



West Sussex County Council Historic Environment Access and Charging Policy

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1. Introduction to the West Sussex Historic Environment Record

a. Content of the Historic Environment Record

West Sussex County Council (WSCC) maintains and enhances the Historic Environment Record (HER) for the County of West Sussex. Chichester District maintains their own HER, therefore any enquiries should be directed to them: for contact details please see the [HER web page](#).

The WSCC HER is the primary source of information about the historic environment in the county. It includes a database that contains more than **15,700** records with information about the Palaeolithic to the present day. These provide information on nationally designated heritage assets (conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments, and protected wrecks), as well as locally designated and undesignated heritage assets. Full details of the remit and content of the record can be found elsewhere in the HER's Information Policy.

b. Mapped data

The database is linked to a series of digital maps held as Geographic Information System (GIS) files. The maps contain geographical depictions of all sites on the database, ranging from simple point locations to complex plots of extensive sites such as ancient field systems. Maps provided from the HER GIS are for information purposes only. Due to Ordnance Survey copyright restrictions this mapping must not be reproduced in researcher's own reports.

c. How do I access the HER?

The HER is based at West Sussex County Council in Chichester. You can receive information from the HER in a number of different ways, such as by letter, email, or telephone. All enquiries for HER information must be via the WSHER 'Request for Information' form found on the [HER web page](#). Unfortunately, a request for information cannot be processed without the unique identifying number generated by the form.

d. Opening times

The HER is available for either telephone or email consultation Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. Unfortunately, the HER is not able to offer visitor facilities.

The HER staff are primarily working from home. Although they have access to the HER and the majority of digital resources associated with the records, there may be some things that are only held in paper copy held in the office. While there is a project being undertaken to scan these documents, this will take time. Due to the challenges of remote working, there may be a delay in response to your enquiry/search request.

e. Searching the HER

Historic Environment Record (HER) searches provide information selected from the record, normally for a defined area, although bespoke searches can also be done for particular periods or types of records. The HER includes both digital and hard copy information and references to other sources held outside the HER. It is constantly being enhanced and the absence of a record should not be relied upon as indicating a lack of heritage interest, other national or specialist sources may contain information not held or indexed.

Unless otherwise stated in the Request for Information form, a 1km radial search area will be applied as a minimum.

For a Listed Building Consent or Householder search a 250m radial search area will be applied as a minimum.

The HER staff are primarily working from home. Although they have access to the HER and the majority of digital resources associated with the records, there may be some things that are only held in paper copy held in the office. While there is a project being undertaken to scan these documents, this will take time. Due to the challenges of remote working, there may be a delay in response to your enquiry/search request should it be necessary to check a paper document.

2. Conditions of Use

a. Introduction

West Sussex County Council is committed to the protection, conservation, and enhancement of the historic environment. In order to ensure that information from the West Sussex County Council HER is used responsibly, those applying to consult it are requested to provide details about the nature of their enquiry and to follow the Guidance for Users outlined below. Please note that permission to use the HER may be refused or limited in certain circumstances.

b. Guidance for Users

1. West Sussex HER users are requested to inform West Sussex County Council of the following by submitting the online form. Mandatory fields within the form are:
 - Name
 - Email address
 - Contact Phone Number
 - The type of, and reason for, the enquiry requested (to be chosen from the pick list)
 - Whether the request is part of the validation requirement for a planning application
 - If a location map has been attached
 - If GIS shapefiles are required
 - If the West Sussex HER Guidance for Users has been read
 - The names of any other bodies or individuals outside their organisation to whom it is intended to pass HER information.
2. A service charge for Officer time for the production of the HER search is made for commercial enquiries to the West Sussex HER. This is normally waived for enquiries for non-commercial, educational, or personal research purposes, except where searches require extensive work. The costs of paper, printing and other incidental expenses may be charged to all users.
3. The West Sussex HER is the copyright of West Sussex County Council. Some information held in the HER may also be the copyright of others. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that copyright law is not breached.
4. Users are requested to inform, and to make their research available to, West Sussex HER where new archaeological sites or data are discovered as a result of their work.
5. Users are requested to make appropriate acknowledgement of the West Sussex HER in any publication or report which has made use of its data.
6. While efforts have been made to verify the data held in the West Sussex HER, West Sussex County Council cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any particular data and its source.

