



The National Railway Museum: Relocating a vast railway archive



project details

location:

Yorkshire & North East

size:

180 tonnes

sector:

Specialist move



the challenge:

Relocating the entire resources of an archive of world importance was no small undertaking. Especially since everything had to be moved twice – into temporary storage and then into its final location. The total library and archive collections weighed 180 tonnes, 22 tonnes more than the Flying Scotsman.



the benefits:

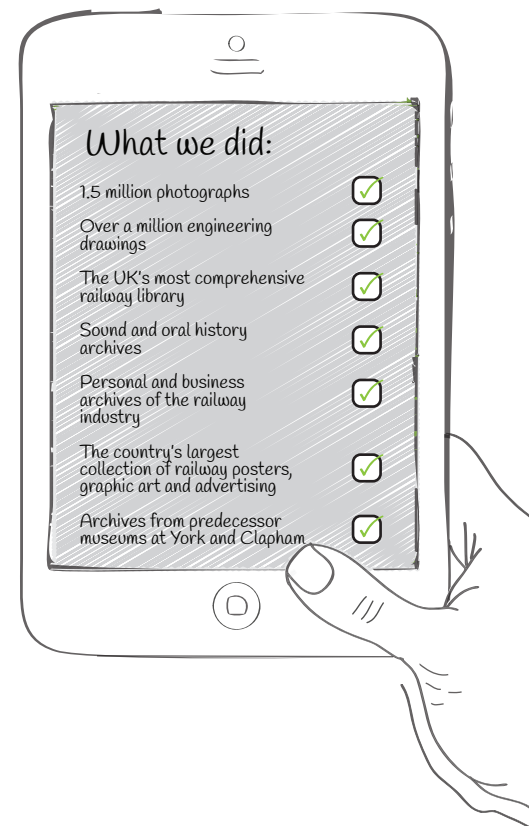
Our project manager worked closely with the Archivist, individual collections managers and site management to plan methodologies, responsibilities, access and risk assessment. It was important that the museum continued to function throughout the move, so work was timetabled to minimise disruption and intrusion into exhibit space.

Behind the scenes at the NRM lies a vast railway archive and library, holding a unique accumulation of knowledge about the history of the railway. Search Engine is the new name and the new space for these important collections.

As well as specialist handling and packing of valuable, fragile and irreplaceable objects, Harrow Green's team had to ensure the protection of exhibits in the main engine hall during the out-of-hours relocation. That meant the daily installation and removal of protective material, including protection for the rail tracks running through the hall.

Our past experience of handling major library and archive collections was vital in ensuring a seamless understanding of the needs of the museum.

"The level of planning involved was exceptional. We provided an individually tailored move programme, including an unusual shift pattern, which balanced historical importance, logistical necessity and public interest in equal measures." - Nigel Dews, Harrow Green





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the solution:

The phased relocation meant cataloguing, sequentially packing and moving the entire library and archive into four temporary offsite locations, including environmentally controlled facilities – and then back again into the museum’s new information centre.



client feedback:



Search Engine will transform the way the NRM cares for these huge hidden collections and change the way that we open them up for hands-on public access.

- **Tim Proctor** Archivist, *The National Railway Museum*

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