

Catch up meeting with [REDACTED], Suffolk Archives, 30th January 2020

Bury St Edmunds office re-opens today after 2 weeks closure for redecoration of public areas.

Lowestoft will be closed for the whole of February. There will be a family friendly re-opening event on Saturday 29th February, and new opening times will commence Monday 2nd March. Opening times will be Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 10am to 2pm/3pm, equivalent to 30 hours of staff time per week, not 30 hours open to the public.

The storage area (far l/h corner of searchroom) has been racked out and will provide space for collections requiring a higher level of supervision – eg Port of Lowestoft collection. Suffolk Archives (SA) have received a really good level of engagement from Port of Lowestoft Research Society – who are delighted with the refurbishment plans.

The re-launch exhibition will be on Victorian Lowestoft; focusing on – and celebrating – those collections remaining at Lowestoft.

There will also be external repairs being done to the Library building, including roof repairs.

[REDACTED] has been asked to put together a Cabinet paper by Cllr [REDACTED], exploring the possibilities for transporting collections back to Lowestoft for consultation.

The Hold, Ipswich

Drying out in the strongrooms continues.

Brynzeel will be installing the racking in early/mid February.

Carters (building firm) will be bringing in external consultants to advise on drying out. NCS membership has also been stepped up, and [REDACTED] will be attending to provide additional consultation/ advice.

Once the shelving has been installed, SA and Carters will try to establish a 3-day no access period for the strongroom (probably a weekend plus a Friday or MOnday) so that baseline humidity and temperature readings can be established.

At present, SA are still unable to provide fixed re-opening dates. UK Power Network have attended the site on schedule, and the site is now connected to the electricity meters.

Official handover date from Carters will be 4th May. Exhibition and IT staff will be working in the building prior to this to reduce fit-out times.

The launch of the Friendly Invasion exhibition will now probably not be until mid-May, but the launch event/ Accreditation presentation with Jeff James will still be going ahead as planned. This will now take place in Uni of Suffolk Waterfront Building, and will include escorted tours of The Hold.

SA may have to extend the accessions moratorium beyond June, due to the ongoing uncertainty over move dates.

SA have also started advertising for Front of House volunteers for The Hold, to help visitors navigate the new building. This will include support for reception, exhibition and shop areas.

Notifications of collections moves: [REDACTED] notified key depositors of the planned move on 6th January. Have we heard anything back from them? [REDACTED] to check whether the relevant information re Manorial collections was also sent to [REDACTED] at the time.

The next step will be to identify those collections to be relocated from Bury St Edmunds.

Future of Gatacre Road site: it has been agreed that SCC's Records Management Unit will take over the management of Gatacre Road once it has been vacated by SA. SCC collections will be moved from a range of existing RM storage facilities throughout the county – saving approx. £160K p/a in storage/ maintenance costs. The air-conditioning to the strongrooms will be switched off and conditions will be monitored.

Options for Registrars and Coroners to store their collections at The Hold are also being explored.

New staffing structure: is still bedding in at present, and some working hour patterns will not be fully established until the move to The Hold has been completed. There has been some low level staff dis-satisfaction with the new hours/ structure and a couple of staff members have chosen to leave rather than adopt the new structure.