

# **UNDEPOSITED RECORDS IN OXFORDSHIRE: identification and preservation of privately owned records**

STAGE 2 Report: survey and analysis of local history groups and community archives in Oxfordshire

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# UNDEPOSITED RECORDS IN OXFORDSHIRE: identification and preservation of privately owned records

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## STAGE 2 Report: survey and analysis of local history groups and community archives in Oxfordshire

For the Stage 1 Report, published online in August 2019, see <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/archives/legal-records-risk-lrar-project/lrar-research-surveys>

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## Executive summary

The **Oxfordshire Undeposited Records Project** was a small scale project with a limited budget and time frame, funded by [UCL Faculty of Laws](#), to design a model methodology for identifying privately held records of value which have not been deposited in an established archives by investigating records in one designated area, Oxfordshire. It followed on from, and was associated with, the [Legal Records at Risk \(LRAR\) project](#), (2015- date), which concentrated on identifying and locating privately held legal records at risk, finding out why they are at risk, prioritising the categories most at risk and seeking both practical and strategic solutions.

The Oxfordshire records project was run in two stages:

- Stage 1 sought to develop a methodology for doing this work and establish contact with stakeholders, including both established and community archives, local history associations and interested researchers. A comprehensive report on our findings was completed in August 2019 and published on the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies' Archives website here: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/archives/legal-records-risk-lrar-project/lrar-research-surveys>.
- Stage 2 comprised a survey and analysis of the situation of Oxfordshire local history groups (including some unlisted) and community archives and their problems, with recommendations, some of which were identified in Stage 1, such as the need for funding to assist local history groups and local archives; issues around access to and sustainability of such archives; guidance already existing and new guidance required. We also sought to provide some practical suggestions as to how these issues can be, if not solved, at least understood and mitigated.

The long-term aim of the project was to help to make previously inaccessible or little-known primary resources available to the public, so that new research can be carried out by both amateur and professional historians. We believe that our Oxfordshire findings and recommendations can be applied to any area in England and Wales (and perhaps beyond).

Specific aims:

- To extend the earlier highly localized project to cover the whole of Oxfordshire selectively, mainly by means of:
  - (i) a basic **survey** of all **Oxfordshire local history groups (80+) and community archives** (number unknown), with detailed case studies of a few selected groups. We expected to find a remarkable variety among these entities.
  - (ii) a critical examination of **guidance** to local historians, history groups and holders of undeposited records (listed in Appendix of the 2019 report), especially in respect of its comprehensibility; to raise awareness among stakeholders of their existence; and to draft jargon-free guidance to fill in gaps in provision;
  - (iii) Clarifying **legal and ethical issues** (data protection, intellectual property, confidentiality etc.) around the collection of records for research by groups and individuals who may not necessarily have archival expertise and suggesting practical solutions;

- (iv) Updating and expanding **information about local repositories** (listed in Appendix to 2019 report) to include more systematic information on their collection policies, access and resource problems;
- (v) Acting in **close liaison with** The National Archives (TNA) sponsored Records at Risk working party, the Oxfordshire Local History Association (OLHA), and the Oxford Centre for Research in the Humanities (TORCH) in respect of activities where our interests overlap. Our aim was to produce a **case study** of the situation in Oxfordshire relevant to the TNA's working party on developing a **national strategy** for privately held records.

This project was manageable within the proposed time frame as it built on the work reported by Clare Cowling in her 2019 report and some information already collected. The key difference is that it extended this work to the whole of Oxfordshire, presented as a case study of one county and deepened our analysis of issues.

## Acronyms and abbreviations

ARA	Archives and Records Association <a href="https://www.archives.org.uk/">https://www.archives.org.uk/</a>
CAHG	Community Archives and Heritage Group <a href="https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/">https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/</a>
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation</a>
NHLF	National Heritage Lottery Fund <i>also known as</i> Heritage Fund <a href="https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/">https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/</a>
OFHS	Oxfordshire Family History Society <a href="https://www.ofhs.uk/">https://www.ofhs.uk/</a>
OHC	Oxfordshire History Centre <a href="https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/history/oxfordshire-history-centre">https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/history/oxfordshire-history-centre</a>
OLHA	Oxfordshire Local History Association <a href="https://www.olha.org.uk">https://www.olha.org.uk</a>
TNA	The National Archives <a href="https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/">https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/</a>
UCL	University College London <a href="https://www.ucl.ac.uk/">https://www.ucl.ac.uk/</a>

## Glossary of terms

- **Archive/archives:** in the traditional definition the term 'archive/s' ('archives' can be either singular or plural) refers both to the repository where records of permanent value are stored and made available for research and to the records stored in it, comprising materials in any format created or received by a person, family or organisation, public or private, in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value of the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator.
- **Born-digital records:** records created in a digital format, as opposed to physical records that have been converted into a digital format (e.g. by scanning).
- **Community archives:** an archive managed by a community organisation, that is, an organisation which is not-for-profit and non-governmental. A classic example is a group of people who live in the same location, but there are 'communities of interest' as well, such as people who work in a certain profession. Volunteers usually play a key role, sometimes alongside professional archivists. Some local museums are also included in this definition.
- **Established archives:** a term this project uses to describe repositories which have been in existence for a considerable time and whose records are publicly accessible as a matter of policy, such as The National Archives (TNA), local authority archives or specialist archives within the higher education sector.
- **In-house archives:** a repository of records (often, but not always on-site) held and managed by the creating or inheriting institution, family or individual. It may or may not be open to the public. It may simply be a storage area for records which are no longer in regular use but are occasionally used for reference by members or staff of the organisation.
- **Privately owned records:** records held by an individual, or family or institution, organisation or business that is not owned by a government.
- **Records:** information, in any form, created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.
- **Records at risk:** any record, regardless of format, whose future preservation, accessibility and security is uncertain, particularly records held outside of an established collecting archive institution but not excluding records at risk from institutional failure of the record creator or the current custodian.
- **Socio-legal:** relating to the relationship between law and society.
- **Undeposited records:** records which are not listed as part of the holdings of established archives.
- **Voluntary sector:** social activity undertaken by organizations that are non-governmental non-profit organisations.

## Introduction

**The Oxfordshire Undeposited Records Project**, funded by the University College London (UCL) Department of Laws, aimed to design a model methodology for identifying and locating privately owned<sup>1</sup> records which have not been deposited in an established archives<sup>2</sup> and, if required, linking them with relevant archive repositories, by investigating records in one designated area, Oxfordshire.

This project was a continuation of work done in a series of projects since 2015 within the general programme of 'Legal Records at Risk'. The initial focus was on ways of implementing at local and national level strategies for preservation of privately held records.<sup>3</sup> Such strategies are being considered, among others by the TNA-sponsored interdisciplinary Records at Risk Steering Group. Stage 1 of the Oxfordshire records project focussed on a methodology for identifying and assisting the preservation of undeposited records of potential archival value at local level, illustrated by a detailed investigation of the situation in Henley and several villages in South Oxfordshire. Stage 2 extended this study selectively to the whole of Oxfordshire and addresses a number of issues identified in the conclusions and recommendations of Stage 1.

Our stage 1 report recommended advocacy, publicity, targeted surveys and using local history groups and community archives as advocates and identifiers of records at risk. We defined "privately owned records" as those belonging to companies and businesses and the voluntary or community sector such as local charities, pressure groups and societies, plus records held by individuals and records deposited in community archives and museums.

The reason for Stage 2 is that we were agreeably taken by surprise by the extent and richness of local historical activities and community archives in the county of Oxfordshire; there are for instance at least 80 active local history associations or groups and a large number of hitherto unrecorded community archives, many of which would welcome, and nearly all of which need, guidance and support.

Our Stage 1 report has been well-received and has stimulated many suggestions for further enquiry and action, some of which we hope to take up within the limits of our time and resources. Apart from specific activities we hope to significantly raise awareness among stakeholders and stimulate more systematic thinking about this under-researched topic. Stage 2 focussed mainly on local history associations, community archives, ways of raising public awareness of the value of local privately owned records and the issues around the preservation of these records.

**Scope:** in January 2020 funding for a further 12 months was allocated to extend the work to

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<sup>1</sup>We define 'privately owned records' as those belonging to non-governmental companies, organisations and businesses, the voluntary or community sector such as local charities, pressure groups and societies, records owned by individuals and records deposited in community archives and museums.

<sup>2</sup> By 'established archives' we mean repositories which have been in existence for a considerable time and whose records are publicly accessible as a matter of policy, such as local authority archives or specialist archives, especially within the higher education sector.

<sup>3</sup> During 2018-2019 we changed the title of the project from 'Privately owned records at risk' to 'Undeposited privately owned records' for diplomatic reasons as it might cause offence to some record holders to suggest that their records are 'at risk'.

encompass a survey and analysis of the work of, and the issues encountered by, local history associations and community archives in Oxfordshire, such as the need for funding; legal and ethical issues around access to and sustainability of such archives; guidance already existing and new guidance required.

**Purpose:** the primary purpose of stage 2 was to:

- a) Suggest solutions to the issues identified above and
- b) To emphasise the importance of such groups and institutions to their local community, especially their socio-legal impact on, for example, local planning and community wellbeing.

**Expected outcomes:**

- Identification of the issues faced by all community groups and archives with suggestions as to how to provide more targeted advice and guidance.
- Evaluation of the ways in which such groups and archives give value to both their local communities and the wider socio-historical scene.
- Preparation and publication of a report covering the above.

## Part 1: Collecting background data

### 1.1 Exclusions

Parish and Town Councils were excluded from our project for the following reasons:

- a) Though they certainly collect community-based records, they do not fit within our definition of a community archive repository as ‘an archive managed by a community organisation, that is, an organisation which is not-for-profit and non-governmental’.
- b) There were c.320 such councils in Oxfordshire as of February 2020 – too many to contact within a limited time frame.
- c) Many have arrangements to deposit records with the Oxfordshire History Centre (OHC).
- d) Where Parish or Town councils provide storage for the records of local associations or community archives this has already been noted in the report.

We also excluded business archives from Stage 2 of the project, as, again, they do not fit into the definition of a community archives.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.2 Issues

1. Lockdown. The work of Stage 2 was affected by the Covid-19 lockdown beginning in March 2020 as it was not only impossible to visit associations and archives in Oxfordshire but it was also felt that it might be inappropriate to contact individual association members, many of whom were elderly and all of whom would understandably have different priorities at this time. Accordingly, we did not recommence contacting local groups and archives until the beginning of May.

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<sup>4</sup> The [Legal Records at Risk project](#) dealt at length with the management of business records and archives as created by the legal sector and also noted the potential value of business archives to the research sector. Our [Stage 1 Report](#) of this project also touched on local businesses and their archives in Oxfordshire.

2. We had found during Stage 1 that there was some measure of defensiveness or wariness or, on occasion, hostility, on the part of the keepers of local archive material. Some seemed to be under the impression that professional archives would seek to interfere unnecessarily in their management of their archives or even to try to wrest their holdings from them. We also heard what appeared to be unfounded rumours that museums and archives destroyed deposited material without consultation. We therefore used the time to discuss, remotely, our Stage 1 findings with the Oxfordshire Local History Association (OLHA), the Oxfordshire History centre (OHC) and the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) and to seek a consensus on the most tactful way to approach the local associations and community archives.
3. We were often unable to determine by simply looking at the websites whether societies and clubs, when collecting material for their archives, had:
  - Obtained written agreements from donors/depositors clarifying the legal status of, e.g., ownership, access, copyright.
  - Taken into account the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when publishing photos and other material on-line.
  - Given any thought to how to dispose of a community archives where funding and/or volunteer manpower to manage the archives ran out.

It was therefore going to be necessary to contact each group or archives individually.

### **1.3 Local history societies**

We began with the on-line list of local history societies in Oxfordshire published by the OLHA<sup>5</sup>. Using this list we went to the website of each society and created a table (see **Appendix I**) with the aim of establishing a profile: when the society was founded; its aims; its source of funding; its membership and whether it was maintaining an institutional and/or a community archives or museum<sup>6</sup>.

