

Berkshire Archaeology Access and Charging Policy

1. Introduction

Berkshire Archaeology is an archaeological advice service for 5 Unitary Authorities: Reading Borough Council, Wokingham Borough Council; Bracknell Forest Borough Council; Slough Borough Council and Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

Berkshire Archaeology maintains the Historic Environment Record for these five Unitary Authorities.

Content of the Historic Environment Record:

The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the primary source of information about the historic environment in the geographical area of the five Unitary Authorities. It includes a database that contains more than 18,000 records with information about remains from the prehistoric period (c.500, 000 years ago) to the present day. These include information on nationally designated assets (listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments), locally designated assets, undesignated heritage assets and Historic Landscape Character areas.

Mapped data

The database is linked to digital mapping held as Geographic Information System (GIS) files. The maps contain geographical depictions of all sites on the database, ranging from simple point locations to complex plots of extensive sites. Maps provided from the HER GIS are for information purposes only. Due to Ordnance Survey copyright restrictions this mapping must not be reproduced in researcher's own reports.

Who can consult the HER?

The HER is available for consultation for all, including members of the public, schools, universities, local societies, researchers and commercial organisations.

How do I access the HER?

The HER is based at Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, Berkshire RG1 6AF. You can get information from the HER in a number of different ways:

By e-mail: info@berkshirearchaeology.org.uk

By telephone: 0118 937 5976

By letter: Berkshire Archaeology, Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, Berkshire RG1 6AF

In person: Every Thursday 12.00 - 4.00pm "Open House" – no appointment necessary (non-commercial organisations) but please contact Berkshire Archaeology on 0118 937 5976 beforehand so that we can prepare for your visit in advance to ensure that the correct person is available and to prepare any information you might require. Alternatively, please contact us to make an appointment to come and see us at another mutually convenient time. PLEASE NOTE THAT WHILE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS APPLY, NO PHYSICAL ACCESS IS PERMITTED TO THE HER.

There is also on-line access to the Berkshire Archaeology HER via The Heritage Gateway website <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/> which contains over 6500 monument records from the Berkshire HER.

Opening times

The HER is open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm. If you wish to visit in person please telephone first (0118 937 5976) or e-mail (info@berkshirearchaeology.org.uk) to make an appointment in order to make sure someone is available. An appointment can normally be arranged within 3-5 working days. The HER Officer will endeavour to assist in establishing whether a visit is advisable but cannot be expected to undertake detailed assessment of the relevance of specific material. On occasion it may prove more useful to make an HER enquiry (see searching the HER) prior to visiting so that reference material can be viewed during the visit.

Facilities

If you choose to visit the HER in person consultation of the HER database will be with the assistance of the HER Officer. Access to the HER database and paper files is via prior arrangement with the HER Officer.

Our location within Berkshire Record Office (BRO) also allows convenient access to their collections subject to their admission criteria. Dedicated BRO staff are on hand to provide help with any further research. (<https://www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/visit-us/planning-a-visit>).

Photocopying facilities are available within The Berkshire Record Office and are undertaken by staff. Charges (as at 01/05/2021) are £3.00 for the first sheet and £2.00 per subsequent sheet, and are payable direct to the Berkshire Record Office.

Searching the HER

Historic Environment Record (HER) searches provide information selected from the record, normally for a defined area, although bespoke searches can also be done for particular periods or types of records. The HER includes both digital and hard copy information and references to other sources held outside the HER. It is constantly being enhanced and the absence of a record should not be relied upon as indicating a lack of heritage interest, other national or specialist sources may contain information not held or indexed.

For a search of the HER please contact us by any of the methods listed above (**How do I access the HER?**)

Please provide as much relevant detail as possible in your enquiry, such as the subject area, the period and the geographical area (a grid reference or postcode would be useful) in which you are interested. In order that we can provide information to meet your specific requirements, it is also useful if you can tell us what you require the information for.

A contact name and address, telephone number or e-mail will be required so that we can reply back to you.

In return we attempt to provide the information to you in a format to suit your requirements (within the confines of our system). This includes summary lists, detailed printouts and maps showing the locations of sites.

2. Conditions of Use

Introduction

Berkshire Archaeology is committed to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In order to ensure that information from the Berkshire Archaeology HER is used responsibly, those applying to consult it are requested to provide details about the nature of their enquiry and to follow the Guidance for Users outlined below. Please note that permission to use the HER may be refused or limited in certain circumstances.

