

Race Equality Commission

Statues, monuments and street names in Sheffield

- A initial review of monuments and street names in Sheffield in the context of Black Lives Matter
- A desire to work with the Race Equality Commission to understand the context of these issues and develop ways forward

In June we formed a working group to undertake a review of Sheffield statues, monuments, street names and other historically significant references across Sheffield in the context of Black Lives Matter and a new awareness of how the city represents its citizens and history.

We have undertaken an initial desktop study and will produce a report in early October that will include both findings and suggestions for ways forward.

This is only the start of the process, and we are keen to be guided by the Race Equality Commission to fully understand the context, roots and backgrounds to these issues in more detail. There are exciting opportunities to reframe existing monuments and to celebrate more diverse and inclusive histories and aspirations in the future. As a group we know that we need to be practical about what we can do or promise as part of this work, and we need to work out a thoughtful and well-informed approach that encourages public involvement. One of the members of our working group, Yuen Fong Ling, is a member of the Commission and this maybe a good way to take things forward.

Monuments and street names

Sheffield does not seem to have any monuments that are overtly contentious but there are monuments and street names that are connected with slavery and imperialism and colonialism. There are also a number of monuments to reformers and abolitionist campaigners.

Sheffield Archives

The Archive holds a wide range of material including catalogues of Sheffield manufacturing and there is evidence of 'Plantation hoes' manufactured in 1816. In 2018 the Archives published a guide to the information they hold on the slave trade and the anti-slave trade movement in Sheffield.

Museums Sheffield

Staff are building a register of contested material as well as a list of all the relevant uncontested objects in the collection. Clearly this is a significant piece of work and sits within a wider, national and global, context of how we represent our histories and is likely to be a separate piece of work.

The working group

Rebecca Maddox is the Council's Head of Business Development (Culture)

Kim Streets and Kirstie Hamilton lead Museums Sheffield

Yuen Fong Ling is an artist, lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University

Pete Evans is lead archivist at Sheffield Archives

Gary Beatson is the Council officer responsible for the maintenance of monuments owned by the Council
Andrew Skelton is the Coun