

CIPFA Research

## Distance Enquiry Services Survey 2013

A survey of distance users of enquiry services of archives in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland



**Archives & Records  
Association**  
UK & Ireland

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## Executive summary

There was an almost three-fold increase in the number of respondents to the 2013 survey compared with that for 2012, up from 845 to 2,221.

Initial estimates that the survey would take 5 to 10 minutes to complete proved highly accurate with an average time to complete of 6.5 minutes.

The level of response to the survey was a highly respectable 30%.

More than one in five respondents to the survey lived outside of the UK. Responses were received from clients in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania. Interestingly over half of all respondents claim to live too far away to visit the archive.

Satisfaction ratings, compared with the 2012 survey, are all up. This is especially in relation to charges for goods or services and provision of bilingual information.

The profile of respondents would indicate that users of distance services can be categorised as either younger females (under 45) or older males (over 65).

Compared with the profile of physical visitors to archives; that for distance users includes a higher proportion of those with a disability / condition.

Although all respondents were told that their anonymity would be preserved more than half were happy to be identified.

## Introduction

The first distance user survey was conducted from April to June 2012. Some sixty six archives across the UK took part. In total 845 responses were received. The survey was conducted using Adobe forms. A number of issues arose such as: If respondents did not have the latest version of java then it did not function correctly; and if they did not have the latest version of Adobe then they would needed to upgrade prior to proceeding.

From Monday, 7 October 2013 to Sunday, 15 December 2013 an online survey was conducted of distance users of archives. Some 49 record offices participated in a survey that achieved a total of **2,221 responses**. As in the previous survey offices across the UK took part. However, the scope and depth of responses received was almost 3 times as large as that of the 2012 survey. We attribute this increased success to a number of factors:

- The transition from a form based survey to that of being online
- A more effective method in encouraging participation amongst distance users to undertake the survey
- A less resource intensive method of distributing these invitations to participate by archive staff
- An increased use of logic within the survey that allowed for respondents to automatically skip sections not appropriate to them.

Compared to the 2012 survey a number of new questions were introduced / adapted so that the results made more sense, including:

- The introduction of an overall satisfaction question
- Splitting of the question regarding the archive's website into:
  - Ease of navigation to our website
  - Our website
- Introducing a new question that initially asks which continent / region they live in and then which country.

## Method

In technical terms the survey is best described as being of a cross-sectional design, i.e. taking place at a particular point in time. The audience for the survey is any individual who receives a service from / has an enquiry answered by an archive during the survey window. Where an individual makes more than one enquiry during the survey window then they were repeatedly canvassed.

For the most part these invitations to participate were issued by email with a link to the survey embedded within. In some cases the response from the archives was in writing and they were sent a paper form to complete and return. On receipt of the completed form archive staff would then submit the response online.

The survey was designed and then hosted to run as a single survey, i.e. all responses were held in a single database. Each archive was given a unique link so that the system could see on whose behalf the respondent was answering. This was reinforced by the system including the name of the archive at appropriate times. Should an archive issue a broken link, i.e. such that their unique identifier was missing, then the respondent was informed to re-contact the archive that sent them the link. This unique identifier also enabled the software to guide the respondent through pertinent options. For example, respondents to Welsh archives were asked:

- Whether they wished to respond in English or Welsh
- A question relating to the availability of bilingual information.

Further 'routing' was used dependent upon the respondent's answer to which continent / region they lived in and then which country. Only those who were residents of Channel Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Sark, or the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were asked questions related to their postcode, ethnic group, disabilities / conditions, and employment status.

A number of questions were constructed to display randomly, with the exception of the 'other' option. In this way each of the options within a question had the opportunity of being listed first. For example "How did you find out about our distance enquiry service?". This helped ensure that there was no potential bias in the answers provided.

