

**Derbyshire County Council**

**Meeting with Cabinet Member – Health & Communities**

**3 December 2013**

**Report of the Strategic Director, Cultural and Community Services**

**NATIONAL CATALOGUING GRANTS PROGRAMME BID**

**1 Purpose of the report:**

To inform the Cabinet Member – Health & Communities about a successful bid to the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for a grant to catalogue the archive of the Harpur Crewe family of Calke Abbey; to request permission to spend the grant and agree to the establishment of a 13 month fixed-term post of Archivist.

**2 Information and analysis:**

- 2.1. In 1987, the archive of the Harpur Crewe family was accepted by the Nation in lieu of inheritance tax, and was donated to Derbyshire Record Office. The archive is extensive, comprising 310 boxes and 403 outsize items dating back to the Mediaeval period. The records include information about many people involved in the estate, from the Harpur Crewe family themselves, to their tenants and staff. As the archive came in to the Record Office, each box was briefly listed, and a rudimentary index was created, but due to its size and complexity, the collection has never been properly catalogued.
- 2.2. Calke Abbey, the home of the Harpur Crewes is now owned by the National Trust. The Harpur Crewes were an eccentric family and inveterate collectors. Calke Abbey is unique in the way that it is presented to visitors, because the property has been left as it was found, in a state of some dilapidation with the enormous number of objects collected by the family, jumbled throughout the house. The archive of the Harpur Crewes resembles the house in its random and disordered nature.
- 2.3. In spite of the poor finding aids, the Harpur Crewe archive is popular and well used. Through discussions with the National Trust at Calke Abbey, however, it became clear that staff and volunteers were largely unaware of the archive and its contents. Cataloguing the archive would enable the National Trust to use the archive to inform its own understanding of the property and create new opportunities for interpreting Calke to its visitors.

- 2.4. Over the past months, the Record Office has been working with a small team of volunteers from Calke Abbey to convert the paper lists into electronic format. This work was recently completed, and added to the online catalogue. Whilst this work was undertaken, the Record Office applied to the National Cataloguing Grants Programme for a grant of £37,325 for a project entitled 'A Catalogue of Eccentricity' to appoint a qualified archivist for a period of 13 months to arrange and properly catalogue the collection. The project will also involve volunteer input, both for practical tasks, such as repackaging, and providing expert knowledge on Calke, its estate and the Harpur Crewe family.
- 2.5. The National Cataloguing Grants Programme is administered by The National Archives (TNA), and supported by a number of charitable trusts, including the Pilgrim Trust, the Foyle Foundation and the Wolfson Foundation. The Programme is very competitive; in 2013, 67 applications requesting a total of £2.2m were made. The available funding pot for the year is approximately £500,000.
- 2.6. The 'Catalogue of Eccentricity' project has additional strategic aims, over and above the cataloguing of the Harpur Crewe archive. These are:
- To review and improve archive cataloguing standards at the Record Office, to ensure that catalogues are easier to use and understand
  - To trial new methods of cataloguing and evaluate whether they will enable collections to be catalogued more quickly and efficiently in the future
  - To develop policies, plans and procedures relating to collections information, which are required for the Record Office to become accredited under the new, mandatory, Archive Service Accreditation
  - To strengthen links with The National Trust, offering new opportunities for the Record Office to widen its outreach and learning programme.
- 2.7. The 'Catalogue of Eccentricity' project will contribute towards the following Council priorities:
- A Derbyshire that works – building a strong economy  
Working with the National Trust, the project will support the visitor economy, enhancing the visitor experience at Calke Abbey, and promoting Calke Abbey and the Record Office, particularly to family historians researching ancestors connected with the estate.

- A local Derbyshire - local people and communities will be better able to use the Harpur Crewe archive for family and local history research. Finding aids will be easier to understand for people unfamiliar with archives.

The Record Office will explore new and more efficient ways of working, and be better able to meet required national standards for archives.

### **3 Financial considerations:**

The overall cost of the project is £75,725, of which the National Cataloguing Grants Programme is contributing 49% to cover the salary of the cataloguing archivist. The remainder will be funded through in kind contributions from staff within the Record Office, including project management and conservation time.

### **4 Human Resources considerations:**

The post has been evaluated at Grade 10 (£25,735 - £28,562).

### **5 Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

### **6 Background papers:**

None

### **7 Key Decision:**

No

### **8 Call-in:**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

**9 Strategic Director's recommendation:**

That the Cabinet Member – Health and Communities:

- 1 Notes the report
- 2 Approves the expenditure of the National Cataloguing Grants Programme grant as outlined in the body of the report.
- 3 Agrees to the establishment of the post of fixed-term Archivist, Grade 10, for 13 months.

**Martin Molloy**  
**Strategic Director**  
**Cultural and Community Services**