

HULL HISTORY CENTRE





HULL HISTORY CENTRE - HULL CITY COUNCIL & THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Housing the former Hull City Archives, Local Studies Library and University Archives, the new Hull History Centre building has been specifically designed to provide a readily accessible service for a very wide audience.

Benefitting from a grant of £7.7 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the innovative building, which was designed by architects Pringle Richards Sharratt, is a ground-breaking partnership between Hull City Council and the University of Hull.

An unusual yet highly attractive aspect of the design is the enclosed yet very visible arcade which provides an intermediate space that is a transition from the streets of the city centre and has been incorporated to tempt people to explore the History Centre and engage with its collections. Behind the arcade on the ground floor, public areas include a large library and reading room together with a lecture theatre, seminar rooms and state of the art conservation facilities

The archive itself, which conforms to BS5454:2000, is on the upper floor. Allowing for expansion over the next thirty years, 13,000 linear metres of storage have been provided within 11 different areas. This storage is principally in the form of mobile shelving to ensure that available floor space is fully maximised.

Prior to commencement of the building's construction, Forster Ecospace Ltd worked closely with the two partners in the project and carried out detailed surveys of their current holdings to help determine the types of storage required. After preparing their initial proposals, and following a vigorous selection process which involved the project managers, the architect and the client, Ecospace was recommended to the main contractor for the building as the shelving supplier of choice.

Because the archive contains a wide variety of items, various accessories have been incorporated within the shelving to house these. They include drawers for film media, pigeon holes for plate glass negatives and pull-out reference shelves to facilitate retrieval of items within the stacks.

Shelf depths vary and although the majority of stored items are in archive boxes which are stored on 400mm deep shelves, shelves for books ranging in depth from 250mm to 800mm have also been provided.

To house the Council's very large quantity of A1 & AO plans, 800mm deep shelves have been fitted within bays 1200mm and 1500mm wide.

Ecospace worked closely with the main contractor, ISG, to complete the project on time and on budget and, since opening to the public on 25th January 2010, the Hull History Centre has had over 13,000 visitors; a considerable achievement for this groundbreaking partnership.