To ensure that archives did not over-expose themselves financially a 'quota' was put in place. A weekly update was issued informing them of the number of responses they had received and the extent to which their quota had been used. If their quota was achieved then they were able to decide whether to close their survey or to increase their quota. The quota worked on the following basis:

- The unique link would identify on whose behalf the respondent was answering
- The system / software would check to see if the entire quota had been used. If it had then the respondent was thanked and the interview was terminated. If it had not then they were allowed to continue
- When a respondent completed the survey the quota was reduced by one
- It could be entirely feasible for a number of respondents to undertake the survey at the same time for the same archive. The software allowed for this as until the respondent submitted their reply, we could not know if they intended to complete the survey. Consequently it could prove possible for an archive to go over-quota, in total this event occurred 7 times.

## Conclusions

The move from collecting feedback by Adobe forms to an online survey achieved the dual aims of improving response and easing the administrative burden on archive staff. Indeed a number of archives were surprised at the level of response they achieved and found themselves having to increase their individual quotas.

According to the logs maintained by each archive, some 30% of respondents agreed to take part in the survey. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that a number of them did not issue reminders to those previously canvassed. This should be classified as a missed opportunity, as doing so would have led to an increased level of participation.

Regardless, a 30% response rate is highly respectable. However, we are unable to determine to what extent those that responded are representative of those who were canvassed to take part. We would recommend that consideration should be given to classifying those canvassed by gender and either country or continent / region. Although other information would prove useful, especially age, obtaining this may prove to be far too challenging.

Nonetheless, for certain aspects, the profile of our distance users did quite closely match that of physical visitors to archives in terms of gender, age group and ethnicity.

## Survey findings

In total some **7,433** individuals were canvassed to take part in the survey. Of these 2,221 agreed to do so, giving a very respectable response rate of **30%**. Consequently, at the headline level, there is a very small margin of error in our results. Specifically, at a 95% confidence level our results are subject to an error of  $\pm 1.8\%$ . What does this mean? If the result for any question was 50 / 50, for example male / female, then at a 95% confidence level the actual results lie somewhere between 48.3% and 51.7%.

We found that from archive to archive there was a large variation in the level of response, from as low as 5% to as high as 98%. This may be due to a number of factors but the most likely being that it is lower for those who did not issue any reminders to those they had previously canvassed.

The archives that participated could be categorised in a number of ways: by country, region and type, of which the principal groups were:

		Count
<b>Country:</b>	England	1,532
	Wales	578
<b>Type:</b>	Local	1,622
	National	507

A separately published benchmarking report includes the results for the individual archives as well as the above categories.



If the respondent was UK based<sup>1</sup> the survey consisted of 23 questions. If the survey was issued by a Welsh archive then there were an extra 2 questions asking respondents whether they preferred to respond in Welsh and to answer a question related to bilingual information. Those who lived outside of the UK were not asked some of the demographic questions such, as postcode or ethnicity.

As can be seen in the table below it took on average 6 minutes and 25 seconds to complete the survey. In fact some 75% of all respondents completed the survey within this time (Percentile 75: 6 minutes and 23 seconds).

**Time to answer** (hrs: mins: secs)

<b>Mean / Average</b>	0:06:25
<b>Minimum</b>	0:00:26
<b>Maximum</b>	5:51:17
<b>Percentile 25</b>	0:03:09
<b>Median / Percentile 50</b>	0:04:25
<b>Percentile 75</b>	0:06:23
<b>Percentile 95</b>	0:13:40
<b>No. of cases</b>	2,221

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<sup>1</sup> Including the Channel Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey and Sark

By default only those who 'submitted' their response were initially deemed to have completed the survey. This would include all those who declined to request a response (1,069 cases) or who, having requested a response, then provided an email address (1,124 cases). However, given the length of the survey it was decided that any individual who completed the survey, up to the first set of demographic questions, would be included in the final dataset. This meant that an extra 28 responses were added, as highlighted below.

