
The National Trust

Hardwick Hall

Threads of Time Exhibition

Background

Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire was built by Bess of Hardwick, Elizabethan England's second richest woman, and has survived almost unchanged since the 1590s. Hardwick Hall contains Europe's finest collection of 16th and 17th Century embroideries and tapestries. The hall is surrounded by tranquil walled courtyards enclosing the fragrant restored herb garden, orchards and lawns.

Challenge

A permanent exhibition was planned by the National Trust to reinterpret Hardwick Hall (one of the Trusts most popular visitor attractions) and its priceless collections to a wider audience. A major restoration programme of Hardwick Hall and its collection had just been completed and two new exhibition spaces were created within the Hall to allow the story of this remarkable building and its creator to be told.

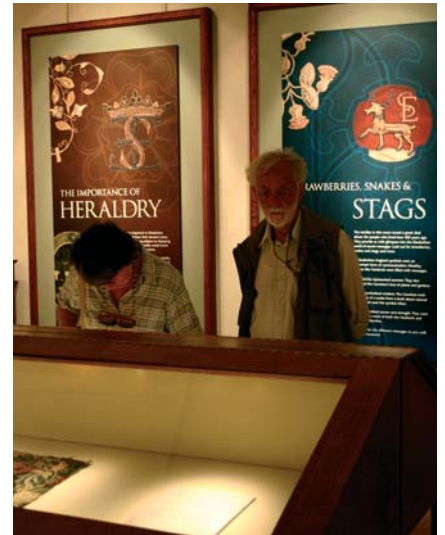
Our solution

Our design approach needed to be sympathetic to the internal setting of a 16th century building. The design cues were strongly influenced by the extraordinary and beautiful embroidery and tapestry designs on show within the collection.

A name and design style were created for the exhibition – *The Threads of Time*. An introductory exhibition outlining the life of Bess of Hardwick, Elizabethan England, the history of the building and its collection was created at the entrance to the Hall including 'low-tech' interactives and touchscreens.

A second exhibition space was also created at the end of the 'Grand Tour' – the traditional route through the maze of rooms within the Hall. Museum grade, hand-crafted wooden cases were commissioned to hold objects from the collection, whilst a series of large interpretive panels were hung throughout the exhibition.





An award-winning permanent exhibition that included traditional exhibition areas, interpretive panels, an audio guide, 'high' and 'low-tech' interactives.

Hand crafted museum grade cases were commissioned to house the Halls priceless collection of embroideries and tapestries.