Guidance for Users

1. Berkshire Archaeology HER users are requested to inform Berkshire Archaeology of the following information:
 - (a) the subject and purpose of their enquiry;
 - (b) the use to which the information will be put; and
 - (c) the names of any other bodies or individuals outside their organisation to whom it is intended to pass HER information.
2. A service charge is made for enquiries to the Berkshire Archaeology HER for Commercial Users. This is waived for enquiries for non-commercial, educational or personal research. The costs of paper, printing and other incidental expenses may be charged to all users.
3. The Berkshire Archaeology HER is the copyright of Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead Unitary Authorities. Some information held in the HER may also be the copyright of others. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that copyright law is not breached.
4. Users are requested to inform, and to make their research available to the Berkshire Archaeology HER where new archaeological sites or data are discovered as a result of their work.
5. Users are requested to make appropriate acknowledgement of the Berkshire Archaeology HER in any publication or report which has made use of its data.

6. While efforts have been made to verify the data held in the HER, Berkshire Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any particular data and its source.

7. Berkshire Archaeology accepts that there may be a requirement to treat certain enquiries in confidence. Equally, the HER expects that users will not pass on information in an irresponsible or unethical manner.

8. Berkshire Archaeology on behalf of the 5 Unitaries reserves all rights of Copyright which are owned in the material provided. Dissemination to a third party without the written consent of the Historic Environment Record Officer is a breach of copyright. Information supplied shall be used for the specified purposes only. All information to commercial organisations will be provided under licence.

9. Access to all or part of the information requested may be refused in certain circumstances.

9.1 Information may not be disclosed if:

- (a) it relates to the subject matter of any legal or other proceedings, actual or prospective (including Local Planning Inquiries);
- (b) it relates to confidential, internal communications of Reading, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead Unitary Authorities;
- (c) it is contained in a document or other record which is still in the course of completion

9.2 Information will not be disclosed if:

- (a) it was supplied to the Council by another party who was under no legal obligation to do so and could not have been put under any legal obligation to supply it and has not consented to its disclosure;
- (b) its disclosure would increase the likelihood of damage to the environment affecting anything to which the information relates

10. A request for information may be refused if it is manifestly unreasonable or is formulated in too general a manner.

11. Every endeavour is made to respond to enquiries within 5 working days.

Feedback and complaints procedure

We are keen to encourage customer feedback and would like to know how you feel about the service we are providing, and how we can improve. If you would like to comment about the service, please contact:

Fiona Macdonald
Principal Archaeologist

Berkshire Record Office
9 Coley Avenue
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 6AF

3. Charging policy

A search fee is normally only made where the enquiry is for commercial or profit-making purposes. This applies to consultations made in person or by telephone, fax, letter, or email. The fee is to cover staff time and will vary according to the nature of the enquiry. Fees may be waived in certain circumstances. Charges are levied for a licence to re-use HER information for a specified commercial purpose. In all cases any charges will be advised in writing and agreed before the work is carried out.

For most other users, such as members of the public and students carrying out personal research, there is no search fee, unless the enquiry is particularly complicated or time consuming to deal with. In such cases any charge will be agreed before the work is carried out.

Scale of Charges (hourly charge)

The current rate for HER service is £47.00 [plus VAT] per hour. There is a minimum fee per enquiry of £47.00 [plus VAT]. Users who are charged will be invoiced.

Requests for data will normally be completed within 10 working days unless the size or nature of the query requires a greater time to respond. In such circumstances this will be discussed with the enquirer at the earliest opportunity and a reasonable timetable will be agreed.

These rates are subject to review. Prices correct at 05 May 2021.

Incidental expenses

All HER users may be liable for incidental expenses such as photocopying, printing and postage. The costs are as follows: -

Photocopying/Printing £2.00 per sheet

Postage users may be charged postage if search exceeds 5 pages. Please contact the HER for further details.

4. Method of payment

Following the enquiry an invoice will be sent out to the HER user by Berkshire Archaeology with details of payment by BACS or cheque. A purchase order or job number will be requested so it can be quoted on the invoice. All payments should be made payable to **Reading Borough Council**.

Cheque payments should be sent to Berkshire Archaeology, Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading RG1 6AF

When visiting in person and photocopying is the only charge, payment is requested on receipt.