#### Last question answered

	Column %	Count
Your gender	0%	4
Your age, at your last birthday	0%	2
Please tell us which continent / region you live in?	1%	12
What is your ethnic group?	0%	1
Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities / conditions	0%	4
Are you currently	0%	3
Are there any changes or improvements you would like to see made to the service at ...	0%	1
Response required	48%	1,069
Email address: provided	0%	1
Email address: verified	51%	1,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,221</b>

The default language for the survey was English (UK). However, those invited to participate by Welsh archives were given the option to reply in Welsh. As can be seen below this amounted to 66 cases which represents some 3% of all respondents and 11% of those responding to Welsh archives (base 578 cases).

**Chosen language**

	Column %	Count
<b>English</b>	97%	2,155
<b>Welsh</b>	3%	66

*By default all surveys are run in English unless otherwise selected*

The vast majority of respondents found out about the distance enquiry service on the archives website. Interestingly some 16%, approximately 1 in every 6 respondents, found out through other unspecified sources. Comparing the results against those for the 2012 survey we find that there is little difference at all. For example, the top choice in 2013 - **the archive's website** - was also the top choice in 2012 albeit that the score was lower at 56%.

**How did you find out about our distance enquiry service?**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>The archive's website</b>	62%	1,342	
<b>A library / museum</b>	8%	179	
<b>Word of mouth, including friends or family</b>	8%	167	
<b>A family history society</b>	6%	132	
<b>Through the course of my education / training</b>	5%	110	
<b>Through the course of my employment</b>	4%	89	
<b>Through a social media site</b>	1%	29	
<b>A magazine / newspaper / other publication</b>	1%	28	
<b>Leaflets / posters</b>	1%	21	
<b>Other</b>	16%	349	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,170	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	98%

*Multiple choice question*

*Sorted in descending order*

Predominantly respondents contacted the Record Office for **family history research** purposes.

**What was your main reason for contacting the Record Office at this time?**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>Family history research</b>	58%	1,251	
<b>Formal education as student / researcher</b>	10%	210	
<b>Work in connection with your employment</b>	9%	204	
<b>Personal leisure / recreation</b>	9%	203	
<b>Non-leisure personal or family business</b>	3%	70	
<b>Formal education as a teacher</b>	1%	19	
<b>Other</b>	10%	212	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,169	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	98%

*Sorted in descending order*

Just over half of our respondents reported that they live too far away to visit; this is especially true for respondents outside of the UK. Only a minority would appear to use the distance enquiry service due to potentially restrictive opening hours (5% cannot visit during your opening hours). The top choice in 2012 - **live too far away to visit** - remains the top choice in 2013, although there is a marked difference in the proportions (62% 2012; 51% 2013). Other notable changes include a reduction in those who “don’t have the time to visit”, down from 12% in 2012 to just 7% in 2013.

**What were your main reasons for using email, letter or other electronic method, e.g. via the web, to contact the Record Office rather than making a personal visit?**

	Column %	Count	%	2012 survey
Live too far away to visit	51%	1,107		62%
See if archive has relevant information	37%	805		40%
Email / phone / letter / other electronic method more convenient	32%	695		36%
In advance of a personal visit	20%	428		20%
Used the archive's website but needed further help or advice	17%	378		15%
Saves on travel costs	15%	330		19%
Need advice on services available	11%	249		10%
Don't have time to visit	7%	148		12%
Cannot visit during your opening hours	5%	112		6%
Follow-up to personal visit	4%	97		4%
Other	3%	70		5%
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,177		840
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	98%	

*Multiple choice question*

*Sorted in descending order*

Overall, some 94% of respondents considered the distance enquiry service to be very good or good. Those aspects of service with the highest levels of dissatisfaction (an aggregation of the adequate, poor and very poor scores) are:

- Charges for goods or services (18%)
- Ease of navigation to our website (17%)
- Our website (15%).

