

## **An Expression of Interest**

### **A Strategic Collaboration between UWTSD and Carmarthenshire Archives Service managed by Carmarthenshire County Council.**

#### **Purpose**

To provide an outline proposal guiding a possible strategic partnership between UWTSD and the Carmarthenshire Archives Service of the Carmarthenshire County Council for the continued management, public access and future development of the Carmarthenshire Archives.

#### **Background and Context.**

The discovery of mould in the Parc Myrddin strong-room of its premises in Richmond Terrace in 2013, forced the closure of the Carmarthen Archives to public access whilst the extent and severity of this was investigated. Subsequent investigation found the premises to be structurally unsound and well below industry standard requirements (PD5454) for continued storage of such materials. Moreover the archive resources themselves (the 'paper and parchment') faced on-going deterioration and degradation unless professionally treated. As a result the worst effected materials were transported to *Harwell Support Services*, who offer specialist collections management solutions for libraries and archives, for immediate treatment. Temporary storage facilities for the returning 'treated' materials were found at the Glamorgan Archives in Cardiff. But with an 'uplift' of the remaining materials planned for November 2015, amounting in total to some 285m<sup>3</sup>, and with a completion date scheduled for June 2016 by when all treated materials would be available for return, a medium and longer term solution to the question of storage, public access and organisation of the archive materials was sought by the Carmarthen Archives Service. With help and guidance from MALD, a number of solutions are being explored by Carmarthenshire Archives Service and the County Council, to which the plan submitted forms one.

The plan presented here offers two things. First it presents a set of solutions to a range of issues facing the Carmarthenshire Archives. These solutions are both immediate, in terms of remedies to assist the archive meet its pressing need for capacity under the correct environmental conditions, and they are medium- long term, in addressing questions concerning the storage, public access and the improved management and organisation of the archive itself. Second, a partnership offers the potential to unlock a far-reaching and longstanding programme of civic engagement, cultural convergence and academic scholarship for the people and institutions of Carmarthen and West Wales.

## **Opportunities offered to Carmarthen Archives by the collaboration with UWTSD.**

Partnership with the University will offer the Carmarthenshire Archives Service a range of opportunities and potential for the current and future development of the Archives. Such a partnership will:

- Ensure the Carmarthenshire Archives remain in Carmarthen and thus open and accessible to the people of Carmarthen and West Wales.
- House the Archives within the infrastructure and support provided by UWTSD, and through partnership significantly enrich the civic life and community of Carmarthen and West Wales.
- Offer tangible support and enhancement for our joint commitment to, and delivery of, the Well-being of Future Generations Act of 2015, and in particular respond constructively to its goals of a 'Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language', and a 'Wales of cohesive communities'.
- Provide, through partnership, the Carmarthenshire Archives with a long term and sustainable future strategy for delivering on their statutory obligations in terms of organisation, management and public access to the County Archives.
- Maintain free public access to the resources and materials contained within the archives, and to provide the appropriate facilities and setting for such public engagement.
- Build upon existing University activities and expertise, to develop a wide assortment of public engagement and involvement including public exhibitions and displays, public 'taster' events, study mornings, genealogy and research workshops, book launches, social and cultural functions, regional and national conferences on archives and archive management.
- Support the digitalisation of key elements of the archives through the University's Digital Humanities expertise, building upon this emerging new sub-discipline that brings together experts from within computing science, digital media, and the arts and humanities, drawing innovatory energy from the application of new technologies to the storage and conservation of archived heritage
- Offer accommodation solutions at appropriate levels of environmental control, size and setting (in the case of Roderic Bowen library and Archive well above that industry standard) both as and when required, and according to the various stages of uplift, movement or re-location undertaken by the Carmarthenshire Archives Service.
- Provide expertise, as and when required, into the process of relocating an archive, based upon the previous experience within UWTSD of moving the Roderic Bowen Library and Archive, with all the concomitant issues surrounding the management and organisation of that process.
- Provide student volunteers, support and internships to assist in the organisation, cataloguing and digitisation of the archive, and where appropriate, assist in the day-to-day running of the archive.

