

Teesside Archives Marketing and Communications Strategy 2023

Executive Summary

Mission Statement

Teesside Archives service, funded by Middlesbrough, Stockton, Redcar and Cleveland, and Hartlepool Borough Councils, exists to create, maintain and preserve the collective memory of Teesside.

Our mission is to make our collections of unique records of historical and evidential value accessible to current and future generations locally, nationally and world-wide to inspire an interest in the history, industry and communities of Teesside and promote a sense of local pride and identity.

Teesside Archives will collaborate efficiently and effectively with our four funding authorities, and help to support other organisations, volunteers and communities for the long-term benefit of our collections and users.

This marketing and communications strategy will give an overview of Teesside Archives current situation and audience as well as looking at the service's key messages, goals and objectives that a future audience engagement plan will need to factor in as part of the wider development of the service.

Situational Analysis/Research

Teesside Archives currently have a digital presence through several social media channels – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and a Wordpress Blog. The channels are managed by the Archivist with support from the Community Engagement Officer (Facebook and Blogposts).

A Content Calendar is regularly updated to reflect current campaigns, local dates of interest and national awareness days. Content is planned to cover the four local authorities equally as well as including service information and behind the scenes style posts about the archives and their staff.

In March 2023, the archivist conducted a Social Media Review with Digital Cultural Network Social Media Tech Champion, Nicola Barrett who looked through our social media channels and gave some feedback on how we can improve our output to increase engagement.

In December 2022, the archivist had a meeting with Hartlepool Council Marketing Team – agreed to tag in Hartlepool Hubs and they will share across their socials. Upcoming events they will promote on their channels. Provide content to accompany their marketing campaigns/projects

In February 2023, the archivist had a meeting with Middlesbrough Council Marketing Team – they agreed to provide support and training in content creation. Agreed a plan to post about archives once a month on Dorman Museum Social Channels and share our content on the We Are Middlesbrough channels

Still to set up meeting with Stockton and awaiting contacts for Redcar & Cleveland.

Teesside Archives have a website that is currently hosted within the Middlesbrough Council Website – <https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/leisure-events-libraries-and-hubs/teesside-archives> - We do

not have control of this, managed by Council Digital Team. This is currently being reviewed and relaunched so could be an opportunity to 'freshen' it up.

All the service information content from our council website is replicated on our Wordpress site - <https://teesidearchives.wordpress.com/> - which we are in control of.

SWOT Analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Already have an online presence with good following across channels - Good archives collections for content - Knowledgeable staff - Invite volunteers/local groups to contribute to our blog - Comprehensive list of local dates of interest - Soft engagement with projects (e.g. Stockton High Street/Waterfront) and local media (e.g. BBC Politics North piece on Teesworks) 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current website being hosted by Middlesbrough Council can be a problematic for other authorities? - Staff time/resources to plan and manage digital output - Ad hoc events promotion - People engage with archives without realising (other people using our images) - Reactionary rather than proactive engagement - Fear of missing out on events
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase engagement both digitally and in person - E-commerce/Online exhibitions - Ancestral tourism - Shared events with Tees Valley Museums/MIMA - Partnerships with Teesside University 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of funding/support - Lack of storage (physical and digital) - No digital preservation will make it harder to store digital archives and digitised content for sharing with users - Governance model – Potential local government reorganisation

Audience Analysis

Teesside Archives have undertaken some work into audience development in recent months. We have analysed our current audience through monitoring user statistics, which includes enquiries and Searchroom visitors, and digital engagement through our social media channels.

Searchroom Users

Email/Telephone/In Person enquiries are recorded monthly. These are not broken down into any further categories or any demographic data captured as this would be very hard to implement and would be very time intensive.

Month	Email	Phone	Post	Person	Total
May-22	205	2	11	0	218
Jun-22	105	5	0	1	111
Jul-22	71	13	0	8	92
Aug-22	104	40	2	8	154
Sep-22	94	21	0	4	119
Oct-22	107	45	0	20	172
Nov-22	126	49	0	14	189
Dec-22	84	23	0	13	120
Jan-23	142	46	0	16	204
Feb-23	151	41	0	18	210

Searchroom visitors are recorded monthly and are broken down into 6 geographical categories: Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton, Other UK, and Other World.