From their websites it appears that there are the following types of society:

1. All comprise regular gatherings of interested people to talk about, and promote awareness of, local history. All societies hold (other than during lockdown) regular meetings on subjects of interest to the local area; many mount regular exhibitions and produce publications.
2. Some state that one of their aims is to collect and make available records of local interest, both original material and copies of material held elsewhere which are not readily accessible.
3. Some appear to have been established to help locate, preserve and protect archaeological artefacts and structures; they have later extended their remit to recording and/or collecting any material of local interest.
4. Some, according to their websites, were established expressly to lobby for protection of the historic environment from inappropriate development. Most then extended this to

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.olha.org.uk/local-history-groups/>

<sup>6</sup> The findings in this section are, we should stress, only as accurate or as detailed as the information available on each website.

collecting records of the area (particularly photos) and publishing as many as possible on their websites.

Records held: there appear from their website to be roughly four categories of records held by local societies.

1. Those holding some collections of records (e.g. the odd photo to put on the website); most societies include on-line photos on their websites but they do not always cite provenance, so it isn't known whether they hold the originals or not.
2. Some are undertaking transcribing/copying of records already held in established archives like OHC.
3. Many are carrying out oral history projects with local residents.
4. Some have set up archives to manage collections i.e. community archives, whether alone or in collaboration with other organisations such as museums.

Funding: all are apparently funded by members' subscriptions; four stated that they were in receipt of National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) grants and three received funding from parish councils.

#### **1.4 Local and community archives and museums**

Using the websites of the local history societies and an on-line list provided by CAHG<sup>7</sup>, we created a table (see **Appendix II**) of local and community archives and museums in Oxfordshire (63 in all). We did not include established, private in-house archives (e.g. those kept by schools, families or businesses to manage their own records or those fully funded by Oxfordshire Council). We tried to adhere to CAHG's definition of a community archives as follows:

“Broadly speaking, people think of projects as community archives either because:

1. The subject-matter of the collection is a community of people. The classic example is a group of people who live in the same location, but there are 'communities of interest' as well, such as people who worked in a certain profession.
2. The process of creating the collection has involved the community. Typically, this means that volunteers have played a key role, sometimes alongside professional archivists.”<sup>8</sup>

CAHG further explains that community archives and heritage initiatives come in many different forms (large or small, semi-professional or entirely voluntary, long-established or very recent, in partnership with heritage professionals or entirely independent) and seek to document the history of all manner of local, occupational, ethnic, faith and other diverse communities. Their work covers a broad spectrum of activity that includes:

- The grass-roots activity of documenting, recording or exploring community heritage.
- The outreach and partnership work of mainstream archive services with a wide range of different communities.

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<sup>7</sup> The list is available here: [https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css\\_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=](https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/what-is-a-community-archive>

In Stage 1 of the project we had asked selected community archives for the reason behind their creation. Reasons given included:

- Physical distance from established repositories making research difficult.
- Cataloguing backlogs in established archives, meaning that records deposited by local groups or individuals could be inaccessible to researchers for some time.
- A perception that established archives charge for accepting deposits.
- A concern that established archives would not wish to collect, e.g., books of local interest, press cuttings or files containing mostly secondary source material, even where such material is demonstrably of local research value, leading to a preference to retain the whole collection locally<sup>9</sup>.

Records held: at the time of writing we had located 63 community archive/museums. The main findings based on their websites are as follows:

Types of community archives:

1. Some had been set up in association with, or as, locally run museums (9). These tend to be managed in the way we would expect of traditional archives: they are open to the public with regular opening hours and staff or volunteers in attendance to assist.
2. Most comprise collections of photographs, objects and documents collected from local residents. Some of the material is usually posted on-line; other material is available to peruse on request. In one case it was stated that documents were available to members only.
3. It was often difficult to decide whether to include a local museum as a “community archives”. We decided to do so where the focus of the museums’ collections was a) purely local b) included original documents, oral histories and photos as well as artefacts or transcripts of documents, maps etc held elsewhere and c) was not run as a purely commercial enterprise. We identified 13 museums in this category.

Holdings based on information on the websites (again, findings are only as accurate as the information provided:

1. The websites of 26 community archives stated that they have an archive of local photographs; most display some photos on their websites.
2. 24 stated that their archive included documents/records. It was often not clear whether these comprised originals or copies.
3. 11 were also the custodians of some parish records (presumably by agreement with/some funding by the Council).
4. 12 mentioned that they hold artefacts/objects.
5. Eight stated that they had catalogued their holdings. No doubt more have done so or are in the process of doing so.
6. Four specified that they held printed material and/or press cuttings.
7. 25 noted that they were undertaking oral history projects, presumably with the intention of keeping the transcripts/tapes in the archives.

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<sup>9</sup> These last two appear to be misapprehensions. We came across no established archives in Oxfordshire or Berkshire which charge for accepting deposits, although some might ask for a voluntary donation towards costs of physical transfer or conservation on an ad hoc basis. OHC’s on-line [Depositing Documents page](#) also specifically states that ‘We welcome donations of published or printed material on any aspect of Oxfordshire life and history, including village or family histories, topical studies, periodicals, and electronic publications’.

8. One stated that it had digitised its holdings and transferred the originals to OHC while keeping the digital copies available locally.

## Part 2: Undertaking the survey

### 2.1 Contacting local history groups and community archives/museums

The next step was to contact the societies and community archives or museums to:

- Seek to fill the gaps in information where the website was unclear.
- Find their views on what professional help, if any, they felt would be useful in undertaking their various activities, especially in the management of their archives.
- Seek to encourage them to publicise their archival holdings, if they had them, effectively.

Questionnaires are not necessarily the best way to collect and collate information, but the number of bodies we needed to contact made a set of standard questions the only efficient way to gather the required data within a short space of time. Accordingly, when we recommenced contacting societies and archives in May 2020, we first sent an introductory email explaining the rationale and scope of the project and asking their co-operation in responding to a set of standard questions. We apologised for the fact that some of the questions had already been answered on individual websites but explained that there was not time to tailor the questionnaire to each individual group. If we received an initial response we then sent out the questionnaire.

Due to the fact that some historical societies managed community archives and/or museums while others did not, we decided on two sets of questions, one to be aimed at each category. We also ran the questions by the OHC, the OLHA and CAHG to seek their feedback. See **Appendix IV** for the list of questions.

### 2.2 Organisations questioned

See **Appendices I** and **II**. We contacted 51 local history societies which, according to their websites, managed community archives, plus a further 22 societies which did not appear to do so but which, nevertheless, took a keen and active interest in their local history. We received 31 initial replies, some including relevant information or links to their websites; all were then sent one or other of the questionnaire to which we received a further 25 responses (see **Appendix IV**).

### 2.3 Findings

The findings were as follows:

#### Local historical societies:

- The first local society was created in 1839; the most recent in 2019. In the C20 most were set up in the 1980s, while the overall majority (by a slim margin) appear to have been established in the early C21 between 2000-2010.
- All those contacted held (prior to the Covid-19 lockdown) regular meetings, open to members and the public, with guest speakers on items of local and national interest.

- Funding in all cases was by subscription; some charged for attendance at events, while some received the occasional small grant or subsidy from the local Council (e.g. for publications).
- Seven stated that they kept in-house administrative archives, comprising membership details, financial documentation and minutes of meetings. Two of the seven had deposited their in-house archives in an established repository (OHC and the Bodleian Library), three kept them in a private home and three maintained them digitally.
- Nine groups had no website. Websites of the remaining groups usually included historical photographs which may or may not have been in the custody of the group (provenance was not always stated).
- Publishing: 10 mentioned specific publications produced or in the process of production by the group based on the material they had collected.
- Issues: sustainability of the groups was the main issue. The impact of Covid-19 was mentioned, but the aging demographic of the officers and members was the primary concern. Two local history societies were uncontactable; the assumption is that they have ceased to exist.

Community archives and museums: 63 were contacted.

- 19 of the respondents provided details of their community archives. All had perforce closed for a period due to Covid-19. Some questions were not answered.
- Management: nine were run by charitable trusts, 13 by volunteers from the local history society. Six employed an experienced archivist or curator to manage the collection, plus volunteers.
- Funding: 12 had received lottery funding, either to help set up the archives or for cataloguing; 10 were funded on a regular or ad hoc basis by their Parish or District Council; others relied on donations and fundraising events. Two had received EU funding.
- Collections: all collected documents and photographs of local historical relevance and, until the Covid-19 crisis, actively collected records. Four stated that they were beginning to actively collect material relating to the impact of Covid-19 on their communities. 15 had undertaken or were undertaking oral history projects.
- Finding aids: 26 stated that their archives was catalogued or listed; one had just begun the process; five had no list or catalogue and would like advice on how to go about it. 12 had published their catalogue or lists on-line.
- Storage: seven community archives were housed in bespoke buildings or museums; six were held in the village/parish hall. Three had small collections stored in cupboards in the village hall, school and church respectively; four were primarily or solely on-line and six were stored in private homes. One history society had passed its original archives to OHC and held digitised copies locally.
- Access: 47 provided free access to material, while six charged. Most did not open full-time, but by appointment or at fixed times.

- Sustainability: six had clear contingency plans to pass collections to an established archives or the Council in the event of the archives' demise; seven had no plans and would value advice; others did not respond to this question.
- Issues: five listed sustainability of the collection as the primary issue; four mentioned physical storage specifically; four noted that management and sustainability of digital records was a major issue; five specified cataloguing, one mentioned data protection and one sought advice on creating displays. Loss of records as local individual owners died was also mentioned. Others simply stated "all" against the examples in the questionnaire. All respondents noted that they would like advice and guidance on managing these issues.
- Liaison with professional organisations: Three museums were accredited by the Museum and Libraries Association. Seven archives stated that they were registered with CAHG; only one had registered with TNA's [Discovery](#). A further eight stated that they would now register with CAHG and four that they would consider registering with [Discovery](#).
- Available advice: 11 noted that they had not previously been aware of the guidance provided by CAHG and TNA; eight stated that they knew about, and had used, available guidance, especially from OHC and OLHA.

## Part 3: Current assistance for community groups and archives

### 3.1 Available guidance

**Appendix IV** of our [Stage 1 Report](#) listed current guidance from the archives sector on recordkeeping and archiving records. We tried to select material of particular value to community archives and groups. Guidance in the **Appendix** comprised material from TNA, OHC, CAHG, The Campaign for Voluntary Sector Archives, The Charity Archivists and Records Managers Group and The Historic Houses Archivists Group.

Since the publication of the Stage 1 Report we have become aware of some more valuable advice available for community archives elsewhere in the country, such as that published by:

- Norfolk Record Office. Their [Community Archives Toolkit](#) contains guides, tips and resources for managing and preserving community archive collections. Equally importantly, there is an understanding that budgets and resources may be limited, so where possible practical advice is listed in priority order and with alternatives.
- [Manchester Histories](#), a charity that works collaboratively with people, organisations, and partners to reveal, share and celebrate Greater Manchester's diverse histories and heritage. The website includes a set of [toolkits](#) to assist local historians.
- The [Oral History Society](#) which offers a great deal of useful advice on archives, data protection, freedom of information, legal and ethical issues and funding, plus some detailed guidance on documenting the Covid-19 pandemic, both remotely during the pandemic itself and by face to face interviews when it is safe to do so. It also runs on-line training sessions for budding oral historians.

