



The Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd

Historic Environment Record

Information Services Policy

Description: This document sets out the HER's policy both for serving the established user base and for developing its audience.

Source: The document *GGAT HER Information Services Policy* has been compiled by The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd. This document is based upon and contains information from *The Welsh Archaeological Trusts Regional Historic Environment Records Access and Charging Policy* (Jan 2005), *GGAT HER Cost Recovery Fees policy* (2008), and follows recommendations from *Informing the Future of the Past: Guidelines for Historic Environment Records (Second Edition, 2007)*.

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1. The Historic Environment Record

1.1. What is a Historic Environment Record?

The Glamorgan-Gwent Historic Environment Record (HER) is the official register of archaeological sites in South East Wales, maintained by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust. The record holds information on over 25,000 sites and events in 12 local authority areas - Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan. The HER is the primary source of information on all aspects of the local historic environment of Wales, and acts as a tool for recording the ongoing process of its interpretation, conservation and management.

1.2. What sort of information is available?

The Regional Historic Environment Records contain information on a wide range of known archaeological sites, monuments and artefacts of periods spanning the Prehistoric to the twentieth century. The HER database currently contains over 25,000 records covering the whole of Southeast Wales. Information is held in a variety of formats, available for consultation. These include:

- Map based information derived from paper OS maps and the HER GIS system.
- Aerial Photographic Collections (yet to be catalogued): includes oblique aerial photographs of locations throughout South Wales, spanning the late 1970s to early 2000. In addition, a photographic archive is currently being digitised and catalogued.
- A small HER reference library with various local interest books and journals.
- A Report Archive of 1,500 archaeological and heritage reports within the GGAT area.
- Further information files and paper records: contain a vast range of unique material including correspondence, sketch plans, maps and site histories.
- Extended National Database of Wales (ENDEX): Access to data from the ENDEX database. A memorandum of understanding exists between the RCAHMW and partner organisations – the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts, CADW and NMGW, to exchange data and to increase public access to archaeological information across Wales.

1.3. Who has Access to the Record?

The HER is a publicly accessible record. Restrictions and charging are set out in *The Welsh Archaeological Trusts Regional Historic Environments Record: Access and Charging Policy* and in *The GGAT HER Cost Recovery Fees Policy*. Future access will be refused where these policies have not been respected.

1.4. How to Access the Record

Access for non-commercial enquirers is available through the *Archwilio* website www.archwilio.org.uk.

Access to HER information additional to that found on *Archwilio* and for commercial enquirers is currently managed through correspondence on HER enquiry forms. On receipt of a completed HER enquiry form, the Historic Environment Record Manager will send a summary of the HER information via post or email. However, enquirers are encouraged to visit the HER as considerable additional information is held in our paper records. Appointments should be arranged with the Historic Environment Record Manager.

Access is FREE to members of the public, academics and recognised historical and archaeological societies. Enquiries from bodies or individuals undertaking work on a commercial basis will incur a service charge. We welcome enquiries either by phone, email, letter or FAX. All enquirers are asked to complete a HER Enquiry form and to read the User Agreement for our records, these are available on request or can be downloaded from our website at www.ggat.org.uk. If enquirers wish to visit the HER, members of staff are on hand to assist with enquiries.

2. Service Standards and Facilities

2.1. Commitment to User

The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd is committed to providing a high quality service. All HER enquirers can expect the following standards of service:

- All enquiries are processed as soon as possible and we aim to respond to all enquiries within 15 working days.
- A standard HER search will include core details of the following records:
 - GGAT HER
 - GGAT Grey Literature Report Archive
 - GGAT Her Linear Tables
 - Cadw Listed Buildings
 - Cadw Scheduled Ancient Monuments
 - RCAHMW NMR
 - Registered Parks and Gardens
 - Registered Historic Landscapes
- Where possible, the above data will be supplied in the format specified by the enquirer.
- We aim to provide adequate facilities for any user of the HER.
- We provide a comfortable working space for visitors to the HER.
- We are committed to improving our service to meet expectations of the user.

