our Place and Environment
- Our People and Communities

Dorset Council – Council Plan (2024-29):

- Provide affordable and high-quality housing
- Grow our economy
- Communities for all
- Respond to the climate and nature crisis

4

ACTION PLAN

Red Amber Green (RAG) Summary

The total number of workstreams within the current review period of the Service Development Plan is:

Red	1
Amber	4
Green	17
Total	21

For ease of comprehension the JAS's **business as usual** activities are listed adjacent to the workstream with which they have the most affinity.

KEY

Symbols used:		Officers involved in specific workstreams:	
✓	Completed	SJ	Sam Johnston, Service Manager for Archives and Records
G	On track	CS	Claire Skinner, Principal Archivist
A	Some minor slippage	OS	Owen Simons, Archivist (Collections)
R	Delays/ Serious Problems/ Not being Achieved	CP/EB	Cassandra Pickavance/Emma Blowers, Archivist (Digital Preservation)
DF	Deferred	JP	Archive Conservation Officer – Jess Pollard
		LD	Luke Dady, Archivist (Public Services)
		MG	Maria Gayton, Community Engagement Officer

Service Development Plan: workstreams and projects

Priority 1: Actively acquire archives relating to Bournemouth, Christchurch, Dorset and Poole and to work through all available means to preserve and conserve them to optimum effect;

Business as usual activities:

- Acquisition, appraisal, accessioning, and limited cataloguing of Council, business and community-generated archival material, both hard copy and digital
- Proactive acquisition of Public Records
- Preservation management of collections within passively managed and [environmentally controlled repositories](#)
- Repair and conservation of documents from DHC's own collections as well as via private commissions

	Workstream/Project	Lead	Outcome/Target	Timeframe	Current progress	Rag Status
1.1	Targeted acquisition of archives especially from a range of sources identified through gap analysis.	SJ/ OS	- Building up the collection in areas of identified weakness within the DHC holdings. 'Gap analysis' forms part of the capital project. - To better reflect the communities of Dorset and BCP council area. - Adding to the publicly accessible cultural heritage of the county for research on the heritage of the county. - Particular focus on business and artistic archives.	Ongoing	- Potential for consultancy-delivered 'gap analysis' of collections as part of capital project build up. - Positive engagement with GRT community and Jewish community over their cultural heritage and records. Grant aid acquired from the Rothschild Foundation. - Depositors strongly encouraged to help fund costs of archive storage. - Need to develop better systems to acquire BCP corporate archives in the absence of an RM service.	
1.2	Selected purchase of documents (auction etc) using the DAT purchase fund	SJ	Acquiring for public ownership items that would otherwise be sold privately.	Ongoing steady stream of material acquired.	Steady stream of purchases assisted by Dorset Archives Trust https://www.dorsetarchivestrust.org/archives/document-purchases	

	Workstream/Project	Lead	Outcome/Target	Timeframe	Current progress	Rag Status
1.3	Externally funded document preservation and conservation.	JP	Rendering damaged/unusable documents available for digitisation and public access via projects.	Ongoing – as and when opportunities arise	- Various private commissions and museum items to supplement core work. £11k of conservation work in the upcoming Wessex Water project.	
1.4	Transfer archival content on obsolete and at-risk audio-visual formats and removable digital media to digital preservation system	CP	At risk archives are preserved and remain accessible	By December 2025	Work underway to transfer removable digital media to Preservica. Significant portion of audio-visual formats digitised in 2023. Likely to require resource to transfer remaining audio-visual formats. The JAS is part of a Lottery-funded project ('Sounds of the SW') relating to the digitisation of sound collections held by the service. The project will also fund a Level 3 apprenticeship placement during 2026.	