**How good do you think the following aspects of the distance enquiry service are at the Record Office**

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Total	
	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Count	Survey response rate
<b>Overall</b>	75%	19%	4%	1%	1%	2,111	95%
<b>Quality of content</b>	70%	23%	5%	2%	1%	2,091	94%
<b>Clarity of response</b>	78%	17%	3%	1%	1%	2,094	94%
<b>Promptness of response</b>	73%	20%	6%	1%	1%	2,104	95%
<b>Charges for goods or services</b>	54%	27%	15%	2%	1%	1,674	75%
<b>Ease of navigation to our website</b>	46%	37%	14%	2%	1%	1,995	90%
<b>Our website</b>	47%	38%	13%	2%	0%	1,984	89%
<b>Availability of bilingual information</b>	62%	27%	10%	0%	1%	458	79%

*Availability of bilingual information only applies to Welsh archives*

*In some cases each row may total to more than 100%, this is due to rounding*

In 2013, five of the questions related to satisfaction with services were also asked in 2012. The table below shows that, for all of these, there was an improvement in those rating these services as **very good** and an overall improvement in total. This is especially so in relation to **charges for goods and services**, up from 76% to 81% (+5%) and for the **availability of bilingual information**, up from 81% to 89% (+8%).

	2013			2012		
	Very good	Good	Total	Very good	Good	Total
<b>Overall</b>	75%	19%	<b>94%</b>	..		
<b>Quality of content</b>	70%	23%	<b>93%</b>	58%	31%	<b>89%</b>
<b>Clarity of response</b>	78%	17%	<b>95%</b>	68%	23%	<b>91%</b>
<b>Promptness of response</b>	73%	20%	<b>93%</b>	70%	21%	<b>91%</b>
<b>Charges for goods or services</b>	54%	27%	<b>81%</b>	47%	29%	<b>76%</b>
<b>Ease of navigation to our website</b>	46%	37%	<b>83%</b>	..		
<b>Our website</b>	47%	38%	<b>85%</b>	..		
<b>Availability of bilingual information</b>	62%	27%	<b>89%</b>	45%	36%	<b>81%</b>

*Availability of bilingual information only applies to Welsh archives*

*.. Not asked*



A significant number of respondents were **first time users** (65%). Of the remainder, most were relatively new users of the service (10% for less than a year), and 25% had used the service for a year or more. This contrasts quite strongly with the visitor survey, where in 2012 only 24% were first time users and 63% had been visiting for a year or more.

**For how long have you been contacting the Record Office by email, letter or other electronic method, e.g. via the web?**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>This was the first time</b>	65%	1,419	
<b>For less than a year</b>	10%	221	
<b>One to four years</b>	13%	285	
<b>Five to ten years</b>	7%	157	
<b>More than ten years</b>	4%	92	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,174	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	98%

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

The gender split amongst our distance users is a very close match to physical visitors. In the 2012 visitor survey this split was 53% male and 47% female.

**Your gender**

	<b>Column %</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Male</b>	52%	1,113	
<b>Female</b>	48%	1,045	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,158	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	97%

The table below has been expanded to include the age profiles of respondent in the 2012 visitor survey to UK archives. The similarities are striking as one might have imagined a much younger profile for distance users and those who might participate in an online survey. On this basis we may be tempted to conclude that our sample of respondents is generally representative of archive users generally.

**Your age, at your last birthday**

	Column %	Count	%	2012 visitor survey
16 to 24	3%	66		5%
25 to 34	6%	125		6%
35 to 44	6%	129		7%
45 to 54	15%	304		12%
55 to 64	28%	578		28%
65 to 74	32%	661		31%
75 to 84	10%	201		10%
85 or over	1%	21		1%
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,085		8,274
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	94%	

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

This breakdown by age and gender shows that we have a younger female population and an older male population. Whereas some 19% of females are aged 44 or under, the corresponding figure for males is 13%. Looking at those groups age 65 or older, for males this constitutes some 50% of our sample whilst for females it is only 35%.