## **Opportunities offered to UWTSD by the Collaboration with the Carmarthen Archives.**

Partnership with the Carmarthenshire Archives Service also offers huge opportunities and potential for the University both on its Carmarthen campus but also at its premises in Lampeter, where the Roderic Bowen Library and Archive is based, and in Swansea. Such a partnership will enable the University to capitalise on its historic links with the history and heritage of West Wales:

- To explore and develop clear potential opportunities offered from the relocation of S4C to the Carmarthen campus of UWTSD, in the development of a wider regional cultural, linguistic and educational 'hub' in Carmarthen.
- Building upon current University activities and its historic association with education, schools and training, to develop a broad and structured engagement with local schools and colleges, through activities such as community engagement visits, focused project work, research into local events and family history, the study of local and regional identities.
- To expand scholarly use and research of the archives by University staff and visiting International academics, undergraduate and Post-graduate students completing dissertations, MPhil and PhD research, research projects and academic publications;
- To more firmly embed the University's existing programme of studies at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, with materials, the organisation and the operations of the Carmarthen Archives. This would include its current provision of courses at postgraduate level of an MA in Heritage Practice and its MA in Local History. At undergraduate level its BA in Heritage Studies, a BA in Heritage Management, and its BA in Heritage Studies with Museums and Archives, and its BA in Digital Humanities with Heritage Studies.
- To provide the University with a vast wealth of important and historic documentation for potential digitalisation by both staff and students, for the purposes of community and civic engagement and education, linking two emerging disciplines and ensuring the long-term safeguarding and conservation of key elements of the archives.
- To develop in partnership with the archive new programmes of study at both undergraduate and postgraduate level in, for example, Archive Management, Archive and Museum Studies, Curatorship and Curatorial studies and Archive Digitalisation.
- To develop research programmes for students to undertake MRes, MPhil and PhD study based in and upon materials in the archives

## Values and mission

Both the Carmarthenshire Archives Service and the University root their activities in a set of core values. The partnership arrangements set out here, between Carmarthenshire Archives Service and the University, offer very clear and demonstrable opportunities for enhancing and embedding the core values of both institutions. For the Carmarthenshire Archives Service these core values, as set out in the County Council's Corporate Strategy, 2015-20, include:

- Valuing our people
- Improving our services
- Openness, trust and honesty
- Working in partnership
- Equality of opportunity
- Listening and delivering on promises
- Putting customers first
- Treating people and environment

For the University the core values include:

- Collaboration through the establishment of a range of strategic relationships at regional, national and international level.
- Inclusivity through putting learners first and championing lifelong learning without barriers; and supporting students from all backgrounds and at all stages of their education.
- Employability and creativity by harnessing the entrepreneurial, research, creative and enterprising skills of our learners.
- Sustainable Development through a system-based approach to delivering meaningful and relevant educational pathways that promotes learning and social responsibility.
- Wales and its distinctiveness through celebrating the distinctive linguistic and cultural assets and heritage of Wales.
- The concept of Global Citizenship through the development of further multi-national activities and opportunities for our learners, staff and partners.
- Research and its impact on policy by ensuring that our research activity and outcomes influence the evidence base of policies developed in Wales and beyond.

## University Expertise and Skills.

In taking forward the partnership the University is able to draw upon a range of skills and services within the institution to help ensure success and delivery. These include:

- A University Corporate Communications and Marketing Department able to advertise and disseminate widely, the knowledge, understanding and opportunities presented by the archive and its treasures, within both the local community and much further afield.
- The Carmarthen campus is home to the Faculty of Education and Community which includes academic units that liaise closely with schools, teachers, community centres, and counsellors who would make use of the archives in terms of educational projects, training and social/ community inclusion.
- A Library and Learning Resource Centre based on the Carmarthen campus that houses:
  - A range of study and learning spaces, reading rooms , open access, study corrals, all with wifi throughout
  - More than 110,000 books and reference materials, along with journals, artefacts for teaching, children's books and more. The library also includes student computers, photocopiers and printing facilities. The library is fully catalogued allowing you to easily find the resources you need for your studies.
- Library and Archive staff experienced in the management of an archive and special collection of International standing, housed in the newly relocated Roderic Bowen Library and Archive.
  - The Roderic Bowen Library & Archives, currently houses the Special Collections of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and includes the University's oldest printed books, manuscripts and archives and is one of the principal resources for academic research in Wales.
  - The Special Collection was acquired over the last 200 years, largely by bequest and donation, and include over 35,000 printed works, 8 medieval manuscripts, around 100 post medieval manuscripts, and 69 incunabula. Material from the Archives includes the early student registers and photographs from the mid nineteenth century onwards.
- Academic and scholarly expertise across a range of related areas and fields that can provide the essential support and assistance to the Carmarthen Archive service both now and in the future. This expertise is to be found amongst the academic and Library staff of the University where we have specialists in Heritage, Heritage Management, Welsh local History, Museums and Museology and display, and Archival management. To name a few of these experts:
  - Dr Jane Cartwright's research interests include medieval Welsh religious history, the cult of the Virgin Mary, the history of the nunneries in medieval Wales, virginity literature and Welsh saints' cults. Jane is one of the leading scholars working in the field