Priority 2: Design and deliver digital preservation services across both authority areas

Business as usual activities:

- Raising awareness of digital preservation and offering advice and support to stakeholders generating and transferring digital archives.
- Proactive acquisition of council-generated hard copy and digital records in close collaboration with records management colleagues in both funding councils

	Workstream/project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Current progress	Rag Status
2.1	Fully resourced JAS digital preservation strategy resulting in robust digital continuity for JAS and its clients: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/understanding-digital-continuity.pdf <i>See consultancy report chapter 3</i>	CP/SJ	• Ensure the accessibility of digital content now and in the future. • Reduction in risk and guarantor of the councils' corporate memories • Collaborative opportunities with other local authorities. • Work with IT and records management colleagues over electronic records management and systems integration. • Preservation of cultural heritage of the county. • Protect investment in digitisation by preserving digital surrogates.	Ongoing	• Longstanding use of Preservica software, now integrated with Epexio re: public access. • Significant ingest of both BCP and Dorset Council records include committee records from Modern.Gov system and adoption records from both councils. • Resourcing challenges as workload in this area grows. • Much work to be done to align proprietary systems (e.g. Planning) with Preservica. Investigating potential of using Preserve 365 which aligns to MS365 functionality.	
2.2	Local authority consortium using Preservica software. Led by DHC, now includes 22 members in a 5-year contract (to May 2027).	SJ/CP	To deliver cheapest possible price for access to digital preservation software and to share skills and knowledge.	April 2019-present.	• Optimum number of members have joined to maximise financial benefits. • Professional network of Preservica users led by DHC is valued and engaged with. • Need to consider what system will be used post-2027.	
2.3	Raise profile and awareness of the practice and benefits of digital preservation within community and other organisations.	CP/EB	To encourage understanding of the importance and relevance of preserving digital content as much as its physical archival equivalent.	Ongoing	• We are incorporating a programme of digital preservation training and support into capital project.	

Priority 3: Provide efficient, innovative and quality digital and place-based services which deliver rewarding experiences for all JAS customers and value for money for the two funding authorities;

Business as usual activities:

- High quality provision of access to original archives and local studies material on-site at DHC
- Processing of enquiries from members of the public relating to a wide variety of subject matter
- Selective digitisation of archival material to enhance access to DHC-held collections and by private commission

	Workstream/Project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Current Progress	RAG status
3.1	Participation in Public Services Quality surveys of archive services	LD	Score of at least 90% 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'	2024 (biennial)	Survey took place in October 2024; 91% of those responding were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.	
3.2	Archive Accreditation	SJ/AI I	Meet the standard set by The National Archives covering wide range of service activities and functions. Tied to appointment as a suitable Place of Deposit for Public Records	Full accreditation review in 2024	Service fully re-accredited in July 2024 following review by The National Archives There will be a mid-point assessment of the service in 2027.	
3.3	Continue to develop Epexio archive catalogue and its links to Preservica together with public front end. <i>See consultancy report chapter 4</i>	CS/ LD/C P/OS	To increase the quality and varied means of access to a greater quantity of DHC-collections online. More publicly available collections-related data, including access to digital material through Preservica. (See also Priority 2)	Business as Usual	Continue on-site volunteering to enhance catalogue. Remote volunteering via Epexio improves quality of customer access to collections and offers wider volunteering experience. Further functionality development: • Provide paid for access to digital archives • Geolocation of collections to facilitate map based searching • Now holds over 420,000 entries	

3.4	Further investigate development of online mapping resource such as Know Your Place or similar working with Historic Environment Service (now integrated into the Archives and Records Service). <i>See consultancy report chapter 4</i>	JH/ LD	Enhanced access to collections. Potential to link to other SW resources	This is now likely to be delivered outside of the capital project as a separate piece of work	Geotagging volunteers have been adding data to the base map e.g. sales particulars relating to properties. Expexio cataloguing system offers some means by which mapping data can be imported.	
3.5	2 members of JAS staff will be developed via the Level 7 Apprenticeship (3 years) funded through the Apprenticeship Levy.	LD	Staff development and professional progression via national scheme (led by The National Archives).	2023-2026	Good progress and all three apprentices are now into the third year of the programme. Will reduce capacity within the public service team due to 1 day per week study implications. SW cohort includes a member of DC's Records Management team.	