### 3.2 Practical help

While every record office to which we spoke in both stages 1 and 2 of the project<sup>10</sup> tried to offer ad hoc guidance and assistance to community groups, we also discovered that some local authority record offices somehow find the time to offer pro-active practical help such as workshops to community groups and archives, indicating that they not only realise the importance of the community archives sector but are keen to promote it. Examples<sup>11</sup> include:

- Gloucestershire Archives, which has a core training offer covering aspects of collections care, collections management, digital preservation and recording spoken history interviews, which before COVID struck, they were delivering on site 4 times a year. They are now putting the training on-line, initially via a series of blogs, as a first step to producing an on-line resource<sup>12</sup>.
- Hampshire Archives and Local Studies, which has been running day workshops for community archives on how to care for their collections for about 10 years. These cover cataloguing, preservation, digital access, and oral history. Participants have come from within and beyond Hampshire and represent geographical and special interest subject based communities as well as interested individuals with their own collections. They are looking at running the next workshop on-line.<sup>13</sup>
- In addition to their work above, the Norfolk Record Office runs the ‘Community Archives: Skills, Support and Sustainability’ project. The project aims to support community archives in Norfolk to ensure their work is sustainable. The project team train members and volunteers to improve knowledge about their collections and how best to look after them. The project provides one-to-one support for 30 partner groups. They are creating and delivering training for community archives across the county. The team has created practical and straightforward guidance to tie in with the long-term support of the Record Office, with on-line training resources available for anyone to access. Electronic equipment and archival packaging and storage materials are being purchased for the partners’ use, and the RO monitors an on-line forum and directory of community to encourage networking and foster knowledge sharing.<sup>14</sup>
- Norfolk Record Office also launched the [History Begins at Home](#) campaign in May 2020. Promoted by the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group and the Archives for Wellbeing Network, the aim is as follows: ‘Primarily it is there to deliver a public benefit

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<sup>10</sup> See S.1.4 of our Stage 1 report for the work done by established Oxfordshire archives (OHC, Bodleian, Berkshire Record Office) to help community archives and history groups

<sup>11</sup> For a more detailed examination of this kind of help for community archives see Dr Julianne Nyhan, University College London, ‘Community archives in the UK: an overview’, published in K. Zietal (ed): *Community Archives. Models of Cooperation with the state*, Publisher: Fundacja O Środka Karta. Program Archiwistyka Społeczna, pp.221-237  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315545898\\_Community\\_archives\\_in\\_the\\_UK\\_an\\_overview](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315545898_Community_archives_in_the_UK_an_overview)

<sup>12</sup> Information sent by email courtesy of *Archives Development Manager*, Gloucestershire Archives, 9 Oct 2020

<sup>13</sup> Information sent by email courtesy of the Principal Archivist (ICT & e-services), Hampshire Archives and Local Studies, 9 Oct 2020

<sup>14</sup> Information sent by email courtesy of the Community Archivist | Community Archives: Skills, Support and Sustainability, Norfolk Record Office, 9 Oct 2020

– everyone needs to look after their mental wellbeing – but it also about proving that archives can make a positive contribution to this incredibly important agenda. Archives provide an opportunity for sustained engagement with a past with which people have a personal connection. This wellbeing benefits of this can last a lifetime.<sup>15</sup>

- Other Record Offices which have produced resources for community archives are the West Yorkshire Archive Service, which in 2017 supported an NHLF funded project in Wakefield which looked at the generations that came from Pakistan to settle in Wakefield after World War II. The '[This is my story, now tell me yours](#)' aimed to develop the Wakefield Asian Archive.

### 3.3 Funding

#### National and international sources of funding:

Selected sources of funding which some community groups and archives may find useful/have already employed are listed below. The list is in no way comprehensive.

- The [LEADER grants programme](#) is a community-led scheme that provides funding for projects in England which help businesses and rural communities to grow and develop the rural economy. It includes cultural and heritage activities and is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. Two museums stated that they had been in receipt of a LEADER grant towards a new store.
- The [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#). Nine of the community archives which responded had received NHLF grants to help set up the archives. The NHLF also provides funding for projects such as cataloguing and digitisation and provides resilience loans. It has offered urgent grants for heritage assets at immediate risk due to Covid-19 and funds specific community heritage projects<sup>16</sup>.
- [The National Archives](#) offers scoping and cataloguing grants. Its [Archives Revealed](#) programme works with charities such as [The Pilgrim Trust](#) and [The Wolfson Foundation](#) to provide funding for conservation, cataloguing and research projects.
- [The Arts & Humanities Research Council](#) (AHRC) offers a number of funding streams to support the creation of digital resources.
- The [Archives and Records Association](#) funds projects within the archives and records sector that promote continuous professional development, standards, guidance, accessibility, advocacy and awareness of recordkeeping issues.
- [The Business Archives Council](#) provides an annual cataloguing grant for business archives related to sports. Its [Crisis Management Team](#) co-ordinates efforts to preserve business records in cases of liquidations, administrations, takeovers and other circumstances where records may be in danger.
- The Records at Risk group is setting up a fund for the emergency rescue of endangered archive collections.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.exploreyourarchive.org/wellbeing-and-archives-sustained-engagement-with-the-past-is-good-for-you/>

<sup>16</sup> See <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/our-work/community-heritage> and <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/our-work/museums-libraries-and-archives>

- CAHG gives [annual community archive and heritage awards](#) to high-achieving archives and museums.
- The [Association of Independent Museums](#) administers grants for activities including training, conservation, development and exhibitions. One community museum mentioned receiving a small grant from the Association.
- The [Museums Association](#) also provides annual funding to support projects that make a real impact on museums and communities.
- The [Art Fund](#) provides acquisition, curatorial and project funding grants for museums.
- [Ancestry](#) may, if the material fits the required criteria, digitise collections of genealogical records free of charge.
- [TownswWeb Archiving](#) offers an annual grant for digitising collections. TownswWeb has also published a [Guide](#) to sources of funding for heritage digitisation projects.

#### **Local sources of funding:**

- Councils: a number of local groups and archives are/were in receipt of town, parish or county council grants for specific projects, plus other benefits such as the council paying for the rental of buildings in which to house archives.
- Charging entrance fees. We were pleasantly surprised to find that a minority of community archives and museums charged for admission, but it is likely that in future more will need to do so. Charging fees is a double-edged sword; it may raise revenue but it may also deter potential visitors and researchers.
- Subscriptions: all the local history groups which responded charge an annual membership subscription, a proportion of which was sometimes passed on to support the community archives (in several cases the local history group and the community archives were indistinguishable).
- Ad hoc: all community archives and groups raised funds through events, exhibitions, fees for lectures, sale of publications etc. Charitable and individual one-off donations are/were also received.

Given the many and varied funding streams available, the real issue for community groups and archives/museums appears not to be the availability of finance for one-off projects such as cataloguing, digitisation and sometimes for the creation of a bespoke building in which to house collections, but having a long-term, consistent revenue stream. No archives or museum can survive without such a stream. This seems to be an obvious statement, yet there have been instances of funding for the creation of archives being granted as a one-off. This *may* be one reason why, of the 100 historical societies and archives investigated, 7 (two groups and five archives) appear to now be defunct<sup>17</sup>. Long-term funding issues were a major concern of most of the community archives and museums which responded to our

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<sup>17</sup> This is speculation based on informal discussions with other archivists. A defunct organisation can't be contacted to ask why it no longer exists; another reason could simply be lack of individuals/local interest to sustain the archives. The ageing demographic of community historians and curators was voiced as the primary concern by respondents to our questionnaire.

questionnaire. A particular worry was whether councils would continue to provide regular assistance such as paying rent for, or providing, premises.

## Part 4: Project conclusions and recommendations

The recommendations in Part 4 of our [Stage 1 Report](#) also apply.

### 4.1 The importance of developing and maintaining relationships between established archive sector and community archives

A small sample of various initiatives undertaken by the established archive sector and archive professionals in academia to define, understand and assist community archives is listed below. These samples show that the archives sector is aware of a) the importance of community archives and b) the issues they face.

- In February 2008 the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded The **Community archives and identities** project at UCL for 20 months (2008-2009). The project “investigated the importance of independent 'community archives', and in particular the role of these archives in the production of collective identities via academic and popular public histories, exhibitions and other interactions... the importance of these collections has only recently been widely recognised amongst cultural policy-makers and professional organisations. However these collections present many challenges to traditional professional practices (for instance the scope of archival collections, the relationship with non-traditional user communities and issues of ownership / custodianship).”<sup>18</sup> The intended outcome was “a better understanding of the role of community archive initiatives in resisting misrepresentation and marginalisation, a clearer understanding of the relationship between formal archive professionals and the custodians of community archives and suggestions regarding best practice models for identifying and ensuring the long-term sustainability of significant community archives, both physical and virtual.”<sup>19</sup>
- This project noted various earlier initiatives to identify and assist community archives, including: “the Community Access to Archives project (2003-2004), the establishment of the Community Archives Development Group (CADG) and reports such as the “Impact of Community Archives” (CADG 2007) and the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) commissioned Community Archives and the Sustainable Communities Agenda (Jura 2009) ...A sign of the extent to which professional recognition of the status of community-based archives and community-based archivists had evolved beyond the traditional indifference and disparagement was the incorporation in 2012 of CAHG as a special interest group within the Archives and Records Association (ARA), the recently re-organised professional body.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/information-studies/community-archives-and-identities-documenting-and-sustaining-community-heritage>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Mary Stevens, Andrew Flynn and Elizabeth Shepherd, **New frameworks for community engagement in the archive sector: from handing over to handing on**, available for purchase on-line: 12 Feb 2010, pp 6-7

- In 2015 Dr Julianne Nyhan of UCL published an article surveying relevant community archives literature in order to give an overview of the relationships that existed between community archives and the state around the year 2015.<sup>21</sup> This article noted further initiatives by established archives to engage with community archives, the availability of funding and attempts to interact with community archives, though it appeared that these attempts were neither formal nor systematic.<sup>22</sup>

## 4.2 The need for continued interaction between archive professionals and local communities

It is clear from our findings that there is considerable advice available to non-professionals in the community archives and museums sector, plus an understanding of their value and the problems they face. The issue, therefore, is not the quantity or quality of the advice, but making it easily accessible. The majority of respondents to our survey were aware of some guidance – primarily that offered by OHC or Berkshire Record Office – and of advice offered in areas of specialist interest such as that offered by the county archaeologist, but not many knew, for example, about CAHG and its guidance.

The internet offers a plethora of advice on managing collections, but it would not necessarily be easy for non-professionals to separate disinterested advice from archive professionals compared to other material such as commercial offerings. Additionally, some community groups may not, by virtue of their age demographic, have confidence in their expertise in using the internet to find relevant information.<sup>23</sup> The internet therefore, is not the only medium by which advice and guidance should be disseminated. Pre- and post-pandemic it was heartening to hear that conferences and events have been/are being planned by archives (such as those listed in **Part 3** of this report) to raise awareness of what's available.

There is, however, a need for better guidance from the archives sector about legal and ethical issues around recordkeeping<sup>24</sup>. While several of the bodies contacted stated that they believed they were managing copyright, ownership and personal data properly, few were able to provide specific evidence in terms of policies or procedures covering these areas. Only six mentioned that they had collections development policies; two community museums forwarded theirs. Both touched on ownership and disposal of material. One forwarded its well thought-out and detailed data storage procedure, listing issues around managing digitised material, but only briefly mentioned concerns around further processing personal data. Almost all respondents noted that they would appreciate more targeted guidance in this field.

The archives sector does already provide a great deal of guidance on the legal and ethical aspects of keeping archives and institutional records, but this guidance is primarily targeted at professional archivists and records managers. There needs to be more straightforward advice which does not assume a detailed knowledge of archive jargon or legislation. The

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<sup>21</sup> Dr Julianne Nyhan, Op Cit

<sup>22</sup> Ibid pp.5-7

<sup>23</sup> I include myself in this group. Fortunately I have children who can guide me when I call for help

<sup>24</sup> Such as copyright, intellectual property, commercial confidentiality, client confidentiality, processing of personal data etc

CAHG does provide some of this kind of guidance<sup>25</sup>, but as most of the local societies and archives I contacted were unaware of CAHG's existence, it needs to better advertise its services. Contacting all the groups and museums listed in the appendices to this report would be a good start.

In this context it is important to note individual initiatives to safeguard records. We came across several examples of individuals, not necessarily formally connected to local history groups, who had saved and stored collections of records with a view to offering them to the local archives. Without such initiatives many records of historical value would have been lost.<sup>26</sup>

### **4.3 The importance of recording the impact of Covid-19 for posterity**

In its response to the Select Committee on the impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors TNA stated: 'The vulnerability of archive services to financial collapse is particularly acute for those who have adopted models that have moved away from core funding, as a means to increase their financial resilience. In many of these cases, diversification of their income revenue, for instance towards a mix of venue hires, events, catering services and retail, has meant higher financial dependence on visitor/user footfall- income which has disappeared during the lockdown phase with the reduction of visitor numbers to zero'<sup>27</sup>.

