

APPENDIX C

Helping us shape the future of the 1620s House at Donington le Heath

Introduction

Leicestershire County Council intends to refurbish Donington le Heath Manor House to represent a home and gardens from 1620. This project seeks to holistically re-evaluate the offer, to give a clearer focus to the house and grounds and create a more coherent and enjoyable visitor experience and increase our understanding of the needs of current users and those who do not come to the site.

Please answer these questions as a potential visitor to the site, using your experiences as a user of historic sites around the country.

Opening Times

The house will have seasonal opening. In your experience as a visitor, what times of year are you most likely to visit a historic house and garden?

Are you more likely to visit a historic site during the week or at a weekend?

Are you more likely to visit a house during school holidays or in term time?

The project will include the development of a new learning offer for the house and gardens. For the benefit of both the learning groups and the general public we are considering having dedicated days for learning activities. Which days would you prefer not to have learning activities on?

The 1620s House is likely to be a half day visit. At what time of day would you most likely visit?

Charging

There will be an entrance charge for public to visit the site. In your experience as a visitor what would you expect to pay for a visit to a historic house and gardens (on a non-special event day)?

Refreshments

We would like to know if we should provide some form of public refreshment offer. What is the least you would find acceptable at a small site such as Donington le Heath?

Given the half day visit, at what time of day would you most want refreshments?

Events

Do you think that the 1620 house should offer special events?

If so, what sort of events would you visit at a historic house and garden site?

Should these events extend beyond the opening season? E.g. if the house is generally open in the spring and summer should there be special events in the Autumn and Winter?

How frequently would you be likely to attend events at the same site?

How much would you expect to pay for a special event aimed at family audience?

What would you expect to pay for a specialist workshop aimed at adults?

Interpretation

What interpretation would you like to see at a 1620s themed Donington?

E.g. panels of information, audio guide, printed guide, room guide, costume living history etc

Where have you seen costumed living history done well and what did you like about it?

Where have you seen costumed living history done badly and what did you not like about it?

Would you prefer a room guide demonstrating an activity to be in period costume or modern clothing, or doesn't it matter?

Would you expect to see living history activities in the house and garden taking place all the time, or only at specific events?

Which interpreted historic garden have you enjoyed the most and what was so good about it?

How important would a gift shop to your visit

Very

Not very

Not at all

Volunteering and taking Part

The 1620s house will rely on a team of trained volunteers to help interpret and run the house and gardens. Would you, or someone you know, want to volunteer at this historic house and/or garden?

Marketing

Where and how would you expect to find out about the 1620s House?

What would encourage you to visit the site more than once?

Is there anything else that you think we should think about that would make the 1620 house a good place to visit and enjoy?