Priority 4: Work with a wide variety of audiences and through public engagement and advocacy to raise the profile of DHC, to encourage access to and appreciation of the archival resource;

Business as usual activities:

- Delivery of outreach services including talks, project design, workshops, tours and engagement with stakeholders, educational institutions and community groups
- Provision of digital services including the online catalogue, website, social media, blogs and material hosted by Ancestry.co.uk

	Workstream/Project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Progress	RAG status
4.1	Continue to work with the Cultural Hub and the Cultural Education Partnership	JH/ MG	To identify opportunities to work with BCP schools, other cultural providers and creatives to develop stimulating resources for engagement with archives in educational settings.	Ongoing	Innovative mixed media resource developed and delivered Contributions to schools' 'artist in residence' projects'	
4.2	Community engagement - support and facilitation for a range of externally-resourced groups and projects to enhance access to and enjoyment of archival heritage.	MG	Positive engagement with a range of groups and subject matter. Value of archives as source material for a wide span of uses.	Ongoing – ad hoc Ongoing – ad hoc and subject to individual project schedules	Groups include: • Bournemouth Jewish community • Gypsy, Romany, Traveller (Kushti Bok) • Poole Lighthouse • BCP Indian community Capital project will open up avenues for this work to grow.	
4.3	Digital promotion, advocacy and outreach, through a range of social media platforms and DHC presence on DC & BCP corporate websites and intranets. <i>See consultancy report chapters 3 & 4</i>	LD/CS	• Raise the profile of DHC to customers and stakeholders • Provide detailed information on DHC and first point of contact • Attract new audiences • Help to sell services and generate income. • A Digital Development Strategy	Ongoing	Primarily delivered via blogs, newsletter and Twitter/X. Undoubtedly more that could be done here particularly via social media. Facebook pages under development. New DAT annual newsletter under development with commercial sponsorship.	

Priority 5: Increase and sustain on-site and remote volunteering so adding value through delivering targeted programmes of work;

	Workstream/Project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Progress	RAG status
5.1	Developing a strong on-site and remote volunteer programme. <i>See consultancy report chapter 3</i>	OS/JP/ MG/LD /CP	- Delivering critical 'added value' capacity, sorting, repackaging, listing collections and for Community Engagement projects - Involving the community in the life of DHC and its collections. - Includes work experience opportunities for young people. - Wider range of projects for volunteers to engage with (digitisation, research, oral history, conservation, cataloguing, collections indexing).	Ongoing and review annually	- Remote volunteering opportunities delivered via Epexio, e.g. geo-tagging. - JAS has started to refine and grow its volunteering programme post-Covid and in the light of technological change. - Maintain standards gained through Investors in Volunteers. - Volunteering numbers have recovered post-Covid. - New volunteer cohort via Hardy and Barnes projects	
5.2	Dorset Archives Trust (DAT) www.dorsetarchivetrust.org	SJ/CS	Mobilising the effective support of DAT for DHC projects through its 3 key priorities: - Fundraising - Collections development - Advocacy	Ongoing annual review Annual review prior to AGM	- Membership steadily increasing. - Events programme based around archive collections. - Documents purchased - Training for trustees - Major plank of fundraising for capital project	

Priority 6: Develop and sustain partnerships with a range of organisations both public and private and to pursue project opportunities which both enhance funding to the JAS and deliver mutual benefits;