TNA further pointed out that 'The nation's archival heritage is cared for by a highly diverse range of custodians. These include businesses, charities and arts organisations many of which are now significantly more vulnerable to failure and dissolution as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent financial pressures. We know from experience that important irreplaceable collections of national and local value may be lost or destroyed if and/or when their custodians fail, creating significant gaps in our national memory. This loss has important ramifications for the future, because it will affect the ability for future generations to research past events and to scrutinize the interventions of decision-makers.'<sup>28</sup>

Community archives and societies were of course impacted by Covid-19, as all those archives and museums previously open to the public had to close their doors, while local history societies had to suspend fundraising social events and lectures. Additionally, the members of local history societies are those designated most at risk of Covid-19 due to their age, meaning that many had to self-isolate. Nevertheless, several historical societies contacted said that they were attempting to gather and preserve information on the impact of Covid-19 on their communities. As TNA has put it; 'The archive sector and the Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) profession are critical in documenting, securing and preserving records relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will enable not only business continuity, research and innovation, but also evidence of how this crisis was managed for

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<sup>25</sup> Such as its excellent guidance note on [GDPR and Community Archives](#)

<sup>26</sup> One individual initiative is that of Bernard Stone, who assembled an archive relating to the Cheney School, which he then transferred to Oxford Brookes University, plus an archive relating to the firm of Ridge and Partners, which he intends to offer to the Oxfordshire History Centre. Many thanks to Bernard for granting us permission to include this shining example.

<sup>27</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/7028/pdf/> S.5

<sup>28</sup> Ibid S.22

future generations.<sup>29</sup> Community archives and historical societies are therefore playing a critical role in the recording the history of the pandemic as it affected communities. It remains to be seen whether they can continue to preserve the records for posterity.

#### **4.4 The socio-legal implications of the changing role of traditional archives**

It is clear that local groups and archives have considerable value to their local communities, not only in providing a source of interest and social interaction to those who might otherwise be isolated due to age, infirmity or poverty (we noticed that entrance to almost all the community museums and archives is free of charge) and thus to wellbeing, but also in acting as watchdogs and pressure groups to protect and preserve the local environment.

They also have an increasingly important role in the archival field. Established archives are increasingly starved of funds<sup>30</sup>; some of those we contacted in Stage 1 of the project stated that they could no longer carry out proactive collecting unless material was in imminent danger of loss (and sometimes not even then) because they did not have the resources to do so<sup>31</sup>. Nor were they able to keep tabs on specific local businesses or societies so as to either take their records or offer more than generic guidance on recordkeeping<sup>32</sup>.

Lack of resources also means that collections policies are sometimes being amended to allow only for the acquisition of core material (i.e. material which specifically reflects the activities of the collecting body). This is especially the case with local authority archives, which increasingly are forced to focus on collecting local government records at the expense of non-governmental material of relevance to the county or district. At the same time, conversely, they are expected to emphasise the “heritage” aspect of their records to maintain public interest, meaning that concentrating on cataloguing and making available (e.g. by digitisation) evidential material protecting the civic rights of citizens could be neglected in favour of prioritising the accessibility of items which look good on the website or in exhibitions and which appeal more to the genealogist than to the professional researcher<sup>33</sup>.

In other words established archives, including even TNA, are “increasingly seeing themselves as cultural organisations operating exclusively in historical time and not as having any longer an evidential role in juridical time. The UK National Archives now sees itself as a cultural, academic and heritage institution and has recently moved from the Ministry of Justice to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.<sup>34</sup> Part of the motive

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid S.27

<sup>30</sup> As detailed in S.3.2 of our [Stage 1 Report](#)

<sup>31</sup> Hence the creation of the Records at Risk Group, formed specifically to monitor and rescue the records of businesses and other institutions in danger of closing. The Group has worked wonders during the Covid-19 crisis (may need a whole section on this in body of report)

<sup>32</sup> With some remarkable exceptions as noted in S.3 of this report

<sup>33</sup> As TNA noted in its response to the Select Committee on the impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors: ‘The vulnerability of archive services to financial collapse is particularly acute for those who have adopted models that have moved away from core funding’. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/7028/pdf/> S.5

<sup>34</sup> [The National Archives, Machinery of Government Change \(2015\)](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/machinery-of-government-change-the-national-archives-moves-to-dcms/) <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/machinery-of-government-change-the-national-archives-moves-to-dcms/> (accessed 7 July 2017). The DCMS has since been rebranded as the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

behind this change may be the income stream that archives can now generate from the commercialisation of their holdings for family history”<sup>35</sup>.

It is clear, therefore, that community bodies and archives are fulfilling a socio-legal need by collecting and preserving records and artefacts which established archives either cannot or may not. They are truly following the “from the bottom up” process by acquiring and making accessible photographs and documents of individuals or local businesses as well as undertaking oral history projects. This work not only provides enjoyment and assists in wellbeing, but helps to protect the rights of the community and its citizens by preserving the historic record. We believe that the situation we found in Oxfordshire could be replicated across most or all counties in the UK<sup>36</sup>.

#### **4.5 The importance of recognising the socio-legal significance of local societies/community archives.**

As evidence of this we noted that several local societies stated that they were specifically established to safeguard legal and civic rights in relation to the protection of the natural and built environment. Examples:

- The Bensington Society was ‘formed in response to a period of change in which our small agricultural community was declared an “area for growth”. This period of change reached a climax in the 1960s, when College Farm in the centre of Benson was demolished and replaced by shops and houses. Those who loved the village as it was, watched in dismay, and their protests became louder and organised. This led to the establishment of The Bensington Society.’<sup>37</sup> Its Constitution (2015) states: ‘The Aims of the Society in the benefit area are: a. To stimulate public interest in matters of concern. b. To promote high standards of planning and architecture. c. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest. d. To promote and support research into the history of the benefit area. e. To promote, protect and improve the visual and physical environment. f. To promote the improvement of the benefit area by associating with the local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation.’<sup>38</sup>
- Friends of Iffley Village, whose Constitution (2015) states: ‘The purposes of the organisation are: conservation of the essential character of Iffley village and its Conservation Area for the benefit of its residents, businesses and visitors; to monitor and guide plans proposed for the future of the Village, and to foster community spirit.’<sup>39</sup>
- Wallingford Historical & Archaeological Society, “founded in 1973, initially in response to an appeal by Oxfordshire archaeologists for local people to keep a watching brief on

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<sup>35</sup> Michael Moss and David Thomas, Northumbria University, *Overlapping temporalities – the Judge, the Historian and the Citizen*, April 2017, [Archives](#) 52(134):51-66

<sup>36</sup> This is not pure assumption. During the course of the project we talked to local record offices throughout the UK and noted the existence of many county-wide community history and archive groups similar to OLHA.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.bensingtonhistory.org/benson-history-group>

<sup>38</sup> [https://12ed7a1d-cf5a-7385-a0e1-4f0f3d190091.filesusr.com/ugd/8d1ec2\\_0cee8801af4b447fba04737a932a0f5e.pdf](https://12ed7a1d-cf5a-7385-a0e1-4f0f3d190091.filesusr.com/ugd/8d1ec2_0cee8801af4b447fba04737a932a0f5e.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> The constitution may be downloaded from this page: <https://friendsofiffley.org/foiv-organisation/>

development in the town, there being no statutory protection for archaeological access in those days.”<sup>40</sup>

- Wychwoods Local History Society, whose Constitution (n.d. 1981?) states that it is: ‘to be vigilant for buildings, sites, artefacts or records which may be under threat from whatever cause and organise or support rescue work for their preservation, recording or investigating before the material or knowledge of it is irretrievably lost.’<sup>41</sup>

Another very recently formed historic society told us that its aims included the following:

‘To make local schools, in particular within a 12-mile radius of Mixbury, aware of Mixbury’s history and heritage; to work with them to see how it can support the national curriculum; and to broaden young people’s knowledge of the area they live in.

To work with universities to develop learning opportunities based on Mixbury’s history and heritage.

To challenging misleading perceptions, found online and in written publications, about Mixbury’s history and heritage.’<sup>42</sup>

The conclusion is that not only are these groups preserving records, but they are also trying to inform and protect their communities through these recordkeeping activities and by publishing books and articles of local interest and significance.

#### **4.6 Ethical and practical issues around the preservation of privately owned records**

We identified the following major issues militating against the preservation of local privately held records:

- Ownership: records belonging to an individual, business, local society or private estate are in principle theirs to do with as they wish. We appeal to their civic-mindedness and sense of obligation to the community (and, indeed, the nation) in which they reside to prevent records of value being sold on E-Bay, auctioned off or simply put in the skip during a house or office clearance.
- Copyright: our questionnaire returns found some confusion over copyright, in that some societies and community archives had not formally taken ownership of records and/or were unsure of how to manage copyright. This is an area where established archives could offer much needed advice.
- Data protection: privately held records containing personal data<sup>43</sup> are still subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act and the GDPR, in that they may not be further

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<sup>40</sup> <http://www.twhas.org.uk/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://wychwoodshistory.uk/whistory/the-wychwoods-local-history-society-constitution/>

<sup>42</sup> Mixbury History Group questionnaire return, 30 Dec 2020

<sup>43</sup> Personal data is defined as “Any information relating to an identified or identifiable physical person (‘data subject’) (i.e. not a legal entity); an identifiable physical person is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.” Art. 4(1) GDPR

processed without the permission of the data subject<sup>44</sup>. Confusion over just what comprises personal data, how to manage it and a fear of data breaches could result in unnecessary destruction of records.

- **Secrecy:** the embarrassment factor should not be underestimated when seeking to preserve privately owned records. Our Stage 1 Report considered that some organisations might not wish to publish the existence of records due to embarrassment over their physical state. Our [Legal Records at Risk](#) report noted that businesses in particular could be reticent to release historical records which might show them in a bad light.<sup>45</sup> It is also possible that records could be deliberately destroyed to prevent them being used as evidence in, for example, planning disputes<sup>46</sup>.
- **Management:** there are obvious logistical issues in trying to provide access to archival records on a volunteer basis (e.g. time management, seeking funding, negotiating storage, arranging appointments, opening at short notice, production of documents, supervision of research, managing entrance or copying fees). Continuity of management is a problem which could lead to short- or long-term closure of archives and dispersal or destruction of collections. There may also be a problem where custodians are for some reason unable to provide supervised access to records or where originals are loaned out.
- **Cost of preservation:** preserving records as archives is not cheap. Hard copy records should ideally be stored securely and with due regard to practical conservation needs such as protection from damp or excessive heat; digital records also require secure storage and protection from alteration. Records should be catalogued or at the very least listed so that they can be used<sup>47</sup>. Digitisation and management of digitised and born-digital records require special skills. Funding archives is therefore a major concern; where funding dries up the archives may cease to exist.
- **Costs associated with access:** though nearly all the community archives contacted provided free access to the material they housed, a few did charge to help cover costs, while one or two others were stored in, for example, council buildings to which council charged entrance fees. It is possible that such fees may deter users. Digitising records to provide better access also comes at a cost to the custodians.

All of the above could be mitigated by better advocacy for archives and publicity campaigns to demonstrate the value of allowing records to be accessed for the benefit of the community and the nation.

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<sup>44</sup> Processing is defined as “collection, recording, organisation, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction.” Art. 4(2) GDPR

<sup>45</sup> See in particular the seminar proceedings on the [Report](#) at Ch.5

<sup>46</sup> This is supposition; we do not have any evidence of this happening in Oxfordshire. Archivists are, however, well aware of destruction of archives for political reasons; see, for example, Margaret Procter, Michael Cook and Caroline Williams, *Political Pressure and the Archival Record*, Rittenhouse Book Distributors, Jan 1st 2005. There are also frequent media reports on the subject.

<sup>47</sup> “Providing access to collections is why archive services exist.” Quoted in *Research into the benefits of capital investment in archives*, Elizabeth Oxborrow-Cowan, UCL, March 2012 p.30  
[http://www.archives.org.uk/images/documents/Publications/Report\\_on\\_capital\\_investment\\_in\\_archives\\_-\\_pdf\\_V2.pdf](http://www.archives.org.uk/images/documents/Publications/Report_on_capital_investment_in_archives_-_pdf_V2.pdf)

## 4.7 The need for long-term, consistent commitment to maintain community archives and museums

**Issues:** two primary sustainability issues stand out:

- The need for long-term, consistent revenue streams. Central and local government, parish and town councils, charities and funding bodies all have a role to play in providing funding not just for one-off projects but to provide sustained support for local archives and museums over time.
- This kind of commitment is also difficult to sustain where the collectors, archivists/curators and managers of community archives/museums primarily (though not always) comprise an aging demographic of volunteers; in other words mostly retired people with time, enthusiasm and an interest in their local community's history and culture). It is a remarkable tribute to these individuals that they have in the main continued to make a consistent contribution to keeping archives and museums sustainable throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Solutions:** 17 of our respondents had clearly recognised these issues and set up, or were intending to set up, charitable trusts to protect their archives and museums<sup>48</sup>. Others have developed good relations with established archives and have agreements to deposit records with them in the event of the community archives no longer being viable<sup>49</sup>.