of Middle Welsh hagiography and she is currently working on a major research project on 'The Cult of Saints in Wales: medieval Welsh-language sources and their transmission'.

- Dr Rhiannon Ifans' main field of research is medieval Welsh literature, both poetry and prose. She is the foremost scholar working in the field of the Welsh carol and related texts.
  - Professor Denis Morgan researches into nineteenth century theology in Wales, the Reformation and post-Reformation; the Evangelical Revival in Wales and eighteenth century Dissent.
  - Conway Davies is the Course Director for the MA in Local History: South West Wales. He is a social historian who was the founder member of the Welsh Schools Heritage Association and editor of *The Welsh Historian*. He has worked on a number of European Funded Projects as well as assessing the impact and value of Heritage and Cultural upon Carmarthenshire's tourism industry.
  - Professor Janet Burton who is a trained archivist also researches into the history of medieval monastic and religious orders and congregations, and has published books on medieval monasticism in regional contexts (Yorkshire, Wales) and on the Cistercians, the regular canons, and religious women.
  - Dr Katherina Zinn whose research focuses upon museum environments with experience of working on projects in the Ägyptisches Museum der Universität Leipzig, the Princeton University Art Museum (Department of Ancient Art) as well as the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge. She also runs a partnership between UWTSO and Cyfarthfa Castle Museums and Art Gallery.
  - Dr Louise Emmanuel, specialises in Tourism, Tourism Development, Sustainability, Heritage Tourism and Landscape. She also works on pan-European tourism projects such as the Higher Education in Heritage and Cultural Tourism project (for which UWTSO was selected as the UK representative for this prestigious Erasmus Mundus project). The project, which ran from 2011-2013 was organised by the Italian Centre for Advanced Studies on Tourism and Tourism Promotion in Assisi, Italy.
- Close links with the Carmarthen Museum and the Friends of the Archive with whom collaborative support, community engagement and awareness-raising activities and heritage management, involvement could be sought.
  - The University has good and longstanding links with many regional Heritage partners and stakeholders. These include Cadw, Dyfed Archaeological Trust, the National Trust, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and the Brecon Beacon National Parks, the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales and English Heritage.
  - The University operates its own Museum, in partnership with the Local History Association. The start-up for this was achieved through a HLF grant of 30k which enabled a refit of the Old Porters Lodge into modern premises and enhanced facilities for public access. The Museum is run by local volunteers in conjunction with student volunteers (indeed the University uses it to provide practical on-site training for its students).

## University Infrastructure.

In taking forward the partnership the University is able to draw upon its existing infrastructure to help ensure success and delivery. These include:

