

## COMMUNITY ACCESS TO ARCHIVE OFFICES

Thank you for taking the time to look at this questionnaire, which is part of an English Heritage project titled **Expanding the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base**.

### **The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is structured into 3 sections. **Please complete multiple choice questions using the letter 'x'**. Each question has a short explanatory sentence indicating whether one or multiple boxes should be checked. For free text questions we welcome as much concise detail as you can supply. We would be grateful if you could avoid the use of 'jargon' in your replies. A brief glossary of terms is included in a separate document to help in the interpretation of some questions.

We hope you'll find everything straightforward. We've attached some explanatory notes about the questionnaire, which we hope will enable you to complete the questionnaire as fully as possible. However if you do have any problems please don't hesitate to give us a call on the numbers below, and we'll gladly talk things through. Thank you again for sharing your information with us.

### **Submitting the Questionnaire**

Completed questionnaires can be emailed to [answers@locusconsulting.co.uk](mailto:answers@locusconsulting.co.uk). Or, if you prefer, they can be printed off and sent in the post to:

Archive Questionnaire  
Locus Consulting  
Park Lane House  
5 Park Lane,  
Donington  
Lincolnshire  
PE11 4UE

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR  
QUESTIONNAIRE NO LATER  
THAN THE**

**15<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2013**

### **CONTACTING US**

Please do not hesitate to contact us using the information below if you require any assistance or advice on filling in the questionnaire.

<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:adam.partington@locusconsulting.co.uk">adam.partington@locusconsulting.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:alastair.macintosh@locusconsulting.co.uk">alastair.macintosh@locusconsulting.co.uk</a>	<b>Telephone:</b> 01775 821402 07882109149 (Adam) or 07557375400 (Alastair)
---	---

PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH YOUR CONTACT DETAILS:

<b>Organisation:</b> Gloucestershire Archives	<b>Position:</b>
<b>Date:</b> 28/2/2013	<b>Email:</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Telephone:</b>

## **SECTION 1: AVAILABILITY**

This section aims to find out about the types and formats of heritage information that you hold and how that information is made available to a member of the public. The format of the questionnaire is multiple choice. Please check one or more boxes for each question where relevant.

**This first section comprises 3 questions and is completed on the chart on the following page:**

<b>1: HELD</b>	<b>Question:</b> <i>Do you hold this type of information?</i> <b>Response:</b> Yes <u>or</u> No <b>Aim:</b> To find out the types of heritage information held within your archive.
<b>2: ACCESS</b>	<b>Question:</b> How can information be accessed? <b>Response:</b> Mark <u>one or more</u> boxes <b>Aim:</b> To understand if and how members of the public can physically access the information.
<b>3: FORMAT</b>	<b>Question:</b> What formats is information held in? <b>Response:</b> Mark <u>one or more</u> boxes <b>Aim:</b> To understand the different formats that heritage information is held in.



## **SECTION 2: ACCESSIBILITY**

As well as finding out the types of information held by your archive, we are interested to know the ways in which it is being made available to the public. This section is divided into three parts, investigating online access to holdings, remote enquiries and requests for research, and physical access by a member of the public.

### **> ONLINE**

A growing number of archives are providing information online, including via third party websites (e.g findmypast, ancestry). The styles of website vary considerably, particularly according to the information displayed, the different structures in which information is held, and the resources available. The questions below seek to understand the different types of heritage information held online and the often individual ways in which it is presented and structured.

**If none of your heritage information is available online please go to Question 2.6**

**2.1 How is heritage information hosted online?** (Mark either 'Yes' or 'No'. Please add the address of your website in the appropriate box.)

TYPE OF SITE	Yes	No	Website address:
Third party website		x	But will shortly be data on Ancestry
Local authority web pages		x	
Bespoke site or sub-site	x		www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives
Mobile phone site		x	
Mobile phone app		x	(name)

**2.2 Approximately when did your online service become available to the public?** (Month/Year)

\*Answer We have had our own subsite for about 1 year; before that we had pages on Gloucestershire County Council website, since c. 2000

**2.3 Can users upload information to your website?**

(NO) (Delete as applicable)

**2.4 If 'YES' what types of information, and can users see each other's contributions?** (Free text answer)

Answer:

## > REMOTE ENQUIRY

Remote enquiries are a common way of providing heritage information. This section seeks to understand what protocols are in place to supply information remotely and the different methods in which it is made available.