In terms of providing support for local archives the new Records at Risk group should be able to assist where collections are in imminent danger of loss. The role of TNA in providing a national portal for disseminating information about archives, most notably through [Discovery](#), needs to be better advertised, as are the services offered by CAHG. Community archives should use these facilities and services and speak out where gaps appear in the advice and guidance on offer.

For Oxfordshire itself the OLHA already offers a conduit for sharing useful advice and raising specific issues. The OHC is also well placed to provide support and practical help despite reduced resources.

## The Way Forward

Stage 1 of this project discussed ways in which relationships between established archives and information owners, whether they be businesses, charities, associations, societies, community groups or individuals, could be developed so as to encourage better accessibility to records of value which they might hold. We also felt that there was a need for more jargon-free guidance and, where possible, practical help aimed at information owners.

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<sup>48</sup> Charitable trusts must be non-profit bodies, allowing them exemption from most forms of tax. To achieve trust status there is a requirement that the trust's purposes benefit the public (or some section of the public). A body which has gained charitable status is in a better position than before to achieve grant funding (including from government). Detailed advice on setting up a charity is given by the government here: <https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-charity>

<sup>49</sup> Three stated that they have such arrangements with their county record office

Stage 2, in looking closely at local history groups and community archives, noted their increasing importance given the steady erosion of support for established archives and for the profession generally. Even the word “archives” has been hijacked (by the IT community) so that there is now a poor understanding of what archives really are and how they should be cared for. Established archives are struggling to survive and can often only do so by diverting resources away from the core functions of collection, preservation and cataloguing<sup>50</sup>. Further, the pace of digital change and the ubiquity and ease of disseminating fake news militate against the careful and painstaking work undertaken by traditional archives to ensure the authenticity and evidential value of the records they manage. The situation is unlikely to change.

Community archives and their custodians may therefore play a crucial part in the future safeguarding of our local history and citizens’ rights. They need our help to do so, ‘For as archivists (and other heritage professionals) have long understood, unless they work to cherish the context from which an archive emerged (in this instance the vibrant scene of politically-driven heritage activism) and find ways to encode it in their catalogues and descriptions the meaning of the record is very soon lost’.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> There may be some dispute over my definition of an archives’ core functions, to which I respond by pointing out that without those core functions (included within these functions are selection, appraisal, listing, conservation, digitisation etc) we can’t make information readily accessible to all who need to use it and if we can’t make information accessible or have a plan for accessibility in the future there’s no point in holding it.

<sup>51</sup> Mary Stevens et al, p.56

## Appendix I: Local History Societies contacted in Oxfordshire

Source: primarily the list managed by the OLHA here: <http://www.olha.org.uk/local-history-groups/>.

The following local societies (75 in all) were contacted to gather information for the project. Some had been contacted previously in Stage 1. Some societies have formed charitable trusts to manage community archives or museums; these are included in the contact list below. Some societies listed by OLHA could not be contacted; we assume they have ceased to exist. Websites were accurate as of 22 October 2020. For responses see **Appendix V**.

Name of society/association	Website
Abingdon Area Archaeological & Historical Society	<a href="http://www.aaahs.org.uk">www.aaahs.org.uk</a>
Adderbury History Association	<a href="http://adderbury.org/listing-category/history/">http://adderbury.org/listing-category/history/</a>
Ashbury Local History Society	<a href="http://www.ashbury.org.uk/organisations-2/organisations/#s9">http://www.ashbury.org.uk/organisations-2/organisations/#s9</a>
Aston History Group	<a href="http://www.astonoxon.com/history-group.html">www.astonoxon.com/history-group.html</a>
Banbury Historical Society	<a href="http://banburyhistoricalsociety.org/">http://banburyhistoricalsociety.org/</a>
Bartons History Group	<a href="http://www.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk">www.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk</a>
Bensington Society (History Group)	<a href="https://www.bensingtonhistory.org/">https://www.bensingtonhistory.org/</a>
Bicester Local History Society	<a href="https://www.blhs.org.uk/index.php/contact-us">https://www.blhs.org.uk/index.php/contact-us</a>
Blewbury Local History Group	<a href="http://www.blewburyhistory.org.uk">www.blewburyhistory.org.uk</a>
Bloxham Village History Club	<a href="http://bloxham.info/broadsheet/category/clubs-and-societies/">http://bloxham.info/broadsheet/category/clubs-and-societies/</a>
Chalgrove Local History Group	<a href="https://chalgrovelocalhistorygroup.org.uk">https://chalgrovelocalhistorygroup.org.uk</a>
Chalk Living History Group	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/chalklh/">https://www.facebook.com/chalklh/</a>
Charlbury Society	<a href="https://www.charlbury.info/community/22">https://www.charlbury.info/community/22</a>
Charney Bassett History Group	<a href="https://history.charneybassett.org.uk/">https://history.charneybassett.org.uk/</a>
Clanfield & Bampton Historical Society	<a href="http://www.bamptonarchive.org/contact-us/">http://www.bamptonarchive.org/contact-us/</a>
Cowley History Group	<a href="http://www.cowleyhistorygroup.co.uk/">http://www.cowleyhistorygroup.co.uk/</a>

Name of society/association	Website
Cumnor & District History Society	<a href="http://users.ox.ac.uk/~djp/cumnor/index.html">http://users.ox.ac.uk/~djp/cumnor/index.html</a>
Deddington & District History Society	<a href="https://www.deddington.org.uk/directory/clubs-societies/history-society-deddington-district/">https://www.deddington.org.uk/directory/clubs-societies/history-society-deddington-district/</a>
Denchworth Local History Group	No website
Didcot & District Archaeological & Historical Society	<a href="http://www.ddahs.org.uk">www.ddahs.org.uk</a>
Dorchester Historical Society	<a href="http://www.dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org/">http://www.dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org/</a>
Ducklington Local History Group	<a href="https://www.ducklingtonparishcouncil.org.uk/">https://www.ducklingtonparishcouncil.org.uk/</a>
East Hendred Heritage Trust	<a href="https://www.hendredmuseum.org.uk/the-trust">https://www.hendredmuseum.org.uk/the-trust</a>
Enstone Local History Society	<a href="http://www.enstoneparish.org/his13/ep5.htm">www.enstoneparish.org/his13/ep5.htm</a>
Eynsham History Group	<a href="http://eynshamhistorygroup.org.uk">http://eynshamhistorygroup.org.uk</a>
Finstock Local History Society	<a href="http://finstocklocalhistory.blogspot.com">http://finstocklocalhistory.blogspot.com</a>
Friends of Iffley Village	<a href="http://www.iffley-village.co.uk/">http://www.iffley-village.co.uk/</a>
Friends of the Vale & Downland Museum Wantage	<a href="http://www.friendsofthevdm.org.uk">www.friendsofthevdm.org.uk</a>
Friends of Tom Brown's School Museum	<a href="http://www.museum.uffington.net">www.museum.uffington.net</a>
Goring Gap Local History Society	<a href="http://www.goringgaphistory.org.uk/goring-gap-local-history-society.html">http://www.goringgaphistory.org.uk/goring-gap-local-history-society.html</a>
Great Haseley History Group	<a href="http://www.greathaseleyhistorygroup.co.uk/community/great-haseley-history-group-15121/contact/">http://www.greathaseleyhistorygroup.co.uk/community/great-haseley-history-group-15121/contact/</a>
Hanney History Group	<a href="http://hanneyhistory.org.uk/about-hhg/contact/">http://hanneyhistory.org.uk/about-hhg/contact/</a>
Harwell Parish History Group	<a href="https://harwellvillage.uk/category/organisation/harwell-history-group/">https://harwellvillage.uk/category/organisation/harwell-history-group/</a>
Henley on Thames Archaeological & Historical Group	<a href="https://www.henley-on-thamesarchaeologicalandhistoricalgroup.org.uk/index.php">https://www.henley-on-thamesarchaeologicalandhistoricalgroup.org.uk/index.php</a>
Hook Norton Local History Group	<a href="http://hook-norton.org.uk/groups/hook-norton-local-history-group/">http://hook-norton.org.uk/groups/hook-norton-local-history-group/</a>
Hornton History Group	<a href="http://www.hornton-history.co.uk/">http://www.hornton-history.co.uk/</a>
Iffley History Society	<a href="https://iffleyhistory.wordpress.com/about-us%20/">https://iffleyhistory.wordpress.com/about-us%20/</a>

Name of society/association	Website
Kennington History Society	<a href="http://kennington-pc.gov.uk/organisations-and-clubs/history/history-society/">http://kennington-pc.gov.uk/organisations-and-clubs/history/history-society/</a>
Kidlington & District Historical Society	<a href="http://www.kidlingtonhistory.org.uk">www.kidlingtonhistory.org.uk</a>
Kirtlington & Bletchingdon Historical Society	<a href="http://www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/village-groups/history-society">www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/village-groups/history-society</a>
Launton Historical Society	<a href="http://www.launton.org/organisations/local-history/">www.launton.org/organisations/local-history/</a>
Littlemore Local History Society	<a href="http://www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/village-groups/history-society">www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/village-groups/history-society</a>
Long Wittenham Local History Group	<a href="http://www.longwittenham.com/clubs-and-groups/history-group/">http://www.longwittenham.com/clubs-and-groups/history-group/</a>
Longworth & District History Society	<a href="http://www.longworth-history.org.uk/archive.html">http://www.longworth-history.org.uk/archive.html</a>
Lower Windrush Historical Society (formerly Standlake & District Historical Society)	<a href="http://www.lwhs.btck.co.uk/">http://www.lwhs.btck.co.uk/</a>
Marcham Society	<a href="http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk">www.marchamsociety.org.uk</a>
Middleton Cheney History Society	<a href="https://www.middletoncheney.org.uk/findmynearest,713567.html">https://www.middletoncheney.org.uk/findmynearest,713567.html</a>
Minster Lovell History Club	<a href="http://www.minsterlovellexperience.com/index.php?inc=events">http://www.minsterlovellexperience.com/index.php?inc=events</a>
Mixbury History Group	<a href="https://www.mixburyhistory.co.uk/contact">https://www.mixburyhistory.co.uk/contact</a>
North Leigh History Group	<a href="http://www.northleigh.org/VirDir/CoreContents/News/Display.aspx?id=27972#North%20Leigh%20History%20Society">http://www.northleigh.org/VirDir/CoreContents/News/Display.aspx?id=27972#North%20Leigh%20History%20Society</a>
Otmoor Archaeological & Historical Society	<a href="http://oxford-consultants.tripod.com/otmoor_archeological.htm">http://oxford-consultants.tripod.com/otmoor archeological.htm</a>
Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society (formerly The Society for promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture)	<a href="https://www.oahs.org.uk/">https://www.oahs.org.uk/</a>
Oxfordshire Family History Society	<a href="https://www.oahs.org.uk/">https://www.oahs.org.uk/</a>
Oxfordshire Probate Group	No website

