

WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY TRUST

VISION 2015

BACKGROUND

The County Council has published a vision for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archives and Heritage Service in 10 years' time. It is the result of their conversations with the users, staff and stakeholders of the service. It aims to bring together and develop the ideas, hopes and requirements these groups have discussed with them. It will be the basis of further consultation and discussion. A copy of that report is available on request.

The County Council's vision is necessarily general and will inform detailed future plans such as annual plans and funding applications. It also informs the work of partner organisations such as the William Salt Library Trust, whose Trustees have developed this vision paper to give direction for the Library. It is written in the context of the both the overall vision of the Archives and Heritage Service, which is;

"Connecting people to the collected stories and heritage of Staffordshire, Stoke on Trent and beyond."

...and their mission "to connect people to the memories of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, by engaging them with the collections we develop and preserve for current and future generations".

THE WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY TRUST

The William Salt Library Trust is a charitable organisation founded in 1872 to look after the collection of William Salt. Salt was a London banker whose family came from Staffordshire and a collector who focused on acquiring items about Staffordshire and its history. He was successful in obtaining several rare items. After his death in 1868 the county gentry persuaded his widow not to sell the collection and raised the funds to establish the Trust.

The object of the Charity is 'to advance the education of the public through the provision and maintenance for the purposes of study or research, of a collection of books, manuscripts, engravings, deeds, autographs and works of art relating in particular to the County of Staffordshire'.

This collection is held in the William Salt Library, a Grade II* Georgian town house in Eastgate Street, Stafford immediately in front of Staffordshire Record Office.

Partners

- The Staffordshire County Council Archive and Heritage Service manages the day to day running of the Library on behalf of the Trust and Joanna Terry, Head of Archives and Heritage, is also the Librarian. Other key partners are:
 - The Diocese of Lichfield
 - Keele University
 - The Victoria County History
- Staffordshire County Council maintains the town house on a fully repairing 99 year

lease, and contributes to the running costs of the collection.

- The Library is supported by The Friends of the William Salt Library who raise funds for specific projects.
- NADFAS volunteers help with cataloguing and repackaging, while further individual volunteers help with cataloguing and other tasks.

The Collection

- The unique Special Collections of books and newspapers are kept in the grade 2* William Salt Library, which is now not suitable for long term storage owing to excess humidity and the fire risk, amongst other things.
- The collection's most vulnerable items are kept in the County Record Office where the archive storage rooms are full and more are needed to continue collecting.
- The collection continues to increase, with a total of 245 accessions received during 2014/15, including 95 printed books
- The Conservation Book programme, together with the Save a Book Scheme sponsored by the Friends, saw 19 titles saved for the future in 2014/2015

Activity

There has been a significant reduction in activity in the Library over the past nine years, from 2005/2006 to 2014/2015.

	2014/2015	2005/2006
Personal Use		
Number of individual visits	1,237	1,783
Number of documents/restricted access items produced for readers	1,485	2,131
Distance Use		
Number of postal enquiries	5	91
Number of email enquiries	424	277
Number of telephone enquiries	352	1,172
Reprographics Services		
Number of photocopies supplied	297	1011
Number of photocopy orders	36	173
Number of Staffordshire Views prints sold	37	194
Number of digital images other than Staffs Views supplied	13	2
Online Use		
Number of page views on Library web site	18,672	69,398
Number of visitor sessions on Library web site	6,735	13,276
Number of resources viewed Staffs Views web site	22,342	62,445
Number of visitor sessions on Staffs Views web site	3,910	33,275

THE VISION FOR THE WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY TRUST 2015 -2025

The Trust in 10 years' time will be an independent partner contributing to a model archive and heritage service. Our vision is that, by 2025:

The William Salt Library Trustees, working with the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archives and Heritage Service, will have ensured the integrity and security of the collection and increased its availability and visibility to the public, so that the numbers of users and researchers- on-line and visiting - have increased.

The planned activity for the archive and heritage service includes many topics to which the Trust might contribute, if resources and time allow. The activities with the greatest priority are:

An Active Partnership Approach

- Developing and strengthening existing partnerships with the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archives and Heritage Service, the Friends of the William Salt Library and NADFAS
- Developing new partnerships to help further the interests of the collection
- Investigating how more volunteers could contribute actively to the management and delivery of our services and to the care of the collection.

By 2025

- The Trustees have Increased the number and types of volunteers who help deliver our services

Resilience, Sustainability and New ways of Working

- Ensuring the long-term security of the collection through housing in PD5454 compliant storage, in the best possible conditions, and having space to continue to collect for the next 25 years.
- Contributing to the redesign and development of the whole site to enable the sustainable use of the townhouse and allow the new library service to be provided in a more cost-effective, sustainable way. If absolutely necessary, however, we will seek alternative solutions to the future of the townhouse.
- Continuing to raise funds for the conservation and care of the collection and investigating the opportunities for increased fundraising to support new developments which could improve access and understanding of the collection
- Adapting to new ways of working in response to the changes in the structure and procedures of the archive and heritage service.

By 2025

- The collection is housed in PD5454 compliant storage, and displayed in buildings which are accessible, welcoming and comfortable. The customer experience is warm, welcoming and inspiring. Users are easily able to use and engage with collections and share their knowledge.

- There is a sustainable use for the old townhouse and reduced dependency on council funds.

Reaching and engaging with a wide range of people and building new audiences.

- Ensuring the identity of the William Salt collection is secured by signage in key areas, by creating exhibitions and standing displays, and by training all staff members so that they may understand the importance of this collection.
- Ensuring the joint service allows the browsing of book collections in open access and, where possible, the atmosphere of a library has been sustained
- Investigating marketing, promotion and use of social media to reach new users
- Contributing ways to browse the collections online and onsite through permanent and temporary exhibitions

By 2025

- Public awareness of the diverse themes and treasures within the collection has grown measurably.

Online presence and remote access

- Whilst ensuring there is a WSL website/webpage, contributing to a new focus on providing online resources and a rejuvenated online presence to reach more people, balanced with a programme to engage more people with the original documents
- Contributing to the plans to manage and provide access to born digital archives and to upgrade the number and quality of on-line user services.

By 2025

- More services are delivered online and more of the collection is available online

Delivery

To deliver the vision by 2025 we will have, in conjunction with the Archive and Heritage Service:

- Developed options with the archive and heritage service for how we will jointly use our buildings to secure our collections.
- Sought funding to increase access and engagement with our collections by redesigning buildings and creating activity programmes to attract a broader range of users.
- Ensured the resilience of the collection for the future.

The Trustees will update this Plan annually and undertake a full review in 2018.