

Shared Learning Project – Smithfield and its residents in the year of the Great Plague 1665



“Thus this month ends, with great sadness upon the public through the greatness of the plague, everywhere through the Kingdom almost. Every day sadder and sadder news of its increase. In the City died this week 7496; and all of them, 6102 of the plague. But it is feared that the true number of the dead this week is near 10000 - partly from the poor that cannot be taken notice of through the greatness of the number” – Diary of Samuel Pepys, 31 August 1665

This project will seek to look into the impact of the Great Plague, the epidemic of bubonic plague which affected London in 1665, on the residents of **Charterhouse**, and its close neighbour across Smithfield, **St Bartholomew’s Hospital**.

St Bartholomew’s Hospital was founded in 1123, and the Charterhouse in 1371. By 1665 both institutions had seen many changes in their already long histories, but both existed to support the poor of the City in their own way. Using the archive records of both St Bartholomew’s and Charterhouse, as well as other primary sources including parish records and bills of mortality, the project team will investigate the impact of the plague that swept across London that summer on the institutions, their staff and residents, and on the surrounding area.

The team will be working primarily at the London Metropolitan Archives in Islington, as well as St Bartholomew’s Hospital Archives, on the hospital site. Each member of the team will be required to attend regularly and devote time to meaningful research on the topic outside of the scheduled meetings. Access to archival material and other resources can also be arranged at any time during the archives’ opening hours. The data collected will be inputted into a spreadsheet via an online form so basic competency in the use of PCs and the internet is essential.

There will be a team of 12 plus a project leader. The project members will meet regularly throughout the project, on Thursdays from 14:00—16:00 at the Charterhouse, beginning Thursday 11 January 2018. We will prepare and showcase our findings to a small, invited audience at The Charterhouse, on March 29th 2018.

If you are interested in joining this project, please contact the project leader, Dianna Widdis on dianna.widdisu3a@gmail.com for more information and an application form. Closing date for application is Monday 13th November 2017.