Heritage Quay™ has been taken over

On Friday 20 November, almost a year after opening, the home of the University of Huddersfield Archives were invaded by a large group of enthusiastic 13 year olds. The group roamed throughout Heritage Quay all day, finding their way into the strong room, getting hands on in the Listening Room, interrogating staff and visitors, and handling fragile documents from the archive collections.

But don't worry! These were students from the Netherhall Learning Campus History Club, and they were here as part of the national Takeover in Museums Day campaign, which is run by Kids in Museums under the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge.

The archives team led the students through some of the tasks that are essential to the running of Heritage Quay. Lindsay, our Assistant Archives Manager, explained why and how collections are protected and preserved and set the group to work on identifying pests before packaging awkwardly shaped items which might be vulnerable to damage. This activity was particularly popular as it required the wearing of lab coats and gloves – CSI style!
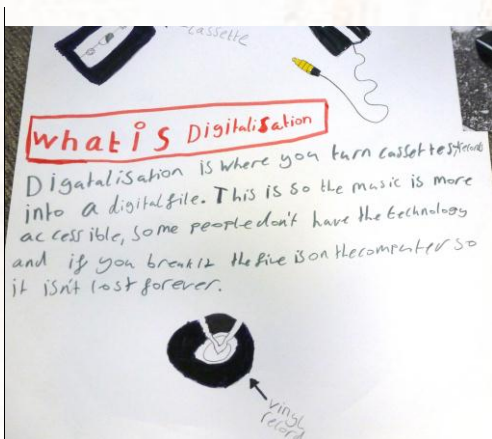
![Heritage Quay™ logo]

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Another group were taken in hand by Rob, our Collections Access Officer, who introduced a range of audio formats, including vinyl records, Betamax and cassettes. Records were unfamiliar to many of the students, and with Rob's help, they learned how to transfer a 30s dance tune, The Crocodile Hop, to digital format, coining a new word in the process – digitilisation!

what iS Digitalisation
Digatalisation is where you turn cassettes/records into a digital file. This is so the music is more accessible, some people don't have the technology and if you break it the file is on the computer so it isn't lost forever.

vinyl record

rare

Dave Smith, Heritage Quay's Participation Officer, explained the importance of engaging with the public and the different ways of doing this. He supervised a group of roving reporters who provided images and commentary on social media throughout the day, and it is their photographs which accompany this blog.

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Finally, I took the whole group up to the students' union to do some market research and discover if people are aware of Heritage Quay and what it's all about. This involved approaching university students, HQ clipboard in hand, smiling and asking a few questions. This exercise was really daunting for some of the group and it was great to watch their confidence grow as they initiated conversation with strangers. Although I did think we might have lost the entire group when we passed by a student stall which was giving out free sweets...

After lunch the students hosted an open hour session, where they shared their newly acquired knowledge with visitors to Heritage Quay. This tested their patience while waiting for visitors to arrive – and gave them a chance to practice meet and greet skills when they did. Fielding questions from the public and learning that it's okay to say "I don't know" were useful experiences too.

Heritage Quay's first Takeover Day was concluded with certificates awarded by the Assistant Archives Manager. Thanks to the Archives Team, and our volunteers Caroline and Richard, the event was a great success and we'll definitely be doing it again next year – we hope you'll join us!

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"Netherhall Learning Campus have arrived at Huddersfield University for the Take Over day. So far we have learnt about the big curvy screen which is very interesting as we have never seen anything like that before! Before we got here we thought it was going to be boring and just full of old boring books, but it was really unexpected and we found so [much] entertaining things with technology." *Takeover Day Social Media Group*

"I learned that you keep water away from old things." *Takeover Day Archives Group*

"It was great to see the kids' enthusiasm, and interesting to see the knowledge they picked up, and how they used research skills they learned during the day." *Assistant Archives Manager*

"We went to the stronghold hunting for pests which damage the products. We have learnt about digitalizing an audio tape to the computer so we can have the tape for ever (until Armageddon of course) so other people in 100s of years can check it so they know how it was like."

Takeover Day Digitising Group

Has Takeover Day made me think about a career in history?

Yeaassss!!!