



Historic Environment Record Access and Charging Policy

1. Introduction

Content of the Historic Environment Record

North Somerset Council maintains the Historic Environment Record for North Somerset. The North Somerset Historic Environment Record (NSHER) is the primary source of information about the historic environment in North Somerset Council. It includes a database that contains more than 40,000 records with information about remains from the prehistoric period to the present day. These provide information on nationally designated (conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments), locally designated and undesignated heritage assets.

Mapped data

The database is linked to a series of digital maps 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 such as ancient field systems. 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.

How do I access the HER?

The HER is based within the Strategic Developments Team at the Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road in Weston-super-Mare. You can acquire information from the HER in a number of different ways: email (DM.Archaeology@n-somerset.gov.uk), telephone (01934 426228) or through our website (<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning/planning-advice/heritage/heritage-further-reading/>) where you will find an interactive map online (<http://map.n-somerset.gov.uk/her.html>).

Please note that the information contained on the HER website is not suitable for commercial purposes. Individuals or organisations requiring data for these purposes must contact the HER directly for appropriate data.

Opening times

The HER is open for appointments on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, 10am to 5pm when staff are available. HER staff 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.

Facilities

There are currently limited facilities at the Town Hall, so if you wish to visit in person you will need to telephone first to make an appointment and make sure that someone is available; please call 01934 426228 or email DM.Archaeology@n-somerset.gov.uk.

If you choose to visit the HER in person, the HER Officer can undertake printing or make photocopies for you. Details of charges for photocopying and printing can be found in section 3.2.

A range of resources is available to visitors, including archaeological reports and photographs. Local journals and a large reference collection are held in the North Somerset Studies Library at the Library in the Town Hall. Visitors are welcome but must have a library card or proof of name and address. Hard copy maps are held at the Somerset Heritage Centre and will need to be contacted directly if you wish to view these maps.

Searching the HER

Historic Environment Records (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.

2. Conditions of Use

Introduction

North Somerset Council is committed to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In order to ensure that information from the North Somerset 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.

Complaints Procedure

If you have any complaint about the service you have received, please contact:

Strategic Developments Team
Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UJ
DM.Archaeology@n-somerset.gov.uk
01934 426228

Guidance for Users

1. North Somerset HER users are requested to inform North Somerset Council of the following online by submitting the form below:

- (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 North Somerset HER, but this is normally waived for enquiries for non-commercial, educational or personal research, except where searches require extensive work. The costs of paper, printing and other incidental expenses may be charged to all users.

3. The North Somerset HER is the copyright of North Somerset Council.

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 North Somerset 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 North Somerset 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 North Somerset HER, North Somerset Council cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any particular data and its source.

7. North Somerset Council 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. North Somerset Council 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.

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 North Somerset Council;
- (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 20 working days.

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, 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. For most other users, such as members of the public and students carrying out personal research or recognised archaeological and historical societies, 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.

3.1 Scale of Charges

North Somerset Council offers two services when requesting information from the NSHER: a priority service and a standard service.

For a priority or standard search:

1. For a priority search (5 working day turnaround) £210 including VAT at the current rate.
2. For a standard search (20 working day turnaround) £144 including VAT at the current rate.

North Somerset Council reserves the right to levy a higher charge for more extensive HER searches. For these larger searches the enquirer should contact the HER team to confirm any extra cost.

Requests for PDF copies of grey literature reports carry no charge.

Requests for non-commercial, educational or personal research, carry no charge, except where searches require extensive work.

These rates are subject to review. Prices correct at 12 August 2021.

3.2 Incidental expenses

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

Photocopying A4 black & white	£0.15
Photocopying A3 black & white	£0.35
Photocopying A4 colour	£0.60
Photocopying A3 colour	£1.20
Minimum charge for sending items by post	Royal Mail tariff applies

3.3 Method of payment

Users are asked to use the online form, where payment can be made by debit or credit card. If however this is not possible, an invoice will be sent out to the HER user by North Somerset Council.