Month	Hartlepool	Middlesbrough	Redcar & Cleveland	Stockton	Other UK	Other World
May-22	3	56	16	20	56	1
Jun-22	12	67	8	5	13	1
Jul-22	10	52	16	4	12	0
Aug-22	4	29	13	31	11	0
Sep-22	5	56	10	12	10	0
Oct-22	6	73	36	29	248	1
Nov-22	6	70	43	14	8	7 - Japan
Dec-22	3	18	14	4	5	0
Jan-23	4	46	10	10	5	0
Feb-23	6	53	14	19	3	1 - Dubai

Twitter

28 day summary with change over previous period



Monthly stats show: number of tweets, Profile visits, New followers, Mentions and Tweet Impressions

We have seen a steady increase of followers over the past 12 months with over 3000 now – unable to break down to area/sex/age etc. through analytics though

Good engagement with other heritage institutions, national bodies, academics and businesses. Plugged into national campaigns such as ‘History Begins at Home’, ‘Explore Your Archive’ and ‘#Archive30’.

Wordpress Blog

140 Email subscribers and 70 Wordpress subscribers

Weekly/Monthly/Yearly stats show: Visitors, Views, Likes and Comments – only shows country no other demographic data

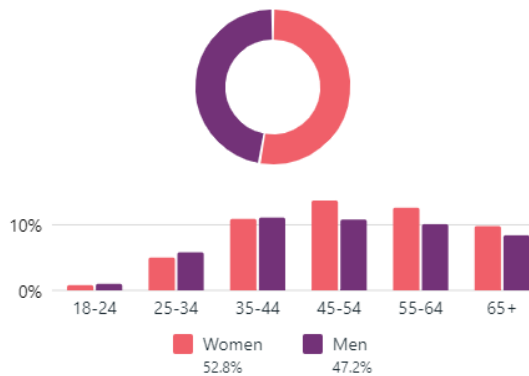
This the platform that has the least amount of engagement and is therefore the lowest priority for the service. Research into the blogposts is very time intensive and staff time is limited. It is worth noting that a number of blogposts posts have been picked up and republished in publications, such as Esk Valley News, which has increased our reach beyond our usual audience catchment though measuring this quantitatively is difficult.

