

## Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record Officer's Report

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Author: Historic Environment Record Officer

### A. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To advise the Forum of the work of the Buckinghamshire HER since the last BHEF meeting.

### B. PROPOSED ACTION

- 2 **The Forum is particularly invited to NOTE the HER performance indicators**

### C. RESOURCES

- 3 At present the HER service comprises one core member of staff with occasional assistance provided by volunteers, students and business support staff.
- 4 As reported to previous meetings, financial constraints on the County Council continue to grow leading to pressure to increase income from fees and charges to recover a greater proportion of the costs of the historic environment record. A revised charging policy was approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

### D. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### 5 HER Performance Indicators

Service performance indicator statistics are collected for the County Council's performance management system.

<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2011</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2011</b>
Historic Environment Records data inputting backlog (targets: reports < 30; collections < 1000 by March 2011)	Reports =55 Collect = 516 Total =571	Reports =60 Collect = 516 Total =576

<b>Volume measures</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2011</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2011</b>
Number of Higher Level Stewardship	4	2

applications handled		
Number of reports received by the HER	49	38
Number of Historic Environment Records enquiries handled:		
commercial	12	16
non-commercial	5	1
UBP web-site users	NA	NA

Usage statistics for the UBP websites have not been available since the new version went live on the BCC web servers on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010, due to technical restrictions required by BCC ITU. We are attempting to resolve this to enable website user statistics to be collected but have not been successful to date.

Use of the HER for non-commercial purposes continues to remain comparatively low, probably as a result of people using the online versions of the database. At the last meeting of the Forum I reported that following a fall in the number of commercial enquiries in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of 2010, in the New Year the number of enquiries seemed to be picking up again; however the upward trend slumped from the end of April and has remained fairly low over the summer. User satisfaction with the service provided by the HER remains high, with 100% satisfaction with the HER and with the UBP website.

The HER Officer has been dealing with consultations for Higher Level Stewardship applications since June 2010 as a result of the Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer working part-time. The number of stewardship application consultations has therefore been included in the volume measures above.

At the end of May the Archaeology Service moved offices from Annexe A to the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the County Hall Tower Block, along with other teams from Planning and Environment. The relocation has brought us onto the same floor as our colleagues in Planning, Waste, Rights of Way, Natural Environment and Sustainability and has increased the visibility of the Archaeology Service, making joint working much easier. The move has meant that the HER no longer has dedicated search room facilities for visitors, however an arrangement has been made with the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies to allow visitors to use space in their Education Room; whilst greater use of digitised resources has already had an impact on the way HER enquiries are dealt with.

## E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Archaeological Reports submitted to the Bucks HER

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