- Appropriate accommodation for the storage and continued public access to materials housed in the archive. This includes both immediate or temporary storage space for archival materials (within the Roderic Bowen Library and Archive) as well as longer term storage solutions on the Carmarthen campus.
- At present the Roderic Bowen Library and Archive has approximately 200 linear metres of space for storage in an above industry standard environmental setting. This might be used as a temporary storage facility, for the partnership to use as appropriate to its particular needs at a given point in the cleaning and transfer process. With its be-spoke reading room and connection to the larger Library facilities it could also help in the delivery of various public engagements, conservation work, organisation and management of the archives or particular parts requiring cataloguing, preparation work, display or just for study.
- Long term storage capacity in accommodation that is appropriate to industry standard specifications for 'paper and parchment'. The amount of capacity was suggested at 285 m<sup>3</sup> though with additional capacity to allow for growth and development. Storage will be close to the main Library and Learning Resource centre on the Carmarthen campus (and to the proposed S4C development) thus ensuring appropriate public access and proximity to relevant facilities and staff. Funding and grant opportunities (as set out below) will be sought to develop the existing facilities in terms of wifi access, computer terminals, additional modern study furniture etc.
- Wrapped around the storage area and Library are the wider University facilities that students and public would benefit by access to. This would include the Halliwell Centre (ideal for exhibitions, displays, conferences, public meetings and various social events) the Refectory with its outside eating area, a café and social space, 24 hours porter's service and car-parking.
- The Carmarthen campus will also see in the near future the relocation of S4C onto a brand new, iconic site Yr Egin, alongside the more recent development of the new Welsh Language Centre in King Street. The opportunity thus exists to develop a really exciting cultural hub within Carmarthen, one that draws together historic, linguistic and heritage based initiatives into a focussed centre of activity and civic engagement for the whole community.

## Grant and Funding opportunities for the partnership.

The University has a Research, Innovation and Enterprise department specialised in working with both the public and private sector to support collaboration and build partnerships. Within this department there is a range of skills and expertise and a huge knowledge and experience of developing successful funding applications. The department has specific experience in applying for and receiving funding with a particular remit on conservation, archive, heritage management, and public engagement. This expertise will be channelled into ensuring that the Carmarthenshire Archive would be adequately financed to ensure that the objectives set out above would be met. In particular the University is already looking at various funding opportunities in relation to the Archives, in particular:

- **Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate** - small scale projects Small scale project funding for projects greater than £1,000 – but less than £15,000. Projects must support the goals set out in the Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and demonstrate wider multiple benefits for the local community, their environment and their local economy
- **Heritage Lottery Fund Transition Funding**- Grants from £10,000 to £100,000 for HLF grantees looking to make their organisations more resilient and improve how they manage heritage. Transition funding is available to UK organisations that want to achieve significant strategic change in order to become more resilient and sustain improved management of heritage for the long term. This can be through acquiring new skills or knowledge, or new models of governance, leadership, business and income-generation.
- **Wellcome Trust Resources for Libraries and Archives**- Research Resources awards facilitate research in fields associated with medical humanities and social science by supporting library and archive collections across the UK and Republic of Ireland. Funding for cataloguing, preservation and digitisation projects is available to create or improve access to collections of printed books and documents, manuscripts, film and photographic materials with research value for a wide range of researchers in fields associated with the history of medicine, medical humanities and social sciences as they relate to health. The scheme further seeks to foster collaborations between researcher communities and repositories, leading to creative partnerships and the seeding of new research proposals based on funded collections. Awards are typically between £10,000 and £150,000).
- Build upon the existing infrastructure and activity for engagements between academic units and local schools



### Some initial next steps (Aug- Sept 2015).

1. To secure approval from Carmarthenshire Archives Service of the Carmarthenshire County Council that such a partnership with UWTSd represents the best way forward for the Carmarthenshire Archives and can proceed to more detailed strategic and operational discussion and planning.
2. Development of a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the University and Carmarthenshire Archives Service of the Carmarthenshire County Council covering all aspects of the partnership with sign off by both parties to the MOU.
3. Establish a small Carmarthen Archives Steering Group comprising the Carmarthenshire Archives Service, UWTSd and other relevant stakeholders (as set out in the MOU) to monitor MOA and prepare detailed Action Plan for moving forward.
4. The Action will be rooted in the general aims and objectives set out in the MOU and will cover all aspects of the partnership though with particular focus upon: facilities, storage, 'uplift' arrangements, movement, organisation and management, staffing, grant applications, public access, projects to increase the *footfall* of the archives (both real and digital), community and school liaison,
5. As part of the process of devising an Action Plan, various stakeholders will be consulted, including some form of public consultation.
6. The Carmarthenshire Archives Service to begin to prepare for their uplift, in dialogue with UWTSd via the Steering Group, to ensure the safe and organised transfer and housing arrangements are in place and ready.

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