2.2. Opening Hours & Contact

The HER is open to visitors daily (by appointment only) from Monday to Friday 10.00am – 1.00pm and 2.00pm – 4.00pm. Enquirers should contact:

Historic Environment Record Manager
Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd.
Heathfield House
Heathfield
Swansea
SA1 6EL

Tel. (01792) 655208
Fax. (01792) 474469
Email. her@ggat.org.uk

2.3. Signing In

Visitors to the HER are required to sign in at reception and fill in a visitors book, giving details such as name, address and reason for visit. For security reasons, all umbrellas, bags and briefcases must be left in the secure reception area and not taken into the HER Search/ Study rooms without prior permission.

2.4. User Facilities

- A car park with space for visitors is available at the front of the Trusts premises.
- Conveniences are located on the ground floor of the building.
- A supervised search room with IT facilities is available for advanced users of the HER. For enquirers who are unfamiliar with the HER, dedicated staff are available to provide instruction and guidance.
- Conference facilities are available on request.
- Free information leaflets.
- Supervised access to the HER Reference Library containing collections on a range of local archaeology books and journals.
- Printing and photocopying facilities are available.
- The GGAT offices have disabled access and all HER facilities are located on the ground floor of the building. Designated staff are also on hand to provide support and assistance with accessibility. Unfortunately, at this time the Trust offices do not have disabled toilet facilities. In line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2004, GGAT is committed to access for all and will make reasonable adjustments to provide an equal level of service to all users.

2.5. Copyright

Users of the HER must abide by all copyright and other legal restrictions that may apply to information held in the record. Supplementary records may include material of which the copyright is held by other organisations. The Data Protection Act 1998 also governs the release of certain types of information.

Digital cameras or mobile phones with fitted imaging devices can be used as a means of copying information, however permission needs to be sought in advance and the appropriate copyright acknowledgement used.

Users will be required to acknowledge the use made of the HERs in any document or published report. For outputs containing HER data, the following statement should be used:

“© Derived from information held by the GGAT HER Charitable Trust, Copyright.”

3. Schedule of Fees (2008)

Historic Environment Records do not charge for information. Access is FREE to members of the public, academics and recognised historical and archaeological societies. However, reasonable costs will be recovered when dealing with enquiries of a commercial nature; this charge is levied to cover the cost of staff time to conduct the inquiry as requested on the HER Enquiry form. The *GGAT HER Cost Recovery Fees* policy outlines the service charges and facility fees that will apply to a HER enquiry. Costs arising from the use of GGAT facilities (photocopies and copy materials) will be recovered for all enquiries.

4. Access and Charging Policy

The Welsh Archaeological Trusts have produced *The Welsh Archaeological Trusts Regional Historic Environments Record: Access and Charging Policy*. This document outlines the type of information available from a HER, what may be withheld, and the reasons for this. The policy aims to supply all information required by the user in order for them to access the HER.

In conjunction with this, enquirers must read and agree to the conditions of access outlined on the HER enquiry form before an enquiry will be processed.

5. Research into User Profiles and Service Satisfaction

The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd is currently carrying out a major review of the main HER user groups, in line with *The Welsh Historic Environment: Position Statement* produced in 2007 by The Welsh Assembly Government. A new HER Enquiry Form and associated HER Enquiry Log have been drawn up in order to monitor trends, changes and improvements in the use of the GGAT Historic Environment Record. All information contained within the HER enquiry log (and associated paper records) is held in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. This information will only be used to monitor the services offered by The Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust. It will not be provided to any outside bodies or agencies.

5.1. How is feedback gained from the various HER Users?

GGAT is dedicated to the delivery of an excellent standard of service and operation. However, in order to identify our strengths and weaknesses and assess what steps need to be taken to provide a more effective level of service a new Historic Environment Record Satisfaction Form has recently been created in order to determine levels of

satisfaction from the various enquirers of the HER. This form will be offered to all HER user groups including both remote enquirers and visitors to the Trust.

Feedback of curatorial services is also obtained through various heritage outreach activities by the completion of feedback forms. These include an assessment of the services offered by the HER whilst exhibiting at such events.

5.2. How are HER service complaints registered?

Grievance procedures are outlined in *The Welsh Archaeological Trusts Regional Historic Environments Record: Access and Charging Policy*. All grievances relating to the HER service should be addressed to:

The Welsh Archaeological Trusts Committee
c/o Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
7a Church Street
Welshpool
Powys
SY21 7DL

Any grievances relating to GGAT should be addressed to:

The Chief Executive
Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust Ltd
Heathfield House
Heathfield
Swansea
SA1 6EL