Facebook & Instagram

Facebook Page followers ⓘ

5,330

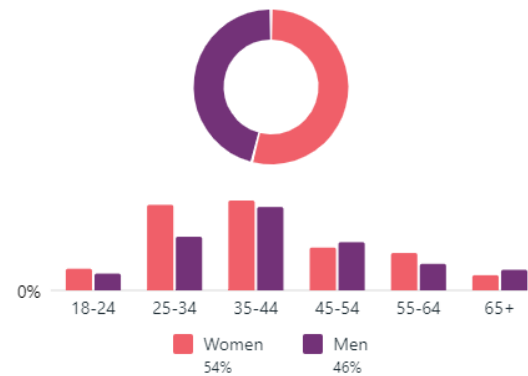
Age & gender ⓘ



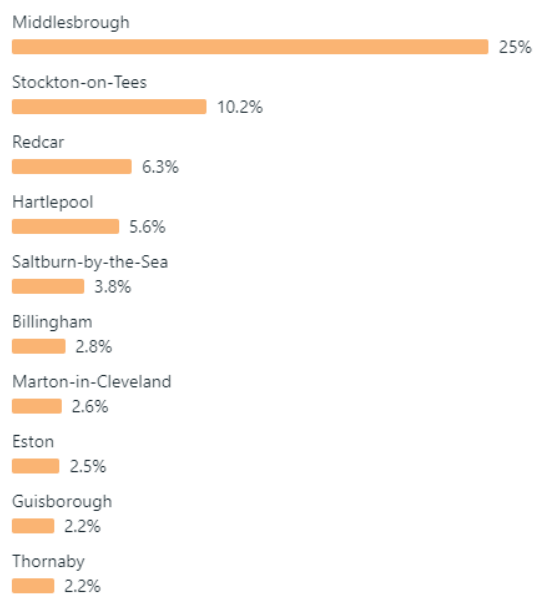
Instagram followers ⓘ

1,522

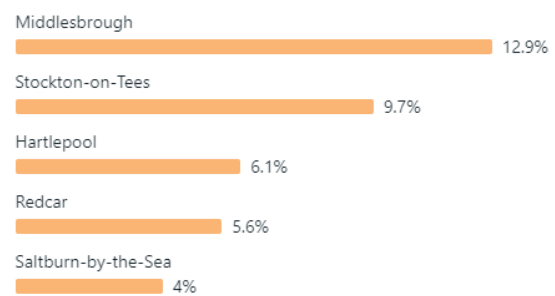
Age & gender ⓘ



Top towns/cities



Top towns/cities



From this data it is clear we are still struggling to engage with audiences aged 18-24 on Facebook and Instagram. This could be down to a number of factors but we believe this to be mostly due to the general make up of users of Facebook being older. Therefore we need to make a more targeted effort towards this audience through Instagram or other methods outside of social media.

Audience Hierarchy

Primary Audience (Must have their support)	Secondary Audience (Important, but not primary)	Other (Nice to have)
Partner Authorities Teesside Magistrates TVCA Members of the public	Community Groups Members of the public Schools Local Businesses Academics	National Businesses Local MPs Heritage Institutions

Media Exposure

Other tools for promotion of the service and our collections include articles and resources published in local & national press, both online and in print.

Publications

As previously mentioned, some of our blogposts have been picked up for publication by community magazines such as the Esk Valley News. We have also had articles about the service published in Sticks & Stones Magazine, the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society Bulletin and Journals, and multiples editions of the HSHAZ Historic Quarter Newsletters.

We have also had features on the Explore Your Archive Website including a 2 month long ‘exhibition’ on the Teesworks Collection.

Exhibitions

We have fed into and loaned material from the collections into local, national, and touring exhibitions which has raised the profile of the service on a much wider scale. Examples include:

- Colville Manuscript on display at Tees valley Arts in 2021 and will be on display again at Kirkleatham Museum in Summer 2023
- Ayresome Park Plans on display at the National Design Museum in London which has led to a touring exhibition where they will be on display in Europe and America
- Digital copies of material from our collections have been used for Tees Valley Museum Exhibitions such as the Comic Book Exhibition at Preston Park Museum and as part of the Heritage Action Zone Engagement Programme delivered by Navigator North
- ICI material was loaned to MIMA for their award winning ‘Chemical Cities’ exhibition in 2021

Conferences/Case Studies

- Chosen to present a case study on the work we have undertaken with Hart Gables to the CLOA roundtable on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in leisure and cultural services
- Presenting a paper on the Teesworks Project at the Heritage, Community, Archives: Methods, Case Studies, Collaboration Conference

TV

- Ruth was interviewed as part of a segment for BBC Politics North and BBC Look North on industrial heritage and the importance of archives
- Regularly mentioned in discussion around the area’s industrial heritage

Commercial Use of Images

We get regular requests for our material to be used to illustrate articles, books, reports and other publications. Notable examples include:

- Oxford Encyclopaedia of Asian History published by Oxford University Press
- Nostalgia book by local historians/authors

We have also been approached by artists and community groups to use our collections as inspiration for new commissions and ongoing creative projects.

Images from our collections have been used in the redesign of museums such as Land of Iron and Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum.

Research into original material has been used to inform engineering projects locally, with the refurbishment of the Tyne Bridge, and internationally in places such as Nigeria.

Key Messages

- Raise awareness of the collections we hold
- Encourage people to use our resources
- Giving people a sense of identity and pride of place through engaging with their local history
- Creating a narrative

Goals and Objectives

- Increase engagement both digitally and in person
- Promote awareness of the archives (who we are, what we do, what we can offer)
- 'Sell' our services – public searchroom, paid research, document copying, private conservation, workshops, events etc.

Tactics & Metrics

- Continue to work on developing digital audience through creating more dynamic and diverse content on social media platforms
- Look at creating a more tailored offering for secondary school/college/university aged audiences – develop a careers in archives workshop
- Reach out to more local businesses and institutions to raise awareness and increase engagement with the archives
- Continue to look to promote the service through local and national publications (in print and online)
- Work with partner authorities marketing teams to push events and archive content across the Teesside Area
- Choose events more carefully to ensure we promote our services with the right audiences and signpost better to gain follow up engagement – digitally or in person