	Workstream/project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Current progress	Rag Status
6.1	Seek external funding for collections related projects including cataloguing, conservation and selective digitisation	SJ/CS	• Make large quantities of new material available to the public. • Assist preservation through digital facsimiles; • Increase the JAS's online presence via catalogue and other digital tools. • Complement scarce core resources.	Ongoing, but subject to available funding opportunities and programmes	Reliant upon opportunities to seek funding through either public or private sources. Collections with funding secured or being sought: • Wessex Water - £103k - underway • Yellow Buses - £5k – delivered • William Barnes archive - £36,000 raised • Quarter Sessions (capital project) • Dorset estates – £77,000 secured in 2025 with other potential funding opportunities	
6.2	Thomas Hardy archive project	SJ/project archivist	• Internationally important collection • £70k investment • Partnership support • Potential Designation application with Dorset Museum	March 2024-October 2025	• Project successfully completed • National Trust internship 1-day per week • Steering group to engage partners • Academic engagement • Archivist starting work on Barnes archive in October 2025.	
6.3	Investigate partnerships with academic institutions to better exploit DHC-held collections and encourage student and academic interest in archives.	SJ/OS/CS	• Strong links to regional HE institutions • Possible collaborative projects • Opens up new potential sources of funding through external grants.	Ongoing; annual review of MoUs and project opportunities via academic departments.	Positive activities: (i) Project links to Exeter university over the archives of Thomas Hardy and Sylvia Townsend Warner. (ii) Links with AUB re: Poole Pottery and Frink archives (iii) Opportunities emerging with BU and its BA in Public History – work experience and extended project placements. (iv) MoU signed in 2020 with University of Exeter. (v) Student travel fund (DAT).	

Priority 7: Efficiently manage and enhance the DHC building including the provision of sufficient long-term archival storage space, so increasing value for money for customers, collections and staff;

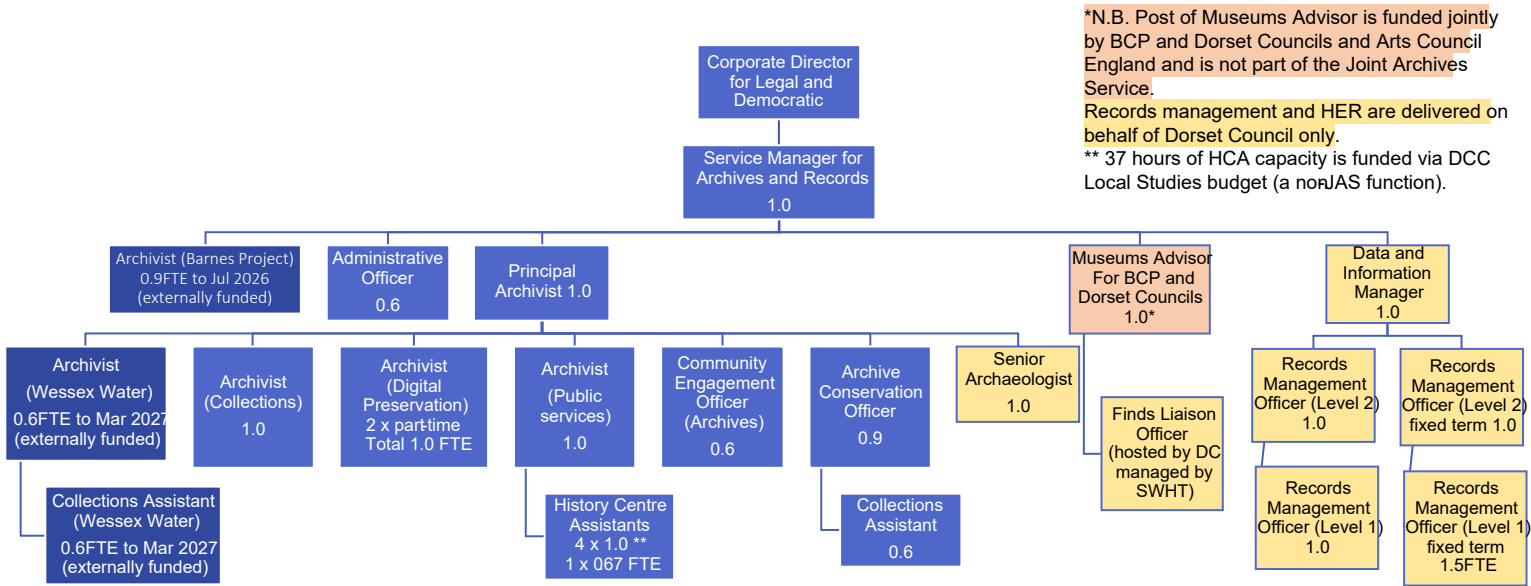
	Workstream/project	Lead	Outcome(s)	Timeframe	Current progress	Rag Status
7.1	Capital project; extension of DHC building to ensure adequate future space for collections. <i>See consultancy report chapter 6</i>	All	• Ensure appropriate storage is available for the next 25-30 years of hard copy archive acquisition. • Ensure that the best value 'full life' solution is agreed. • Wide programme of public and community engagement across the county. • Improved public access to the building	Early 2025-	• Dorset Council has committed £540,000 in its capital programme (2026/27). • Bid to NLHF due to be submitted in November 2025. Total project costs c. £5 million.	
7.2	Take part in Dorset Council energy efficiency initiatives and projects. Pursue the improvement of the fabric of the DHC building	SJ/CS	To improve fabric and energy consumption in DHC building – (heat pump and low energy lighting, roof and facias and soffits, lift)	Ongoing	• DC has been awarded funding for improved energy efficiency projects. • New PV solar arrays added to DHC roof summer 2022. • £800k repairs to fabric of DHC carried out 2024-25.	

