

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

Church Buildings & Records

How can we help you?

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service works to protect, preserve, manage, record, interpret and promote the history and historic environment of Worcestershire, and are based in The Hive, Worcester. We have an official duty to help you through offering advice on the care of your buildings and their records, but we are also happy to talk to you about ways of making the most of your historic buildings and records by working with the community.

Archaeological advice

Churches, whatever their date, are a key part of the history and archaeology of any town or village. They are important monuments in their own right but they also tell us about religious, social and economic changes in the parish they serve. Any building work that is proposed in the church or graveyard can provide an opportunity to uncover further information about the heritage of the parish and it is important that this evidence is not damaged or destroyed without recording.



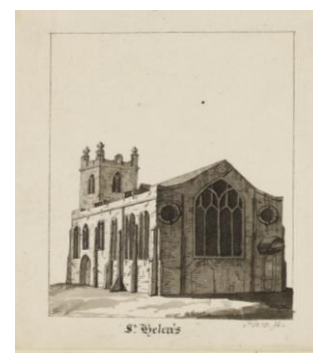
Victoria Bryant (Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service Manager) is the archaeological advisor to Worcester Diocesan Advisory Committee. If you are intending to apply for faculty and your proposals involve changes to the fabric of the church or ground works in the graveyard please contact Victoria at vbryant@worcestershire.gov.uk as early as possible. Advice provided before and during the design stage and before submission of faculty could save you time and money. Changes could include:-

- Re-pointing and removal of plaster
- Underpinning
- Lowering of floor levels
- Replacement of stonework and renewal of timberwork
- Building extensions
- Graveyard extensions
- Excavation of pipe trenches, digging of drains.

The following booklets provide more guidelines and advice.

- <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/caring-for-places-of-worship-report/>
- http://www.churchcare.co.uk/images/archaeology_bg.pdf

Money for repairs from the Heritage Lottery Fund and some other funders often come with a condition of community engagement. We have worked with many organisations to help celebrate local heritage with their communities, and would be happy to talk to you about this. Please contact our Outreach Manager, Paul Hudson, explorethepast@worcestershire.gov.uk, if you are interested.



Diocesan Archives

Amongst our 12 miles of archives we probably hold some of your parish records here in The Hive as, in accordance with the Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978, the Bishop of Worcester has appointed us to act as a Diocesan Record Office. Dr Adrian Gregson (Archival Policy and Collections Manager) is the Diocesan Archivist. Adrian's role is primarily to advise the Bishop on the care and disposition of diocesan archives, but he can also advise you on any questions you have about keeping your records and registers for permanent safekeeping, and when you need to pass them on to us.



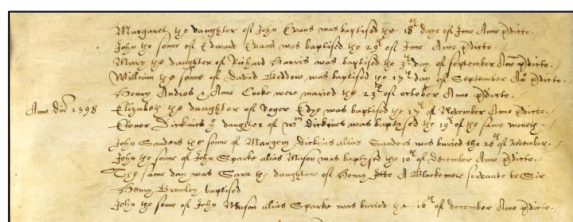
One of the main aims of the 1978 Measure has been to ensure the protection, preservation and accessibility of parish registers and records. This is best achieved through the deposit of records in The Hive, which is approved by the Bishop and The National Archives. When you deposit your records with us they are kept in secure, temperature and humidity controlled conditions in our strongrooms which meet British Standards. New deposits are inspected for mould and pests before processing for storage, and with an on-site Conservation Studio and Digital Photographic Darkroom, they may be treated, repaired and potentially digitised to ensure permanent preservation.

As a result of his role as Diocesan Archivist Adrian is also a deputy registrar and can sign copy baptism and marriage certificates (C of E) requested by members of the public.

If you looking at doing a display in your church, and might want to borrow back your registers please contact Adrian for advice on the best way to do this. You can e-mail him on agregson3@worcestershire.gov.uk. Our Learning & Outreach manager can also give suggestions for other sources to help with looking into the history of your church or discuss possible projects.

Researching Family History

Family history has become a popular pastime, and parish registers are one of the key sources to trace ancestors, as you may know if people have contacted you about viewing your registers. Here in the *Explore the Past* area of The Hive the parish registers we hold can be viewed. Many of them are on microfilm, available in our self-service area seven days a week. In addition to the registers we also hold Bishops Transcripts and Wills on microfilm, monumental inscriptions and baptism and marriage index (1660-1837) for Worcestershire.



We also have a wide range of other resources to help people trace their family history, and regularly get people starting their family history with us, so please feel free to direct people to us. Further information about the sources available can be found on our website.

For further information please contact us

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