Name of society/association	Website
Radley History Club	<a href="https://www.radleyhistoryclub.org.uk/">https://www.radleyhistoryclub.org.uk/</a>
Shrivenham Heritage Society	<a href="http://www.shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk/">http://www.shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk/</a>
Sibfords History Society	<a href="https://thesibfords.uk/clubs/shs">https://thesibfords.uk/clubs/shs</a>
Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust	<a href="https://www.sofa.org.uk/">https://www.sofa.org.uk/</a>
South Stoke Historical Society	<a href="http://www.southstoke.org.uk/in-around-south-stoke/history-of-south-stoke/">www.southstoke.org.uk/in-around-south-stoke/history-of-south-stoke/</a>
Stanford in the Vale & District Local History Society	<a href="http://www.stanford-in-the-vale.co.uk/clubsoc.shtml">www.stanford-in-the-vale.co.uk/clubsoc.shtml</a>
Steeple Aston Village Archive Trust	<a href="https://www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk/contact-us.html">https://www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk/contact-us.html</a>
Stratton Audley Local History Society	<a href="https://strattonaudley.org/?page_id=509">https://strattonaudley.org/?page_id=509</a>
Sutton Courtenay Local History Society	<a href="http://www.sclhs.org.uk">www.sclhs.org.uk</a>
Tackley Local History Group	<a href="https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html">https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html</a>
Thame Historical Society	<a href="http://www.thamehistoricalsociety.org.uk/photos/">http://www.thamehistoricalsociety.org.uk/photos/</a>
Vale and Downland Museum Trust	<a href="https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html">https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html</a>
Vale of the White Horse Industrial Archaeology Group	Closed 2019
Wallingford Historical & Archaeological Society	<a href="http://www.twhas.org.uk">www.twhas.org.uk</a>
Weston-on-the-Green Society	<a href="http://www.wotg.org.uk/Weston_on_the_Green_Society.htm">www.wotg.org.uk/Weston_on_the_Green_Society.htm</a>
Wheatley Society	<a href="https://history.wheatleyarchive.org.uk/a-brief-history/">https://history.wheatleyarchive.org.uk/a-brief-history/</a>
Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society	<a href="http://www.whitchurchonthames.com/groups/history.html">www.whitchurchonthames.com/groups/history.html</a>
Witney & District Museum & Historical Society	<a href="http://www.witneyhistory.org/witneymuseum.html">http://www.witneyhistory.org/witneymuseum.html</a>
Wolvercote Local History Society	<a href="https://wolvercote.org/history-society/">https://wolvercote.org/history-society/</a>
Wootton, Dry Sandford & District History Society	<a href="http://www.history-society.org">www.history-society.org</a>
Wychwoods Local History Society	<a href="https://wychwoodshistory.uk/whistory/contacting-us/">https://wychwoodshistory.uk/whistory/contacting-us/</a>

## Appendix II: Community Archives contacted in Oxfordshire

**Source:** websites of local history societies and the list provided by the Community Archives and Heritage Group here: [https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css\\_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=](https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=)

Most of the community archives (63 in all) were contacted, either directly or under the umbrella of their local history group or trust. Some have “official” names; others are simply the collection of records representing the area gathered together by the local society. Where this is the case I have included a description in square brackets. Collections in local authority libraries, archives or museums have not been included. Privately managed museums are included where their content includes primarily local material. Some may no longer exist, as their websites were inaccessible or they had no contact details.

- \* Registered with Community Archives and Heritage Group
- + Registered with The National Archives

Town/village/local area	Name of archives	Archives website
Abingdon	Abingdon Area Archaeological and Historical Society On-line Research Archive  Down Memory Lane (Oral History and Archive project)*	<a href="https://www.aaahs.org.uk/archive">https://www.aaahs.org.uk/archive</a>  <a href="http://sharonwoodwardmisc.hiefpictures.blogspot.com/">http://sharonwoodwardmisc.hiefpictures.blogspot.com/</a>
Ashbury	Ashbury Archives	<a href="http://www.ashbury.org.uk/history/histarchives/">http://www.ashbury.org.uk/history/histarchives/</a>
Ascott see Wychwood		
Aston	[Archive of 3,000 or so items]	Contact <a href="#">Aston History Group</a>
Bampton	Bampton Community Archive	<a href="https://atom.bamptonarchive.org/">https://atom.bamptonarchive.org/</a>
Banbury	Banbury Museum	<a href="https://www.banburymuseum.org/">https://www.banburymuseum.org/</a>
Barton	[Collection of documents and photographs]	Contact <a href="#">Bartons History Group</a>
Bensington/Benson	[Collection of documents and photographs]	<a href="https://www.bensingtonhistory.org/">https://www.bensingtonhistory.org/</a>
Bicester	Bicester Local History Archive	<a href="https://www.blhs.org.uk/index.php/head_about-us/archive">https://www.blhs.org.uk/index.php/head_about-us/archive</a>
Blewbury	[Collection of documents and photographs]	Contact <a href="#">Blewbury Local History Group</a>

Bloxham	Bloxham Village Museum	<a href="http://www.bloxhammuseum.com/">http://www.bloxhammuseum.com/</a>
Burford	Burford Tolsey Museum	<a href="https://burfordcommunityarchive.org">https://burfordcommunityarchive.org</a>
Chalgrove	[Archive of photographs]	<a href="https://chalgrovelocalhistorygroup.org.uk/pictures">https://chalgrovelocalhistorygroup.org.uk/pictures</a>
Charlbury	Charlbury Museum	<a href="https://www.charlbury.info/community/42">https://www.charlbury.info/community/42</a>
Charney Bassett	[archives]	<a href="https://history.charneybassett.org.uk/">https://history.charneybassett.org.uk/</a>
Chipping Norton	Chipping Norton Museum	<a href="http://www.chippingnortonmuseum.co.uk/products.htm">http://www.chippingnortonmuseum.co.uk/products.htm</a>
Churchill	Churchill & Sarsden Heritage Centre	<a href="https://www.churchillheritage.org.uk/">https://www.churchillheritage.org.uk/</a>
Cumnor	Cumnor Parish Record	<a href="http://users.ox.ac.uk/~djp/cumnor/index.html">http://users.ox.ac.uk/~djp/cumnor/index.html</a>
Deddington	[Archive of photographs]	<a href="https://www.deddington.org.uk/gallery/">https://www.deddington.org.uk/gallery/</a>
Dorchester	[Archive of photographs]  Dorchester Abbey Museum	<a href="https://www.dorchester-on-thames.co.uk/welcome/dorchester-photo-gallery/">https://www.dorchester-on-thames.co.uk/welcome/dorchester-photo-gallery/</a>  <a href="https://ehive.com/collections/9217/dorchester-abbey-museum">https://ehive.com/collections/9217/dorchester-abbey-museum</a>
Dry Sandford <i>see</i> Wootton Bassett		
East Hendred	Hendred Museum (Champs Chapel Museum)	<a href="https://www.hendredmuseum.org.uk/">https://www.hendredmuseum.org.uk/</a>
Filkins	Swinford Museum, Filkins	<a href="https://www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org/things-to-do/attractions/swinford-museum-p59083">https://www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org/things-to-do/attractions/swinford-museum-p59083</a>
Goring Gap	[Collection of archives]	Contact <a href="#">Goring Gap Local History Society</a>
Great Haseley	[Collection of documents, audio recordings, artefacts and photographs]	Contact <a href="#">Great Haseley History Group</a>
Hanney	Hanney History Group Photos and Archive	<a href="http://hanneyhistory.org.uk/photos-archive/">http://hanneyhistory.org.uk/photos-archive/</a>
Harwell	Harwell Heritage Centre	<a href="https://www.harwellvillagehall.co.uk/the-heritage-centre/">https://www.harwellvillagehall.co.uk/the-heritage-centre/</a>
Hendred <i>see</i> East Hendred		

Henley on Thames	[Collection of photographs of local buildings]  River and Rowing Museum, Henley	Contact <a href="#">Henley Archaeological &amp; Historical Group</a>  <a href="https://www.rrm.co.uk/">https://www.rrm.co.uk/</a>
Hook Norton	Hook Norton Village Museum and Archive	<a href="https://hook-norton.org.uk/history/village-museum-archive/">https://hook-norton.org.uk/history/village-museum-archive/</a>
Iffley	Friends of Iffley Village Community Archive  [Collection of documents and photographs]	<a href="http://www.iffley-village.co.uk/archives/4592464102">http://www.iffley-village.co.uk/archives/4592464102</a>  Contact <a href="#">Iffley History Society</a>
Kingham	Ralph Mann Archive, Kingham	Contact Mike Davies <a href="mailto:mikedvd@hotmail.com">mikedvd@hotmail.com</a>
Kingston Bagpuize	Kingston Bagpuize – a Village Snapshot*	<a href="http://www.kingston-bagpuize.com/">http://www.kingston-bagpuize.com/</a>
Launton	[archive creation in progress]	<a href="http://www.launton.org/archive/">http://www.launton.org/archive/</a>
Littlemore	Littlemore Archives	Contact <a href="#">Littlemore Local History Society</a>
Long Wittenham	[Collection of photographs]	Contact <a href="#">Long Wittenham History Group</a>
Longworth	Longworth & District History Society Archives*	<a href="http://www.longworth-history.org.uk/archive.html">http://www.longworth-history.org.uk/archive.html</a>
Marcham	Marcham Society Archive	<a href="http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk/archive.php">http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk/archive.php</a>
Middle Aston <i>see</i> Steeple Aston		
Milton <i>see</i> Wychwood		
Minster Lovell	[Museum - now closed – film; DVDs]	<a href="http://www.minsterlovellexperience.com/index.php?inc=events">http://www.minsterlovellexperience.com/index.php?inc=events</a>
Mixbury	[archive creation in progress]	<a href="https://www.mixburyhistory.co.uk/contact">https://www.mixburyhistory.co.uk/contact</a>
Oxford	Oxford Castle and Prison  Oxford Bus and Morris Motors Museum	<a href="https://www.oxfordcastleandprison.co.uk/your-visit/">https://www.oxfordcastleandprison.co.uk/your-visit/</a>  <a href="https://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org/">https://www.oxfordbusmuseum.org/</a>
Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire Buildings Record (held at OHC)	<a href="https://obr.org.uk/">https://obr.org.uk/</a>
Oxfordshire	Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust (SOFO) Museum* +	<a href="http://www.sofo.org.uk">www.sofo.org.uk</a>

Radley	Radley History Club Archive	<a href="https://www.rhcarchive.uk/">https://www.rhcarchive.uk/</a>
Ramsden	Ramsden Parish Domesday Project	<a href="http://www.ramsdenvillage.co.uk/history">www.ramsdenvillage.co.uk/history</a>
Sarsden <i>see</i> Churchill		
Shipton <i>see</i> Wychwood		
Shrivenham	Shrivenham Heritage Society Collection	<a href="http://www.shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk/catalogue/">http://www.shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk/catalogue/</a>
Sibfords	[archive of documents and photos]	Contact <a href="#">Sibfords History Society</a>
Southmoor <i>see</i> Kingston Bagpuize		
South Stoke	[archive of documents, oral history and photos]	Contact <a href="#">South Stoke Historical Society</a>
Stanford in the Vale	[archive of photos]	Contact <a href="#">Stanford in the Vale Local History Society</a>
Steeple Aston	Steeple Aston Village Archive*	<a href="http://www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk">www.steepleastonarchive.org.uk</a>
Stratton Audley	[oral history archive]	Contact <a href="#">Stratton Audley Local History Society</a>
Tackley	Tackley Archive	<a href="https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html">https://www.tackleyhistory.org.uk/archive.html</a>
Thame	Thame Museum	<a href="http://www.thamehistoricalsociety.org.uk/photos/">http://www.thamehistoricalsociety.org.uk/photos/</a>
Tolsey <i>see</i> Burford		
Uffington	Tom Brown's School Museum	<a href="http://www.museum.uffington.net/">http://www.museum.uffington.net/</a>
Wallingford	Wallingford Museum	<a href="http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk/">http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk/</a>
Wantage	Vale & Downland Museum	<a href="http://valeanddownlandmuseum.org.uk/">http://valeanddownlandmuseum.org.uk/</a>
Wheatley	Wheatley Village Archive	<a href="https://www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk/">https://www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk/</a>
Witney	Witney Museum	<a href="http://www.witneyhistory.org/witneymuseum.html">http://www.witneyhistory.org/witneymuseum.html</a>
Wolvercote	Wolvercote Local History Society Archives	<a href="https://wolvercote.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/WLHS_Archive_Jan2020.pdf">https://wolvercote.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/WLHS_Archive_Jan2020.pdf</a>
Wootton	[Archive of photographs; Dry Sandford and Wootton]	<a href="http://www.history-society.org/photographs/">http://www.history-society.org/photographs/</a>
Wychwood	Wychwood Local History Society Archives	<a href="https://wychwoodshistory.uk/whistory/archives/">https://wychwoodshistory.uk/whistory/archives/</a>

## Appendix III: Individuals and interested groups contacted

The following individuals representing specific interest groups were contacted for, or, following a generic email to the archives community seeking help, offered, advice and guidance during Stage 2 of the project:

