

Research Room Design

Round one

Tablets

I have used tablets to refer to any type of digital device that might be installed in the Research Room, because those are already available to use to volunteers. In the future different devices might be used.

The tablets are the access point for any digital files and most importantly the Seaton Delaval Hall Knowledge Index.

Questions to ask:

How much storage room is available on the tablets?

Do people have access to SharePoint on the tablets?

*Are the tablets “legal” in the eyes of IT?
Might we have the same problems as with the MP3 player?*

Seaton Delaval Hall Knowledge Index

Questions to ask:

Would you be able to edit the index on the tablet?

Should the detonators name be entered into the spreadsheet? Or would this be a GDPR issue?

Possible actions:

Workshop with contributors how they would like their information to be set up

The SDH Knowledge Index is the central spreadsheet that keeps track of the location and contents of the knowledge, research and materials floating around the site.

It should be accessible to volunteers, staff and anyone using the Research Room. It should be easy to update and search.

Video & Audio

Technically, any audio or video files are not allowed to be stored on SharePoint because they take up too much server space and that leads to a larger carbon footprint. Where these files should be stored instead I do not know.

For the tablets it might be possible to have them hosted on third party websites like Vimeo or Sound Cloud, and the playlist made private or unlisted.

Photographs, Scans & Texts

These types of files could possibly be available via SharePoint.

Photographs and scans could also be hosted on Flickr.

Some might be able to be stored directly on the tablets depending on file size.

Shelves

Questions to ask:

Should everything in the Research Room be a handling copy? And original copies can be access by request.

A lot of stuff is available on the shelves: loose items collected together binders and folders, larger items, index cards (for the analogue fans), and bound/print items.

Loose Items, Large Items, & Publications

Loose items like newspaper cuttings, photographs, transcripts of letters or oral history recordings etc. should be held in albums or ring binders with polly pockets. Then in the inside cover people make an index for those who are not fans of the digital index.

Large items like posters and maps can be kept in tubes and have the content written on the side.

The publications on the shelves includes printed versions of Delaval Delvings, National Trust Reports, Books and Magazines.

Questions to ask:

Any physical photos handed in, fall under the collection policy, while digital photographs do not. Physical photos therefore need to be protected. Does this mean we should keep copies in the Research Room and not originals?

Possible actions:

Some research documents have personal information on which might need to be removed before it is placed in the Research Room under GDPR.

Index Cards

For those who do not want to use the digital index we can have index cards for the items that are unable to have a contents page. For example, index cards for: Delaval Delvings, videos, and published items.

People can add and update these as appropriate.

Research Room Volunteer

Keeping order in this room will hopefully not be difficult and yet it is probably advised to have a volunteer that supports the maintenance of the Seaton Delaval Hall Knowledge Index and the material available in the Research Room just in case.

Advert for Research Room Volunteering Role

“The history of Seaton Delaval Hall goes as far back as the Saxons before the land came into the hands of the De Laval. There are many stories that we know and many we still need to discover, which is why we now have established a research room at the hall for those who want to do research into the hall. But like any space that holds knowledge, like a museum, library or archive, you need someone who is able to help manage all the knowledge and keep it available and accessible to all. This is why we are looking for a research room volunteer to help us catalogue the research available in the research room. The role does involve updating digital and analogue catalogues, and managing digital and analogue files.”