

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Culture Leisure and Sport Decision Meeting
<b>Subject:</b>	Update on the Conan-Doyle Collaborative Doctoral Award with the University of Portsmouth
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	12 December 2014
<b>Report by:</b>	Head of City Development and Cultural Services
<b>Report author:</b>	Katharine Brombley, PhD student, University of Portsmouth
<b>Wards affected:</b>	ALL

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**1. Requested by:** Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport

**2. Purpose**

2.1 To update members on the progress of the Collaborative PhD project between Portsmouth City Council and the University of Portsmouth funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The project will run October 2013 to September 2016.

**3. Information Requested**

3.1 This is a postgraduate research project looking into the fandom of Arthur Conan Doyle using the unique collection at Portsmouth City Library bequeathed by Richard Lancelyn Green. This project is collaboratively supervised by Dr Pittard (University of Portsmouth) and Dr Jane Mee (Portsmouth Museums and Visitor Services Manager).

3.2 The aims of the project are to:

- Produce an 80,000 word thesis on the research topic, which will result in the awarding of a Doctoral qualification to the researcher.
- Increase public awareness of the collection through an online blog.
- Encourage local residents to get involved with the collection through exhibitions and other activities organised and run by the researcher in collaboration with council officers.
- Contribute to the council's 'Home of Great Writing' initiative.
- Establish links with current fandom communities and impact on longer term tourism strategies of the city.
- Provide the researcher with opportunities to gain transferable skills that are exploitable in the future...
- Widen access to the material in the collection for a non-specialist audience.

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- Extend knowledge of the collection in the academic community, making Portsmouth's public cultural holdings a destination for academic research.
- 3.3 The project began with the collaboration of Portsmouth City Council and the University of Portsmouth, represented by Dr Jane Mee and Dr Christopher Pittard, who applied for funding to the AHRC. The aim of this particular funding stream is that the research benefits both an academic and non-academic partner - the latter in this case represented by Portsmouth Museums and Visitor Services. A research student was recruited through an application process as stipulated by both organisations HR policies.
- 3.4 In October 2013 the research student, Katharine Brombley was introduced to the Conan Doyle collection by Michael Gunton and Katy Ball. This allowed Katharine an initial look at the collection and she was taught how to handle objects and archive material. This also covered an introduction to CALM the database used to catalogue Archives.
- 3.5 A blog was set up, which is hosted by Wordpress and linked to the Conan Doyle collection website. This has had 2400 views, with a personal best of 140 views in one day. Topics cover issues with modern fandom; biographical insight into Conan Doyle and interesting anecdotes/things found in the collection; as well reflections on personal experiences of working with the council, local groups, and training
- 3.6 Katharine has shadowed the Community Access Officer for the Conan Doyle collection, met the Museums Learning Officer and helped with the Portsmouth Autism Support Network's Doyle project as part of the Sharing Sherlock project. She has also designed school worksheets, helped move exhibitions, written proposals and has been involved with consultations on effective community involvement practices. She has also observed a number of museum events, including the Sherlock Trail and a Home Front session for schools at the D-Day Museum.
- 3.7 Katharine has presented two workshops to museum, library and archive staff and the Conan Doyle collection volunteers. As well as providing Katharine with an opportunity to prepare and organise a workshop, this event will help to ensure that staff are aware of Katharine's work and gain insight into the collection and how it might be used to engage the public in the future. The opportunity to attend a Cabinet Member Briefing also forms part of Katherine's learning as part of the project.
- 3.9 The plan for 2015 is for Katharine to get progressively more involved in developing and delivering events based on the Conan Doyle Collection. She will be introduced to the Inspiring Learning for All framework and generic learning and social outcomes. She will plan and present a public seminar at Bookfest 2015.

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- 3.10 In the final year of the project Katharine will participate in numerous Knowledge Transfer activities in partnership with council officers, as well as curate an exhibition.
- 3.11 Finally, Katharine will produce an 80,000 word thesis to be submitted to the University of Portsmouth for assessment and a viva will be held where Katharine will defend her thesis and the work she has carried out in the three years of her PhD.
- 3.12 The PhD and associated costs are funded by an award of £55,128 from the AHRC and £3,000 from PCC (over three years, from Museum Service budgets).

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Signed by  
**Stephen Baily**  
**Head of City Development and Cultural Services**

**Appendices:**

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location