5. Service structure

Classified as Official

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Archives and Records Service
Structure November 2025



Core funded archives staff: 12.37 FTE
Externally funded project staff: 2.1 FTE

5. Risk Register

November 2025
Archives Service Strategic Funding
(Risks have been listed in order of severity)

Risk Scoring	Impact	H	6	8	9
L = Low		M	3	5	7
M = Medium		L	1	2	4
H - High			L	M	H
			Probability		

Risk No.	Risk Description	Likely Impact if Risk Occurs	Impact H/M/L	Probability H/M/L	Score	Counter Measures	Comment
1	Core Funding: continued risk to local government funding from 2026/27. This will need to be factored into the JAS's ability to maintain current levels of service delivery.	Further reductions in standards, levels and capacity of services offered by JAS - potentially taking it below the minimal effective level through the loss of distinct functions. If capital project bid is successful then the JAS will need full staffing complement to manage BAU and the project.	H	H	9	Service works hard to secure external funding to complement core resourcing. Ensure understanding of value for money through benchmarking and TNA Accreditation. Importance of digital preservation in supporting business continuity and will require increased resourcing in the future.	Standstill budgets in 8 out of 11 previous years. Inflationary pressure specifically from national pay agreement, energy and business rates rise. Important to gauge the views of the two unitary councils on the role and priorities

2	Failure to develop preferred option to provide extra space for JAS collections	Finite and diminishing space within repositories (96% capacity). DHC would, in time, have to start refusing material. Failure to preserve corporate memory or Dorset's heritage. Potential revenue cost implication if space has to be rented.	H	H	9	Agreement over capital match funding by DC - £540k in 2026/27. Full life cost of DHC extension is the cheapest solution. External storage would be much more expensive in the long term.	Project application due to be submitted in November 2025.
3	Funding for digital preservation is not continued and work concludes without long-term sustainable solution.	Failure to provide digital preservation services for funding authorities and wider community. Information loss and/or data corruption. Potential legal implications.	H	M	7	Prove the long-term benefits of digital preservation and the risks and consequences of not having such a system. Consortium model has halved costs to each member. Need BCP Council to adopt digital preservation via Preservica.	- The JAS is leading the local authority sector in working on digital preservation. - Information loss/corruption is a major risk to the corporate memory of both authorities. - Evidence of growing understanding of digital preservation and its benefits.
4	Failure to acquire records of the funding councils	Impaired corporate memory and raised risks to legal or other challenge; reputational damage.			6	- Work to raise profile of the JAS particularly within BCP Council area. - Encourage consideration of records management function - Collaboration with officers to ensure transfers take place	Transfers of records tend to be ad hoc. Good links with Democratic and Childrens Services.

5	Dorset Archives Trust: failure to sustain Dorset Archives Trust due to lack of external interest and low capacity to support from within DHC.	No revenue impact; loss of support in communities, harm to reputation and loss of potential for special projects and funding to benefit Dorset's archives.	M	L	3	• Cultivate new trustees to strengthen body. • Ensure alignment of DHC activities and those of DAT.	Body increasing in confidence and understanding. First legacy has been secured in 2024 Very positive results in terms of fundraising.
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