7. West Sussex County Council accepts that there may be a requirement to treat certain enquiries in confidence. Equally, the HER expects that users will not pass on information in an irresponsible or unethical manner.
8. West Sussex County Council reserves all rights of Copyright which are owned in the material provided. Dissemination to a third party without the written consent of the Historic Environment Record Officer is a breach of copyright. Information supplied shall be used for the specified purposes only.
9. Access to all or part of the information requested may be refused in certain circumstances.
 - 9.1. Information may not be disclosed if:
 - it relates to the subject matter of any legal or other proceedings, actual or prospective (including Local Planning Inquiries);
 - it relates to confidential, internal communications of West Sussex County Council;
 - it is contained in a document or other record which is still in the course of completion
 - 9.2. Information will not be disclosed if:
 - it was supplied to the Council by another party who was under no legal obligation to do so and could not have been put under any legal obligation to supply it and has not consented to its disclosure;
 - its disclosure would increase the likelihood of damage to the environment affecting anything to which the information relates
10. A request for information may be refused if it is manifestly unreasonable or is formulated in too general a manner. Clarification of the enquiry will always be sought before a final decision is made.
11. Enquiries will normally be processed within ten working days of receipt, but more complex enquiries may take longer, in which case the client will be contacted. In some cases the HER Officer may contact the client for further clarification or additional information prior to processing.
12. Subject to resource availability, a priority service is offered with requests being processed within three working days of receipt.

c. Complaints procedure

If you have any complaint about the service you have received please contact either the HER Officer Rachel Salter (email: Rachel.Salter@westsussex.gov.uk or telephone: 0330 222 6453) or the Environment and Heritage Team Manager, Don Baker (email: Don.Baker@westsussex.gov.uk or telephone 0330 222 6439).

3. Charging Policy

A search fee is normally only made where the enquiry is for commercial or profit-making purposes. This applies to consultations made by enquiry form, telephone, letter, or email.

The fee is to cover staff time and will vary according to the nature of the enquiry and the time necessary to fulfil the request. Fees may be waived in certain circumstances.

For most other users, such as members of the public and students carrying out personal research, there is no search fee unless the enquiry is particularly complicated or time consuming to deal with. In such cases any charge will be agreed before the work is carried out.

a. Scale of Charges

The current rate for the HER service is charged per hour or part thereof. The minimum fee per enquiry is dependent on the type of enquiry:

- **£337.00 plus VAT** for a priority search (3 working days);
- **£212.00 plus VAT** for a standard search (10 working days);
- **£130.00 plus VAT** for a Householder search (10 working days).

Users who are charged can either pay on-line (preferred) or be invoiced.

For a **Householder HER search** (where the site falls into an [Archaeological Notification Area](#) or requested by the Local Planning Authority):

- **£130.00 plus VAT** at the current rate.
- Should the search return a negative result, there may be a charge of **£65.00 plus VAT** to cover Officer time.

For a **Full or Element HER search**¹:

- For a **Priority** HER search (three working-day turnaround): **£337.00 plus VAT** at the current rate for the first hour of work or part thereof, and then at **£168.50** for any additional hour(s) or part thereof.² Should the search return a negative result, there may be a charge of **£168.50 plus VAT** to cover Officer time.
- For a **Standard** HER search (10 working-day turnaround): **£212.00 plus VAT** at the current rate for the first hour of work or part thereof, and then at **£106.00** for any additional hour(s) or part thereof. Should the search return a negative result, there may be a charge of **£106.00 plus VAT** to cover Officer time.

A request made for additional information for a completed search i.e. a change of search radius/area, an inclusion of data that was previously excluded at the request of the enquirer, will be classed as a new search and would be subject to a completed 'Request for Information' form and charging.

The creation of PDF maps when GIS shapefiles were requested may be subject to a charge of officer time for their production.

Requests for scanned Grey Literature to be sent either by email or CD may be subject to charging at the rates specified above and will be assessed on a case by case basis.

All fees are subject to review. Prices correct at 1 July 2025.

b. Method of payment

There are two options for payment and a choice can be made when filling out the Request for Information form:

- On-Line Payment - **Preferred**:

Following the receipt of the Request for Information form, details of the WSCC HER Search number, search cost and instructions for payment are sent to email address given on the

¹ The contents of a full HER search are listed on the [HER web page](#).

² There may occasionally be circumstances, due to the absence of the HER Officer or Assistant (arising from annual leave or staff sickness) that it will not be possible to provide a Priority Search Service.

form. Once the HER Team have received your Payment Authentication Receipt from the On-line payment system, your search will be undertaken within the timescale allocated to your search choice (Priority Search – 3 working days; Standard Search – 10 working days; Householder search - 10 working days).

- Invoice:

Following completion of the search undertaken within the timescale allocated to your search choice (Priority Search – 3 working days; Standard Search – 10 working days; Householder search - 10 working days), an invoice will be sent to the HER user by West Sussex County Council. Payment for the HER search will be specified on the invoice.

c. Incidental expenses

All HER users may be liable for incidental expenses such as photocopying, printing, compact discs, and postage. The costs are as follows.

- Photocopying/Printing:
Black and White: 10p per A4 sheet, 15p per A3 sheet
Colour: 50p per A4 sheet, £1.00p per A3 sheet
- Compact disc: £5.00
- Postage: Users may be charged postage if search exceeds 20 pages. Please contact the HER for further details.

R. Salter
Historic Environment Record Officer
09/06/2025