

Sewerby Hall

Sewerby Hall sits on the East Yorkshire coast and is surrounded by formal gardens and parkland. With its views of the sea and extensive outdoor space, the site is a popular venue locally. In 2014, East Riding Council, who manage the site, re-opened the house following refurbishment. The project was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and by loans from the V&A and the East Riding Collection. The project sought to redisplay the house as it was in the last years of its private ownership and extend and improve public access to its historic interiors. The 43 V&A objects now displayed at Sewerby comprise the largest single long-term loan by the museum and took several years to plan and conclude.

The original house (built on the site of a Jacobean building) was constructed by John Greame between 1714 – 1720. It was a fashionable design and every subsequent owner made alterations to update the house to their living requirements. In 1934 the house was sold by Yarburgh Lloyd Greame and the contents dispersed in a sale lasting six days. The catalogue for this sale includes furniture, soft furnishings and fine art, and illustrates the building's long occupation in the existence of furniture from a variety of periods. The empty house then served a variety of uses: a café, council offices and other institutional spaces.

With the aid of early photographs and the sale catalogue, curators sought to furnish the interiors as they might have been in 1900. A careful selection of objects which conveyed the lifestyle of such a family living at this period and in such a building was agreed between the V&A and the site curator. The final selection includes three late 18th century oil paintings, various different types of seat furniture and tables, furniture to store books, a dinner wagon and a commode. Earlier pieces from the 17th century were also included to replicate the mix of furniture that once existed in the Oak Room as illustrated by the sale catalogue and photographic sources.

The furnishing of the interiors facilitates an educational programme for school parties and other activities alongside access to the public in the form of historic family rooms and venue hire.



Sewerby's main facade



Oak armchair, 1650 – 1700, now on display in the Oak Room. The sale catalogue listed items dating back to before the house was built. V&A number 229-1898.



A dumb waiter now on display in the Dining Room. V&A number W.70-1962