### 2.5 Do you provide a remote search/enquiry service? YES(Delete as applicable)

We provide a certain amount of information free of charge (eg searching our catalogue for relevant records which we can then suggest to the researcher)- these free enquiries are limited to 20 mins (including time taken to compose and type reply); we also offer one session of 20 minutes of paid research (usually the time taken to check one specific document reference); we do not undertake more than one paid session per customer, nor anything which will take longer than 20 mins

### 2.6 What material and/or data can be supplied remotely for each heritage information type (free text), and in what format can this be provided? (Multiple choice) (e.g. Holdings list, copy of specific document, publication)

We offer a paid reprographics service whereby documents are scanned (never photocopied) and either a digital image or a print out of the scan provided. The only cases where this can't happen is where we have no copyright permission; where the documents are closed to the public; where the documents are unfit to handle

	Material/data/information	FORMAT			
		Photocopy	Printout	Scan/Photo	Other*
Maps	Holdings list via online catalogue; copies of specific documents		X	x	x
Lists & Registers	Holdings list via online catalogue; copies of specific documents		X	x	x
Records	Holdings list via online catalogue; copies of specific documents		X	x	x
Wills & Probate	Holdings list via specific database on our website; copies of specific documents		X	x	x
Plans	Holdings list via online catalogue; copies of specific documents		X	x	x
Images & Media	Holdings list via online catalogue; copies of specific documents		x	x	x

\*Please give details if 'Other'

c.98% of our holdings are catalogued to at least collection level and this catalogue information is available via our online catalogue (accessed from our website); we also have a specific database for certain records including wills & probate inventories- this is also accessed via our website. Ancestry are about to digitise our parish registers of baptism, marriage and burial and this info will be available online



## > VISIT

It is likely that the most effective way of accessing the information held by an archive is to visit it in person. For the user, this represents an opportunity to tap into the knowledge and experience of archive staff. This part of the questionnaire aims to find out what heritage information is accessible through a visit, along with the practices, facilities and resources available to help access archive holdings.

### 2.7 What are the opening arrangements of your archive? (Please include days, times and any access restrictions in operation) (Free text).

We are closed to the public on Mondays; our opening hours are Tues, Wed, Fri 9-5; Thurs 9-6.30; Saturdays 9-1.

### 2.8 What facilities are available to members of the public visiting your Archive? (Mark either 'Yes' or 'No')

FACILITY	Yes	No
Dedicated workspace	x	
Computer with catalogue access	x	
Computer with internet access	x	
Library/search room	x	
Other*	x	

\*Please provide more information here

Microfilm & microfiche reader printers; coffee room inc vending machine and water cooler; locker room; powerpoints for use of researchers own laptops; exhibition space for family/local history groups; notice board for Friends of Gloucestershire Archives (Our formal support group); "how to" leaflets and details of upcoming events; the Glos Family History Society resource centre is also located on our site; documents can be pre-ordered in advance of visit; table space can be reserved for project groups; we can offer tailored workshops for specific groups, for a charge

### 2.9 Can you provide visitors with assistance in any of the following areas? (Mark one or more boxes)

	Computer/IT skills	Officers' local knowledge	Manual searching	Interpreting information	Other*
Maps	x	X	x	X	
Lists and Registers	x	X	x	X	
Records	x	X	x	X	
Wills and Probate	x	X	x	X	
Plans	x	X	x	X	
Images	x	X	x	x	

\*Please provide more information here

We are limited in the amount of time we can spend helping users to understand documents because of visitor numbers and staffing levels. However, we are usually able to provide a basic level of help eg decipher a word in a document.

**2.10 How can information be viewed by a member of the public? (Mark one or more boxes)**

	Original Document	Photocopy	Microfiche /Microfilm	Digital image	Transcription or Translation	Other*
Maps	X	X	x	X	X	
Lists and Registers	X		x	x		
Records	X					
Wills and Probate			x			
Plans	X					
Images	x			X		

\*Please provide more information here

Our whole series of inclosure maps and awards have been digitised and are available digitally (in the searchroom) rather than hard copy. One electoral registration district now sends through their registers digitally. Most of our parish registers of baptism, marriage & burial are on microfilm/fich.e

**2.11 What criteria can visitors use to search information? Does this require staff assistance? (Free text)**

	Geographical location search	Topic/type criteria search	Requires staff assistance?
Maps	X	X	No in theory but often yes in practice
Lists & Registers	X	x	No in theory but often yes in practice
Records	x	x	No in theory but often yes in practice
Wills & Probate	X	X	No in theory but often yes in practice
Plans	X	X	No in theory but often yes in practice
Images & Media	X	X	No in theory but often yes in practice

All catalogued material can be assessed by anytext search (this is likely to be effective with geographical searches as the place to which the document relates is very likely to be mentioned in the catalogue entry); we have paper indexes which permit documents to be accessed via place and subject (governed in both cases by thesaurus); this has not been added to for c. 5 years. A



small amount of structured indexing has been done to our online catalogue entries, using keywords. WE hope to add to this over the next financial year.

