



Derbyshire

Derbyshire VCH Trust News

www.derbyshirevch.org

News from the Derbyshire Victoria County History Trust – Registered Charity Number 1098339 – spring 2021



Publication changes to 'Big Red Books'

National changes on how volumes of the VCH 'Big Red Books' are published will not impact on how our members receive their copies. As the series moves to print-on-demand, our members will still have a printed book.

From this year, the University of London Press will be publishing 'Red Books' – the former agreement with Boydell & Brewer (who published Derbyshire volume III) coming to an end as it was financially unsustainable. Production and editorial work will continue to be undertaken as normal by the VCH Central Office team – but see page 2.

Print-on-demand is now of a vastly improved quality – comparable with traditional book production. It is also widely used in academic publishing and by the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London (at which VCH is nationally based) for its book series. Counties, such as Derbyshire will be still able to produce a 'prestige' Red Book as, for example, the cloth-bound and gold-tooled Derbyshire VCH volume III).

Red Books will be published with a prestigious new University Press, and will return to the University of London as their home (since 1933). The Institute also sees the move to print on demand will enable books to be produced at other price-points and more easily digitised.

- See page 2 for details of other changes at the VCH central office.

New website launched – Facebook success

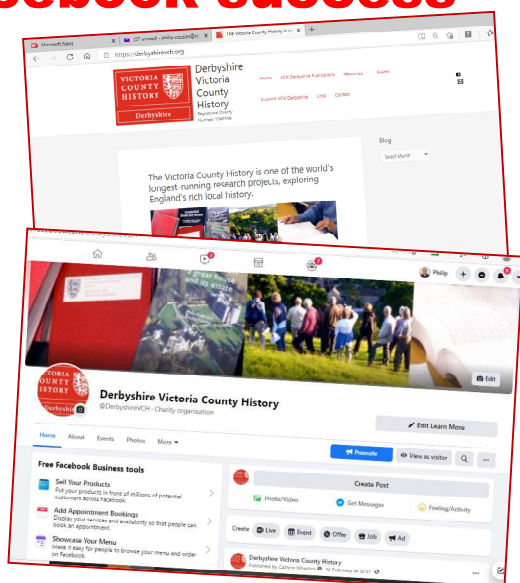
Digital publicity developments continue

We have launched a new website, as part of improvements to our communications.

The decision to launch our new site – www.derbyshirevch.org – has been taken as a result of technical issues which meant we could no longer update both the Derbyshire part of the VCH national website and the VCH Explore website. Our new website has links to a newsletter archive and further information on our Facebook posts. Those posts reappear under a 'blog' section on the website. Draft text also appears - a facility that has been promised to members for some years.

The new site is being compiled using Wordpress – a common user environment and is populated by our secretary, publicity officer, and treasurer. Meanwhile, our Facebook page is attracting a good deal of interest. Apparently, we 'reached' over 9,000 people in the month up to 20 February and had 798 'engagements'. To take a look at our page see www.facebook.com/DerbyshireVCH. If you are not a member of Facebook you can still view our posts, but cannot comment on them. We post about once a week and transfer the most of them to our website 'blog'.

We have had a blog published by the British Association for Local History about our recent approach to digital media, including Facebook posts. Take a look at <https://www.balh.org.uk/blog-opening-up-our-research-to-others-from-department-store-to-model-colliery-village-2021-02-24>.





The University of London's Senate House, which houses the Institute of Historical Research.

Photograph: Steve Cadman
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/stevecadman/56350347/>. Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license).

Changes at IHR and the impact on VCH

Changes in support for VCH Central Office

A major organisational change programme has been taking place across the School of Advanced Study, at the University of London, which includes the Institute of Historical Research.

The results were announced in late December 2020, with an update issued in February. The review has included centralising publishing activity, in a new, larger University of London Press (UoLP) (see page 1). As a result, the VCH Managing Editor role has been discontinued with its incumbent Jessica Davies Porter choosing not to join the new UoLP team. She left at Christmas.

The UoLP team are now managing VCH production and publishing. A new Publishing Manager is to oversee progress, with VCH work a central priority for that post-holder.

Professor Catherine Clarke is continuing as Director of the VCH as part of her role as Director of the Centre for the History of People, Place and Community. The VCH team will be supported by Dr Philip Carter (IHR Head of Digital and Publishing), who will play a key role in managing all IHR publications. Dr Adam Chapman remains as principal editor for the VCH, based at the Institute. He also teaches on the Institute's MRes and PhD programmes.

Although VCH books in the pipe-line at central office are moving ahead, this does not have any immediate impact on Derbyshire VCH, as we currently have no 'Red Books' scheduled for publication. Indeed, we have outsourced publication of our research findings to others – notably the 'Chesterfield Streets and Houses' book and the forthcoming book on Hasland.

Members can be rest-assured that the trust will be keeping a close eye on things.

We are sorry: Hasland is delayed

We are sorry that the planned publication of our book on Hasland has been delayed.

Our county editor, Philip Riden, who had been busy assembling material for the book, has been detained on other tasks, including taking on the joint editorship of the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal.

Philip comments; 'Since the last newsletter I also realised that there were some gaps in the drafted text, that needed revisiting. Unfortunately, I can't do this with libraries and archives being effectively closed. There's also an issue with illustrations. I want to use more old ones in the Hasland book, than in the '...Streets and Houses' one but have been unable to source these from the collection in Chesterfield Local Studies Library, again due to the lock-down.'

The trust apologises to members for the delay to the Hasland book. Due to the changing nature of restrictions, we haven't now set a publication date, but it will be sometime this year.

Derbyshire VCH Contacts

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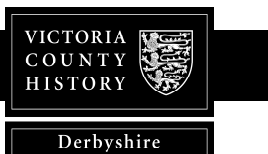
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Activities still 'on-hold'

Despite the recent 'road map' announcement from the government, all our activities are currently on-hold. We will review the situation over the coming weeks, to see when we will be best placed to restart our Chesterfield research group. It still seems likely that we will not be able to hold any walks. We will also be reviewing what to do about our AGM. Members will be kept fully informed.

Derbyshire finances fine

We would normally report on our financial position at the AGM, but we haven't been able to do so – as we haven't had one. As year's AGM is also in some doubt our treasurer – Cathrin Wharton – reports that we are in a solvent position.

Seminar opportunities

There are opportunities join many on-line seminars and talks. For example, the Institute of Historical Research has been running a series talks (some free) on topics ranging from mapping to regional commemorations of British railways. Take a look at what's currently on offer at www.history.ac.uk/search-events. The British Association for Local History also runs a series of events - www.balh.org.uk/events. Our own website carries a selection of local talks from other organisations - <https://derbyshirevch.org/events/>.

Prize draw news

Membership of the Trust generally carries with it an automatic entry into our monthly prize draw. Despite the pandemic we have still been operating this – with a monthly prize of £100. At one time we used to publish, with permission, the names of the winners, but have decided not to continue with this due to potential data protection issues. We will, however, publish the winning numbers from our next newsletter.

Thanks to everyone who has supported us through these difficult times. We hope that you are keeping safe and hopefully looking forward to a better summer than last year!