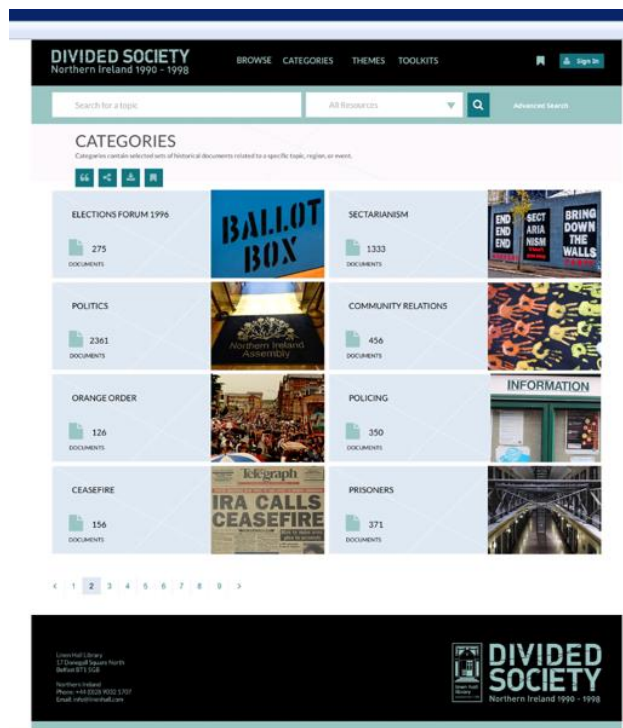


Divided Society at Linen Hall Library - An online archive and digital resource



Overview:

The Northern Ireland Political Collection at the Linen Hall Library started in 1968 with a single civil rights leaflet. Since then the Library has sought to collect all printed material relating to the 'troubles', peace process, and post conflict society and the collection has grown to some 350,000 items, including books, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, manifestos, press releases, newspapers, journals and periodicals. It is a unique collection; collected contemporaneously it is the definitive archive of the 'troubles' and peace process. The Divided Society digitisation and outreach project was the Library's largest project to date, concentrating on posters and periodicals from 1990-1998. This was a historically significant period in our shared recent history and included events such as the Downing Street Agreement, two ceasefires, all-party talks, and negotiations which led to the Good Friday Agreement, and the subsequent referendum.

Over 500 journals comprising thousands of individual issues were digitised along with c. 800 posters. All are available from the curated and fully searchable Divided Society website. The project was underpinned by an innovative and insightful education and outreach programme which resulted in the creation of original exhibitions, unique oral reminiscence, and educational toolkits.

Major outcomes:

- Promotes access to the collections; expands the boundaries of the physical library
- Raises profile of the Library
- Creation of surrogate copies – reduces handling and potential damage to unique and sometimes fragile items

- Digitisation isn't the end of one life cycle – it is the beginning of another
- Preservation of our cultural heritage
- Creation of a resource tailored for use in learning, teaching and research
- Community engagement; engaging with the next generation of users of the Linen Hall Library