**2.12 Bearing in mind your answer to Question 2.6, what additional material and/or data can be supplied or accessed during a visit (free text), and in what format can this be provided? (Multiple choice)**

(e.g. Photocopy, digital image, transcription, report)

	Material/data/information	FORMAT			
		Photocopy	Printout	Scan/Photo	Other
Maps	The actual document can be seen. Copies can be made using digital camera or ordered via repro service				
Lists & Registers	The actual document can be seen. Copies can be made using digital camera or ordered via repro service				
Records	The actual document can be seen				
Wills & Probate	Images of the actual document can be seen on microfilm. Print outs can be made		x		x
Plans	The actual document can be seen. Copies can be made using digital camera or ordered via repro service				
Images & Media	The actual items can be seen				

## **SECTION 3: ENABLING ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION**

Much of the information held by archives is in a raw form (e.g. original documents and maps). This section aims to find out what processes and resources are in place to assist a member of the public in the interpretation and application of information acquired from an archive office.

### **3.1 Please give details of any methods and materials available to help users in the interpretation of heritage information, such as user guides to your archive. (Free text)**

**Answer:**  
**Catalogues: where a full catalogue of a collection has been compiled, it will usually include a certain amount of contextual and other information which will help interpret the documents; “how to” sheets on various aspects of using documents in the searchroom; user guides for parish registers and non conformist registers, also sources for South Gloucestershire; fact sheets on certain types of records eg our newspaper holdings; “make the most of ....” courses which look in detail at certain types of records and what they can be used for**

### **3.2 What guidance do you have to help guide members of the public in undertaking heritage-related projects in your area? If you don’t provide any guidance of this kind please enter “n/a”. (Free text)**

We offer community/heritage groups a free initial session to discuss their ideas and help develop their plan. We also offer tailored workshops on aspects which groups have told us they want eg on cataloguing/caring for their records; digital preservation- we make a charge for these

(These might include guidance on how to produce village design statements, organise local history projects, or inform building restoration projects.)

<b>Historical research</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Conservation (e.g. buildings)</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Architecture and design</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Education and outreach</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Planning-related matters</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Landscape history</b>	<b>See above</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>See above</b>

**3.3 Are you aware of any *specific* community-led plans (e.g. parish plans, village design statements, neighbourhood plans etc.) that have used information from your archive in the past 5 years?**

**Answer: YES/NO** (delete as applicable).

Possibly! Here are some examples of use of our Archives which may well be relevant to your survey.

- A few years ago a member of Glos Archives staff attended a Rural Community Council presentation about village plans and recalls them mentioning how a display of old images was very effective in attracting people to attend public meetings about their local plan
- Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership have run various research projects to inform local development, using Glos Archives collections as part of their research and also depositing their findings – eg Final report produced on behalf of the South West Regional Development Agency, prior to the demolition of the buildings at the former "Clutch Clinic", Gloucester (LS54546), Pam Daw's research notes for the Gloscat Heritage Project (D12997)
- Rural community heritage projects which we have helped support e.g. Kempley Tardis and Mickleton Village certainly have as part of their aims raising awareness of history/heritage/conservation/inform current development proposals within their community. e.g. one of Kempley project's aims • To design, open easy access to [the project's] research materials, exhibitions, publications, workshop recordings, etc., within a single digital domain, and establish editorial links to local and national archives. The website's architecture is to be presented as a cascade of maps through time, a viewer browsing as one would a map, clicking on 'hotspot' icons of buildings, farms and landscape features to reveal historical data and expert interpretation • Joint Aims with our heritage industry partners: English Heritage, Cotswolds and Forest of Dean Destination Management Organisation, Forestry Commission / Natural England plus regular visitors representing university courses, U3A, Museum and National Trust/ heritage tour parties, schools and students.
- The "Churchdown ponds" project done by Churchdown parish council used OS maps help in the Archives

**3.4 If 'YES' please give some specific details where possible (Free text)**

(e.g. location, type of plan and basic aims)-

Please see above

Type of Plan	Details

**This concludes the questionnaire. Thank you for taking the time to share your information with us.**

**END**