Vital funding awarded to unlock archive stories

Maps, photos and records from Rotherham's community archives. Credit: Rotherham Archives and Local Studies.

The first round of Archives Revealed grants has given a total of £675,000 to 13 projects, stretching from Edinburgh to Belfast and Rotherham to Brighton.

The funding will help build the skills and resilience needed to protect these archives for future generations and make them more accessible to the public.

Twelve archives – whose records date as far back as 1792 – have received cataloguing grants. Their projects will shine a light on subjects ranging from female Paralympians to public transport, and mental health treatment to community youth theatre.

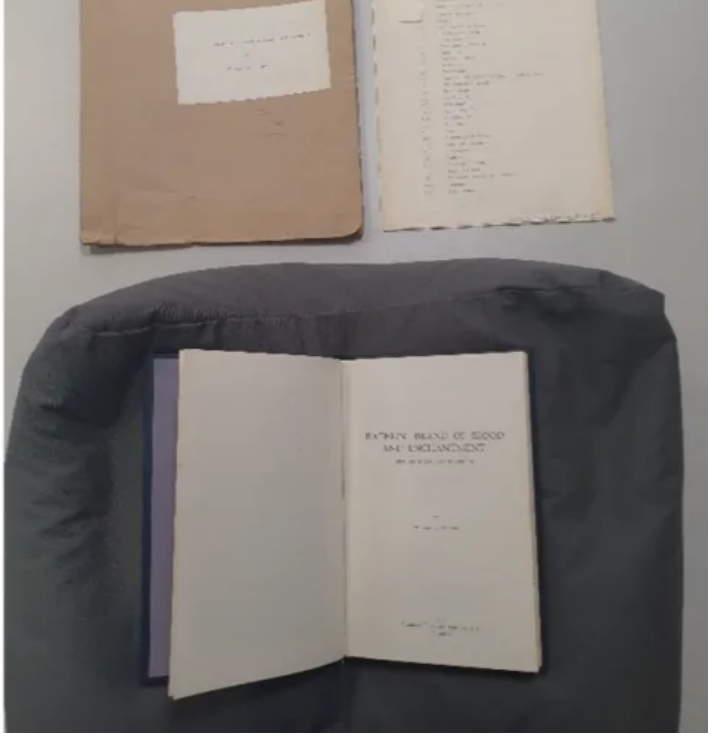
A painting of the Brighton Pavilion in the 19th century. Credit: Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust.

The successful cataloguing projects are:

- Derry City and Strabane District Council Tower Museum – £39,620
- University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections – £50,000
- The Mulberry Bush Organisation – £39,615
- Royal Academy of Dance – £49,352
- Peak District National Park Foundation – £45,000
- Poetry Archive – £39,260
- National Paralympic Heritage Trust – £45,230
- City of Edinburgh Council – £50,000
- Sandwell Archives – £49,055
- Rotherham Archives and Local Studies – £42,406
- Belfast Library and Society for Promoting Knowledge – £39,432
- Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust (Brighton & Hove Museums) – £50,000

Widening access, sharing culture

A further £150,000 consortium grant has gone to The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), working in partnership with the Nerve Centre. Their project, Now We're Talking, will catalogue and widen access to the papers of two significant cultural figures from Northern Ireland: the author and broadcaster, Sam Hanna Bell and the folklorist, writer and broadcaster, Michael J Murphy.



Left: Sam Hanna Bell and Graeme Roberts, Rathlin Island, June 1950. Right: Partial typescript draft of a book titled Rathlin: Island of Blood and Enchantment: The Folklore of Rathlin by Michael J Murphy and a hardback typescript copy of the book. Credit: Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.

David Huddleston, acting PRONI Director, said: “Murphy and Bell were chroniclers of Northern Ireland’s people, culture and traditions and their works provide a unique lens through which to view the region’s history. Using their extensive archives as a starting point, this project aims to reconnect communities with their shared cultural heritage through an exploration of tradition, memory and identity.”

This is the first consortium grant awarded through Archives Revealed, enabling heritage organisations to work together to share skills and knowledge, foster partnerships and build organisational resilience in the sector.

About Archives Revealed

Archives Revealed is a £5million partnership with The National Archives, the Pilgrim Trust and the Wolfson Foundation, made possible by National Lottery funding. It is the only funding programme in the UK dedicated to the cataloguing and sharing of archival collections.

Liverpool Record Office.

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Ancestral Futures by Eelyn Lee and collaborators, commissioned by Dig Where You Stand. Photo: Anh Do.

l fill gaps in the archives

Supporting diversity, equity and inclusion in the great outdoors. Photo: Wayfinding project.

Inclusion, access and participation: eight ways to improve your project's reach and impact