### **Oxfordshire**

- Robert Boyd, Robert Boyd Publications
- David Clark, Oxfordshire Buildings Record
- Christopher Fance, Oxfordshire Family History Society
- Jill Hind, Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society (formerly The Society for promoting the Study of Gothic Architecture)
- Heather Horner, Oxfordshire Probate Group
- Oxfordshire Record Society
- Mark Priddey, History Centre Manager (Archives), Oxfordshire History Centre
- Liz Woolley, Oxfordshire Local History Association

### **UK wide**

- Dr Bette Baldwin, Archivist, Clevedon Pier and Heritage Trust Archive and secretary and archivist of the Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage heritage charity
- British Association for Local History
- Julie Courtenay, Collections Leader, Gloucestershire Archives
- Philip Gale, Head of Standards and Improvement Team, Archives Sector Development, TNA and Chair, Records at Risk Group
- Mike Hyde, Chairman, Marlow Museum, Buckinghamshire
- Jack Latimer, Community Archives and Heritage Group
- Kate Maisey, Archives Development Manager, Gloucestershire Archives
- Heather Needham, Principal Archivist (ICT & e-services), Hampshire Archives and Local Studies
- Robin Sampson, Community Archivist, Community Archives: Skills, Support and Sustainability, Norfolk Record Office
- Gary Tucson, County Archivist, Norfolk Record Office and Chair, Chief Archivists in Local Government Group and the Archives for Wellbeing Network
- Christopher Tracy, Archive Specialist and Project Officer, Archives for Wellbeing Network, Norfolk Record Office, Norfolk Heritage Centre, Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library
- Janice Tullock, Janice Tullock Associates Limited, Archive Consultant & Heritage specialists

## Appendix IV: Questionnaire

### Questionnaire 1: Oxfordshire Undeposited Records project - questions for local history societies

#### Part 1: About your society

1. Name:
2. When were you set up?
3. What is your main purpose?
4. How are you funded?
5. How many members do you have at this time?
6. What are your main activities?
7. Do you have any special concerns about the preservation of your community's history (e.g. local businesses or individuals destroying records; lack of facilities for archives; local authority archives not collecting records of interest)?

#### Part 2: Your society's in-house records

Do you keep a set of your own organisational records as an in-house archive (e.g. membership, minutes of meetings, financial)? If yes:

1. Are they in paper or digital format or both?
2. Where are they stored?
3. Would you consider eventually allowing them to be used by researchers once data protection/confidentiality restrictions have time-expired?
4. Do you intend to keep these records in-house or have you considered/would you consider passing older records to a local authority archives?

#### Part 3: Community archives

Are you collecting any local material for a community archives? If no, please move to **Part 4**. If yes:

1. When did you start collecting and how are you funding the archives (e.g. grants from your Parish Council; Heritage Lottery Funding; subscriptions; charging researchers)?
2. What categories of material do you collect (e.g. original documents; photos; oral histories; parish records; newspaper clippings; published articles; facsimiles or transcripts of records available elsewhere; artefacts)?
3. Do you pro-actively collect material or accept material on an ad hoc basis (e.g. from individuals within the community)?
4. Have you received/do you intend to seek further funding from sources like your Parish Council, Heritage Lottery Fund to, e.g. store the contents; catalogue the contents; digitise material?
5. Are the archives listed or catalogued? Please specify (e.g. a simple list of material; a detailed catalogue). Are the lists/catalogue available on your website?

6. Is the archives in a public location (e.g. a village hall) or kept by a member of your local history society?
7. If in a public location, is the archives routinely open to the public and when?
8. If in a private home, how and to whom is access managed (e.g. members only; to others by appointment)?
9. How/by whom is it managed (e.g. volunteers; an experienced archivist or curator; an individual within their own home)?
10. Is ownership of the archives collections and the copyright documented?
11. Do you have relations/regular communication with other community archives and historical associations?
12. Is it registered/do you intend to register it with the Community Archives and Heritage Group <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/index.php>?
13. Will you register the archives with The National Archives' *Discovery* portal: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive?>

**Part 4: In-house and community archives: issues, risks and available help:**

1. Are you aware of the guidance on managing in-house records and community archives provided by, e.g. the Community Archives and Heritage Group or The National Archives?
2. Have you sought advice from the Oxfordshire Local History Association, the Oxfordshire History Centre, the Community Archives and Heritage Group or The National Archives on any particular aspect of managing archives (e.g. on cataloguing; storage; digitisation; managing born-digital material; managing audio-visual material; copyright; data protection)?
3. Is there any particular issue on which you would like some guidance or practical help? (See examples in previous question).
4. Do you, or would you like to have, contingency plans for in-house and/or community archives in the event of loss of resources to continue to manage the archive (e.g. the local history group dissolving; loss of premises; lack of people to manage the archives)? Such plans might include passing the collection to the Oxfordshire History Centre or another established archives.

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**Questionnaire 2: Oxfordshire Undeposited Records project - questions for community archives and museums:**

1. When was your archives set up and how is it funded? E.g. by your Parish Council; Heritage Lottery Funding; subscriptions; charging researchers.
2. What was the aim behind establishing the archives/museum?
3. What categories of material do you collect? E.g. original documents; photos; oral histories; parish records; newspaper clippings; published articles; facsimiles or transcripts of records available elsewhere; artefacts.

4. Do you pro-actively collect material or accept material on an ad hoc basis? E.g. from individuals within the community.
5. Have you received/do you intend to seek funding from sources like your Parish Council, Heritage Lottery Fund to, e.g. set up the archives; store the contents; catalogue the contents; digitise material? Please give details.
6. Are the archives listed or catalogued? Please specify (e.g. a simple list of material; a detailed catalogue). Are the lists/catalogue available on your website?
7. Is the archives in a public location (e.g. a village hall; a bespoke building) or kept by a member of your local history society?
8. If in a public location, is the archives routinely open to the public and when?
9. If in a private home, how and to whom is access managed? E.g. members only; to others by appointment.
10. How/by whom is it managed (e.g. volunteers; an experienced archivist or curator; an individual within their own home)?
11. Is ownership of the archives collections and the copyright documented?
12. Do you have relations/regular communication with other community archives and historical associations?
13. Is it registered/do you intend to register it with the Community Archives and Heritage Group <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/index.php?>
14. Will you register the archives with The National Archives' *Discovery* portal: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive?>

**Issues, risks and available help:**

5. Are you aware of the guidance on managing community archives provided by, e.g. the Community Archives and Heritage Group or The National Archives?
6. Have you sought advice from the Oxfordshire Local History Association, the Oxfordshire History Centre, the Community Archives and Heritage Group or The National Archives on any particular aspect of managing the archives (e.g. on cataloguing; storage; digitisation; managing born-digital material; managing audio-visual material; copyright; data protection)?
7. Is there any particular issue on which you would like some guidance or practical help? (See examples in previous question).
8. Are you aware of any archival material in your area which might be at risk of loss but which you are unable to collect at this time?
9. Do you, or would you like to have, contingency plans for the archives and its records in the event of loss of resources to continue to manage the archive (e.g. the local history group dissolving; loss of premises; lack of people to manage the archives)? Such plans might include passing the collection to the Oxfordshire History Centre or another established archives.

## Appendix V: Table of responses – local historical societies and community archives/museums

Contacted: 101

Responded: 37

Questions not answered/no response: 64

The table below combines the responses in both categories, as it was sometimes impossible to separate the community archives from the related/responsible society. Additionally, some groups/archives chose to send reports rather than answer the specific questionnaire.

Where the relevant information was available on websites it has been added to the table below even if there was no response from the organisation.

No.	Question	% [rounded up; based on responses and/or information on website]
	<b>Historical societies</b>	
1.	When were you established?	
	• Nineteenth century	1
	• Twentieth century	37
	• Twenty-first century	20
	• Not answered/no information on website	43
2.	What was the primary reason for your establishment?	
	• To help protect the natural/built environment	4
	• To rescue historical records and information	18
	• To research and discuss local history	53
	• Not answered/no information on website	26
3.	How are you funded? [Note: more than one category might apply]	
	• Members' subscriptions	27
	• Charges for events/exhibitions	21
	• Council grants	4
	• Grants from external bodies e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund	5
	• Donations	5
	• Profits from publishing	1
	• Not answered/no information on website	38
4.	How many members do you have?	
	• Less than 100	13
	• 100-200	5
	• More than 200	2
	• Not answered/no information on website	81

5.	What are your main activities? [Note: more than one category might apply]	
	• Social/informative gatherings (lectures etc)	52
	• Research and publications	6
	• Collecting historical material	18
	• Archaeological digs	11
	• Lobbying to protect the environment/records	5
	• Not answered/no information on website	9
6.	Do you have any special concerns about the preservation of your community and its history? [Note: more than one category might apply]	
	• Environmental destruction	4
	• Loss of community memory	24
	• Sustainability of group	7
	• Misleading information	1
	• Not answered/no information on website	65
7.	Do you have an in-house archives (institutional records)?	
	• Yes	17
	• No	3
	• Not answered/no information on website	81
8.	Have you set up/are you affiliated with a community archives?	
	• Yes	38
	• No	3
	• Not answered/no information on website	60
	<b>Community archives:</b>	
1.	What was the aim behind establishing the archives/museum?	
	• To record and save the community's history	26
	• To encourage the community's interest in its history and environment	27
	• Not answered/no information on website	48
2.	How is it/has it been funded (primary source of funding)?	
	• By the Local Society	11
	• By Parish/Town Council grants	11
	• External grants (eg NHLF)	16
	• Entrance fees	15
	• Charitable trust	17
	• Not answered/no information on website	31
3.	What categories of material do you collect? [Note: most collect several categories]	
	• Original documents and maps	23
	• Photographs	58
	• Oral histories	24
	• Transcriptions (copies of archival material available elsewhere)	15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary source material (eg newspaper cuttings, books, articles)</li> </ul>	11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artefacts</li> </ul>	22
4.	Do you pro-actively collect material or accept material on an ad hoc basis?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both</li> </ul>	59
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad hoc only</li> </ul>	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No longer collect</li> </ul>	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not answered/no information on website</li> </ul>	66
5.	Are the archives listed or catalogued?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listed</li> </ul>	9
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catalogued</li> </ul>	19
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Available on-line</li> </ul>	21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not yet listed or catalogued</li> </ul>	14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not answered/no information on website</li> </ul>	38
6.	Is the archives in a public location?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes (bespoke building)</li> </ul>	13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes (space in village hall/church/school)</li> </ul>	13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes; some or all on-line (scanned)</li> </ul>	8
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes; regularly passed to an established archives (eg OHC, Bodleian)</li> </ul>	6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No (member's home)</li> </ul>	11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not answered/no information on website</li> </ul>	50
7.	Is the archives open to the public?	
	Yes	48
	No; open to members and local residents only	3
	Not answered/no information on website	50
	If yes under what conditions?	
	Admission fee charged	6
	Prior appointment necessary	16
	Archival items may be borrowed	2
	Not answered/no information on website	77
8.	Are ownership of the archives collections and the copyright documented?	
	Yes	27
	No/not sure	25
	Not answered/no information on website	49
10.	Are you aware of any archival material in your area which might be at risk of loss but which you are unable to collect at this time?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> </ul>	5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No</li> </ul>	18
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not answered/no information on website</li> </ul>	78
	<b>Liaison with/knowledge of guidance from established archives</b>	

1.	Do you have relations/regular communication with other community archives and historical associations (eg OLHA; OFHS)?	
	• Yes	11
	• No	9
	• Not answered/no information on website	81
2.	Are you aware/have you used the available guidance from, eg, CAHG, TNA, OHC, OLHA?	
	• No, not aware	12
	• Yes, have used	7
	• Not answered/no information on website	82
3.	Are you registered/do you intend to register with the Community Archives and Heritage Group <a href="https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/index.php?">https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/index.php?</a>	
	• Yes already registered	7
	• No	17
	• No - will now consider doing so	8
	• Not answered/no response	69
4.	Are you registered/will you register the archives with The National Archives' <i>Discovery</i> portal: <a href="http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive?">http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/find-an-archive?</a>	
	• Yes	1
	• No	12
	• No - will now consider doing so	4
	• Not answered/no response	84
5.	Is there any particular issue on which you would like some guidance or practical help? [Note: most list several categories]	
	• Sustainability	12
	• Digital records and digitisation	8
	• Storage	6
	• Cataloguing	7
	• Copyright and intellectual property	3
	• Displays	1
	• Not answered/no response	81

## Appendix VI: An imaginary project on how to identify privately held, locally relevant records of potential archival significance

**Note:** For a detailed description of how to locate records of archival significance see Kate Tiller's *English Local History: An Introduction*, The Boydell Press, 2020

**Scenario:** a village history society wishes to identify privately held papers, locally relevant and of potential archival value but about which they have almost no information.

