



Records



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FOCUS ON: HERITAGE COLLECTIONS STORAGE



Business sector
Heritage and Conservation

Organisation
The Charles Dickens Museum

About
The Charles Dickens Museum

Housed at 48 Doughty Street, London, the home where Dickens wrote some of his best-loved novels, the museum is a magnet to visitors from all over the world. Curator, Louisa Price, tells us how Restore and their collaborative National Conservation Service Heritage Storage Scheme have helped give visitors better access to the museum's rare books, paintings, photographs and memorabilia.

What is the Heritage Storage Scheme?

In collaboration with the National Conservation Service, Restore provide a level of heritage collections storage that's second to none. Located at Upper Heyford in Oxfordshire in specifically re-purposed, re-fitted bomb- and flood-proof aircraft hangars from the Second World War, the scheme provides exceptionally low-cost, PD5454:2012-compliant facilities with unparalleled flexible contract terms.

01. The challenge

'The idea of putting a collection in off-site storage is daunting for any curatorial team. It makes you feel detached from objects for which you are responsible. However, using an off-site storage facility actually provided us with an opportunity: it meant we could ensure that our collection was secure within a stable environment while we underwent a major refurbishment. By keeping parts of the collection in store long-term we freed up space in our Museum for a more up-close-and-personal experience for visitors and for the interpretation that brings Charles Dickens to life.

We needed a top quality storage service that was practical for us – so not too far away, with excellent inventory mechanisms; flexible – so the firm would not be fazed by our moving pieces back and forward to our own exhibitions and on loans to other museums, nor by our requirements to frequently re-assess our storage needs; and with the added-on extras of on-site cataloguing and research space.

Would the Heritage Storage Scheme meet our needs?'



Notes

Complete information management:

5 reasons to choose Restore

1 Flexibility – with Restore as your outsourcing partner you can be sure we will listen to what you want, then deliver it.

2 Nationwide – we offer a truly national service with a range of document handling choices – and we're still growing.

3 Complete information lifecycle – from Cloud data back-up where information is available at the touch of a button, to near storage document management where information is accessible within hours, to deep, specialised storage of archive papers, we make sure you have what you want, when you want it and where you want. And, at the end of your information's life, we dispose of it efficiently, responsibly, securely.

4 Control – by handing responsibility for security, logistics and compliance to Restore you are effectively taking back control over your information. You can rely on us to work in partnership with you, caring for your information in dedicated, approved facilities right across the UK.

5 Feel the benefits – we give excellent value for money, timely communications that are tailored to your needs, professional and experienced staff at every level – no wonder our customers will tell you that moving to Restore is 'the best decision you'll ever make!'

02.

Our experience

'In fact, we were the first heritage organisation to sign up to the Heritage Storage Scheme! Throughout our 18-month experience I've found Restore to be flexible, helpful and thoughtful while we all find the balance that's right for us. They have provided us space on site to catalogue and connect with our pieces without having to move them. A good instance of this is that we recently brought in a conservator to look at two paintings and it was far easier for us all to meet at Upper Heyford. If we have needed to move any items, Restore's relationship with specialist art handlers, for example, has been useful. This is all helped along considerably by good communications from the people at Restore and from Chris Woods at the National Conservation Service. While we were their first customer and there may have been a couple of logistical teething problems, their honest communications and rapid response means I have full confidence in their care for our irreplaceable objects.'

03.

Our results

'In their heart of hearts, any museum curator really wants to keep all their collection with them. Space restrictions means this cannot always be the case. In conjunction with our refurbishment in 2013/2014, moving part of our collection to Upper Heyford made perfect sense. It has freed up two desks' worth of space in the library so researchers are more comfortable and, excitingly, it has created more room for new acquisitions.'

Why I would recommend Restore

In the 18 months we have been engaging with Restore and the Heritage Storage Scheme, I've found them to be very trustworthy, good communicators and responsive.



Louisa Price,
Curator

