

Bringing centuries of Surrey records into the 21st century

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Residents, researchers and history enthusiasts will soon find it easier than ever to explore Surrey's rich heritage thanks to a major investment in a new collections management system at the Surrey History Centre, by Surrey County Council.

Home to Surrey's archives, Surrey History Centre, with accredited status by The National Archives, cares for an extraordinary collection spanning more than 900 years of history. Its six miles of shelving contain around six million documents, manuscripts and parchment records dating back to the Middle Ages.

The collection includes family and house history records such as parish registers, census returns, civil registration records, poor law records, electoral registers and manorial records. It also houses thousands of historic photographs, postcards, watercolours, engravings and archive films, alongside local history books, directories, newspapers, periodicals and historic maps.

Among its treasured special collections are records and papers connected to notable Surrey figures and businesses, including Lewis Carroll, renowned garden designer Gertrude Jekyll and the Broadwood piano family.

Managing and preserving such an extensive collection is a significant undertaking. The introduction of the new collections management system will transform how people discover and access Surrey's archives, making searches faster, more intuitive and more comprehensive.

The improved online catalogue will be available Monday 14 September and provide an improved user experience, helping users quickly locate the records and documents they need. Documents can then be ordered up from home in advance of their visit to the Surrey History Centre.

Councillor Mark Nuti, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, said: "Our archives tell the story of Surrey and the people who have lived, worked and shaped our county over hundreds of years. By investing in modern technology, we are helping to ensure these invaluable records can continue to be discovered, explored and enjoyed by future generations.

"This is about investing in the future to gain access to the past. The new collections management system will make it easier for residents, family historians and researchers to explore Surrey's rich heritage, with improved search functionality and the ability to request documents before visiting the Surrey History Centre. These improvements will help people plan their research more effectively and make the most of their time with us, while encouraging even more people to discover the fascinating stories held within Surrey's archives."

The investment forms part of Surrey County Council's commitment to preserving the county's heritage while making public services more accessible and user-friendly through digital innovation.

For more information about the Surrey History Centre and its collections, visit: [Surrey History Centre - Surrey County Council](#)

Surrey County Council



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