**Parameters:** the first step is to decide on the geographical area e.g. should records of national significance (such as the papers of a renowned author) which just happen to be held locally be included? Should old or new boundary divisions be followed? The next step is to consider what categories of local records might still exist, as follows:

### Examples of what the village might include:

- An Elizabethan eight bedroomed house which has been continuously occupied by **one family** since (a) (1600) (b) 1800.
- A 14th century church, the **parish records** of which disappeared in the early twentieth century.
- An early **reformatory** created in 1800 which fell into disuse in the 1940s and is now a ruin;
- An early fifteenth century **almshouse**, which continued in operation as a charitable institution until 1890 when it was converted into a care home
- A medium-sized **tannery** started in the 1840s, still operative, but unwilling to discuss its records;
- a row of one bedroom **pensioners' cottages** dating from the mid-18th century and converted into private homes with mod cons by a developer in the 1960s.
- A family **publishing business** founded in 1830, taken over by an established commercial publisher in the 1950s
- A local **butcher/greengrocer**, hanging on by the skin of his/her teeth
- An **estate agent** of long-standing
- The old **post office**, now an antiques shop
- The old **school**, now a private home
- A **local history group**, now apparently defunct
- A **pressure group** set up to fight a local development (possibly defunct)

### Sample issues:

- No records of any of the above are listed in The National Archives' [Discovery](#) portal.
- Current occupiers of premises uncooperative.
- Few details in relevant local history literature.

### Sample explanations for the lack of readily accessible records:

- The records are held in a private archives which doesn't publish its holdings
- The records are held in an established archives but are not yet catalogued (therefore there's no public knowledge of them)
- the owners moved house and took their records with them

- possibly dumped - someone saw a lot of papers in a skip outside a business premises
- family emigrated; records unknown
- destroyed by fire, flood, error
- hidden because possibly embarrassing
- records left in someone's attic, basement or garage
- records still exist, probably on-site, but the owners aren't interested in making their whereabouts public

### **Sample records which could still exist**

To better target enquiries, use examples from [Discovery](#) and local authority archives of collections of records of similar bodies to ask about whether any of the following survive:

- Manor houses/stately homes: court rolls, maps and plans, visitors' books, stewards' papers, valuations, accounts, deeds, owners' personal papers
- Almshouses: drawings, photographs, charitable trustees' papers, plans, lists of inmates
- Reformatories: school deeds, leases, minute books, lists of pupils, visitors' books, accounts, log books
- Housing: plans, deeds, valuations, photos
- Schools: account books, pupil registers, photographs, trustees' minutes, letter books, prize winners
- Churches: registers, minutes, accounts, photos, plans
- Post offices: accounts, newsletters, photographs, attendance books, sorting office diaries
- Shops: accounts, plans, photos, employees' data
- Tannery: waste books, hide books, accounts, employees' data
- Businesses: accounts, plans, directors' minute books, photos, employees' data

### **Sample enquiries one could make** (in no particular order)

- Write to the current owners/occupiers/information owners, if you know who/where they are; even if they won't co-operate it's only polite/sensible to let them know that you are interested in what they might hold. They may have records stored somewhere but simply do not wish to advertise the fact. It may be best to make a specific, rather than a general, enquiry (such as about a particular building or person) initially.
- Check first with the local Council and local authority archives, one or both of which will have records of planning applications, Council sponsored redevelopment etc. Local authority archives will also have historic deeds and wills. They will have some knowledge about lost/missing local records. If the established archives *knows* they were destroyed there's no point in looking further.
- For post office records, contact the British Postal Museum and Archives (<http://www.postalheritage.org.uk/collections/museum/>)
- For records of charities contact the Charity Archives and Records Managers Group <https://charm-online.org.uk/>
- If there is an umbrella historical association (e.g. OLHA) for the area or county talk to them.

- Contact the Community Archives and Heritage Group <https://www.archives.org.uk/>.
- Contact nearby community archives (not just in the local area, but further afield) and other history societies and pressure groups and look at their relevant publications for references to primary source material.
- Check local library and museum for information.
- Contact every known private archives in the area (many are *not* registered [Discovery](#)), including private in-house archives, business archives, church archives, school archives.
- Check with local university to see if any academic studies have been/are being done e.g. on heritage buildings
- Check:
  - Manorial documents register <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search>
  - Heritage at Risk register <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/>
  - Charity and voluntary sector archives records at risk register <https://www.voluntarysectorarchives.org.uk/records-at-risk/>
- Talk to local historians to see what they know/what advice they can give
- Write/chat to friendly relevant locals and get some oral histories (not evidence, but useful as background).
- Run publicity campaigns as already done by some local assns. (see websites where they ask the community for photos and records).
- Check relevant literature again: local histories are being published daily (see the websites of local history societies for examples) and often mention records they have been allowed to consult. The *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire's* latest publication on Oxfordshire was in 2019: <https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/oxfordshire>
- The Business Archives Council 's newsletters and journal are available online: <https://businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/publications/newsletters/> . Subscribe to the British Records Association and the Association of Archivists and Records Managers – their journals and articles, available only to members, may mention particular categories of records at risk.

### Offering practical help

- Be very aware of possible reasons for non-co-operation or resistance on the part of information owners or custodians: privacy concerns, embarrassment about the state of surviving records; indifference; lack of interest in local or national history and heritage; other priorities (including a lack of resources to help even if they wish to do so).
- If the initial contact is successful, widen the enquiry tactfully to suggest (depending on the records identified) that the records may have national, international or local significance in protecting civic rights, assisting in local wellbeing, facilitating knowledge of the environment etc.
- Suggest ways in which information owners or custodians could be helped to reduce the burden of retaining and managing records, such as the assistance and guidance offered

by local authority or university archives plus practical advice available from, e.g. local history societies, CAHG, TNA.

- Make clear safeguards will be provided in accordance with, e.g., data protection, commercial confidentiality, legal professional privilege, copyright, research ethics and archival best practice.
- It may be necessary to offer to take custody of the records. Ensure that there is proper provision available should this request be made e.g. by liaison with the local authority archives or community archives.

**And finally..**

Don't give up; be patient. It may take years to get results, but it will be worth it.

## Appendix VII: Published guidance by the archives sector aimed at community archives, local history groups and local historians

This Appendix complements the advice and guidance listed in **Appendix IV** of the 2019 [Stage 1 Report](#).

### Guidance on collecting and managing local archives

Archives for Wellbeing Network and the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group: *History begins at Home* [Worksheets](#)

- Being There
- Fashion
- Food
- Guides and Scouts
- Hobbies
- Holidays
- Nights In
- Nights Out
- Outdoors
- Schools
- Toys
- Work

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ed575d95472d45f02fd7475/t/5ee017867850ee586c008746/1591744390946/HBAH+Capturing+Voices.pdf>

Manchester Histories [Toolkits](#)

- [Toolkit 1: Doing Your Historical Research Project](#)
- [Toolkit 2: Doing Your Oral History Project](#)
- [Toolkit 3: Evaluating Your Project](#)
- [Toolkit 4: Creating Your Own Archive](#)

Norfolk Record Office [Community Archives Toolkit](#)

- [The collections management guide](#)
- [The preservation guide](#)
- [The cataloguing guide](#)
- [The digitisation guide](#)
- [The interpretive planning guide](#)
- [The oral history guide](#)

Oral History Society

[Information for community-based oral history](#)

[Oral history and family history: some tips for family historians](#)

The National Archives

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/talking-to-your-community/> Examples include:

Case studies: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/case-studies-and-research-reports/case-studies/audience-development/>

Reports: The value of museums, libraries and archives to community agendas  
<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20111013140105/http://research.mla.gov.uk/evidence//view-publication.php?pubid=915>

Advice for private archives: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/running-your-organisation/advice-to-private-archives/>

## Guidance on managing digital information

Heritage Fund [Digital Skills for Heritage](#)

- [Digital Attitudes and Skills for Heritage: what we have learned so far](#)
- [Digital guide: on-line privacy and security](#)
- Making on-line content accessible to all

The National Archives [Plugged In, Powered Up](#) advocacy resources

- [Safeguarding your digital archives](#)
- [Preserving your digital information](#)

## Guidance on managing collections and gathering evidence during the Covid-19 pandemic

Oral History Society [Advice on oral history interviewing during the Covid-19 pandemic](#)

1. Remote oral history interviewing during COVID-19
2. In-person oral history interviewing during COVID-19

Archives and Records Management Association [ARA Together Support Hub](#)

- Access to ARA Together's On-line Community
- Content generated from our On-line Community
- The ARA's own news and policies relating to COVID-19
- The latest advice and guidance from the governments and the NHS (UK) and HSE (Ireland)
- Support and practical help from the heritage sector
- Tips for staying engaged with your own professional development
- Other Learning and CPD opportunities to explore
- Support relating to health and wellbeing

TNA [Our coronavirus response and guidance > Collaborating with the archive sector](#)

- [broad principles for reopening safely](#)
- [re-opening checklist](#)
- [resource list](#)

National Lottery Heritage Fund: <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/heritage-emergency-fund> “This includes increased advice and support, longer-term skills and capacity building initiatives, and a £50 million Heritage Emergency Fund to provide emergency funding for those most in need” (incl Covid-19 help).

## Appendix VIII: Websites of stakeholder organisations

For websites of community archives and local historical societies see **Appendices I and II**

Ancestry: <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/>

Archives and Records Association <https://www.archives.org.uk/>

Art Fund: <https://www.artfund.org/about-us>

Arts & Humanities Research Council: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/>

Association of Independent Museums: <https://www.fundingforall.org.uk/>

Berkshire Record Office: <https://www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/>

Bodleian Libraries Special Collections: <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/collections>

Business Archives Council <https://businessarchivescouncil.org.uk/about/aboutintro/>

Community Archives and Heritage Group: <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/>

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/rural-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/rural-development_en)

Family and Community History Research Society:  
<https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/societies-family-community-historical-research-society-fachrs>

Family History Federation: <https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/>

Museums Association: <https://www.museumsassociation.org/about/>

National Cataloguing Grants Programme:  
<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/guidance-note-for-applicants-2011.pdf>

National Lottery Heritage Fund <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/>

Oxfordshire Family History Society: <https://www.ofhs.uk/>

Oxfordshire History Centre: [https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/history/oxfordshire-history-centre?utm\\_term=nil&utm\\_content=](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/history/oxfordshire-history-centre?utm_term=nil&utm_content=)

Oxfordshire Local History Association: <http://www.olha.org.uk/>

Oxfordshire Record Society: <http://www.oxfordshire-record-society.org.uk/>

The National Archives: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

TownsWeb Archiving: <https://blog.townswwebarchiving.com/>

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Archives for Wellbeing Network and the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group, *History begins at Home*: <https://www.historybeginsathome.org/>

Robert Boyd Publications: *The Changing Faces of...series*, 1994-2003

Clare Cowling:

- Legal Records at Risk project: <https://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/archives/legal-records-risk-lrar-project>
- *Legal Records at Risk: A strategy for safeguarding our legal heritage*, University of London Press, July 2019
- *Oxfordshire Undeposited Records project Stage 1 Report*, IALS, 13 August 2019

Community Archives and Heritage Group:

- *Community archives and GDPR*: <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/resource/community-archives-gdpr>
- *Search for an archive*: [https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css\\_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=](https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/search-for-an-archive?st%5B%5D=Oxfordshire&css_searchfield%5B%5D=text&fq=)
- *What is a community archive?* <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/what-is-a-community-archive>

Institute of Historical Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London:

- *British History on-line - Oxfordshire*: <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/Oxfordshire/vol16/pp343-347>
- *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire*, 2019 <https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/oxfordshire>

Manchester Histories, *Historical Research Project Toolkits*, <https://manchesterhistories.co.uk/getinvolved/toolkits>

Michael Moss and David Thomas, Northumbria University, *Overlapping temporalities – the Judge, the Historian and the Citizen*, April 2017, *Archives* 52(134)

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