



Agenda Item 7

Wells City Council

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Presented By (if different)	Haylee Wilkins
Subject	Archivist Data
Date of report	24 th July 2025
For consideration at	Civic and Archives Committee
Date of consideration	31 st July 2025

Background

As part of the terms of reference of this Committee, the Town Clerk has requested that the Archivist provide a quarterly synopsis of the actions completed and any issues or concerns. It is expected that this will ensure the committee is kept abreast of any changes within the function.

Enquiries

April to June 2025, we've had 36 enquires for this period. We've had people interested in the history of Somerset Carnivals in Wells, Tor Woods, The Orange Grove Nursing Home that closed in the 1940's, Mills in Wells, former pubs in St Cuthbert Street and the movement of POW's to Wells. This is an increase of 8 enquiries compared to the same quarter, April to June, for 2024, which is a 29% increase.

We've also had four researchers who have visited the archive in person. One visitor was interested in evidence of historic footpaths, and another was interested in an 18th century execution at Keward Green. The execution was of a family member found guilty of poisoning her husband. This is one fewer visitor than for the same quarter last year, April to June, 2024.

Archives Physical Infrastructure

The extreme heat has been a bit challenging. During the previous heatwave the storage environment has seen a maximum temperature of 1.7 degrees above what we would like it to be before falling. During the most recent heatwave this month, we recorded a similar temperature before seeing a fall early this week. The humidity readings have been excellent however, largely due to the museum's dehumidifier, with the storage environment not exceeding 55% relative humidity for the entire quarter. Given the outside conditions this is considered to be an acceptable

position, and as such, it is not felt that there has been any significant threat to the collections. It is however something to remain mindful of.

Exhibitions & Outside Engagement

There remain a number of exhibitions in early stages of development, as well as the ongoing catalogue development, to allow this to be published in the coming years. The Catalogue is a longer term project, that requires significant resource and is at present, very much dependant on the volunteer support offered to allow it to progress.

It remains a balance between the progress of the catalogue verses the delivery of short term exhibitions, which offer significant community value. The next exhibitions are for the Little Theatre and at the Town Hall as part of a nationwide Historic England day, where we have previously displayed the charter and are looking to hold the same feature this year.