**Your age, at your last birthday BY Gender**

	Male			Female		
	Column %	Count	%	Column %	Count	%
<b>16 to 24</b>	3%	27		4%	39	
<b>25 to 34</b>	5%	54		7%	70	
<b>35 to 44</b>	5%	50		8%	77	
<b>45 to 54</b>	13%	141		16%	162	
<b>55 to 64</b>	25%	272		30%	303	
<b>65 to 74</b>	35%	375		29%	285	
<b>75 to 84</b>	13%	139		6%	62	
<b>85 or over</b>	2%	19		0%	2	
<b>Total</b>	100%	1,077		100%	1,000	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		1,113	97%		1,045	96%

*The above column (male) does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

Our survey had participants from around the globe taking part. Whilst some 1,691 were UK residents (79%) this still meant that 462 responses (22%) were truly distance users! The tables that follow overleaf provide a more detailed breakdown of participation for each continent / region.

**Please tell us which continent / region you live in?**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>Europe</b>	84%	1,805	
<b>Oceania</b>	8%	162	
<b>Americas</b>	7%	158	
<b>Asia</b>	1%	19	
<b>Africa</b>	0%	9	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,153	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	97%

*Sorted in descending order*

Only 8 African respondents would confirm which country they were residents in.

**Please tell us which continent / region you live in? Africa:**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>South Africa</b>	63%	5	
<b>Tunisia</b>	13%	1	
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	13%	1	
<b>Egypt</b>	13%	1	
<b>Total</b>	100%	8	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		9	89%

*Sorted in descending order*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

Those from the Americas were primarily North American, living in either the USA or Canada.

**Please tell us which continent / region you live in? Americas:**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>United States of America</b>	58%	91	
<b>Canada</b>	39%	62	
<b>United States Virgin Islands</b>	1%	1	
<b>Trinidad and Tobago</b>	1%	1	
<b>Colombia</b>	1%	1	
<b>Brazil</b>	1%	1	
<b>Argentina</b>	1%	1	
<b>Total</b>	100%	158	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		158	100%

*Sorted in descending order*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

Responses from Asians were spread across a number of locations.

**Please tell us which continent / region you live in? Asia:**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>India</b>	26%	5	
<b>Thailand</b>	11%	2	
<b>Malaysia</b>	11%	2	
<b>China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region</b>	11%	2	
<b>China</b>	11%	2	
<b>Bangladesh</b>	11%	2	
<b>Turkey</b>	5%	1	
<b>Japan</b>	5%	1	
<b>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</b>	5%	1	
<b>Afghanistan</b>	5%	1	
<b>Total</b>	100%	19	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		19	100%

*Sorted in descending order*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*



There are in total some 53 European countries; we received responses from 18 of these (34%). Europe is broken down into 4 distinct areas as follows: Eastern (7 cases); Northern (33 excluding the UK); Southern (18 cases); and Western (41 cases).

**Please tell us which continent / region you live in? Europe:**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</b> <i>(Northern Europe)</i>	94%	1,691	
<b>Ireland</b> <i>(Northern Europe)</i>	1%	25	
<b>France</b> <i>(Western Europe)</i>	1%	22	
<b>Spain</b> <i>(Southern Europe)</i>	1%	12	
<b>Germany</b> <i>(Western Europe)</i>	0%	8	
<b>Sweden</b> <i>(Northern Europe)</i>	0%	5	
<b>Netherlands</b> <i>(Western Europe)</i>	0%	5	
<b>Switzerland</b> <i>(Western Europe)</i>	0%	3	
<b>Russian Federation</b> <i>(Eastern Europe)</i>	0%	3	
<b>Italy</b> <i>(Southern Europe)</i>	0%	3	
<b>Belgium</b> <i>(Western Europe)</i>	0%	3	
<b>Poland</b> <i>(Eastern Europe)</i>	0%	2	
<b>Norway</b> <i>(Northern Europe)</i>	0%	2	
<b>Greece</b> <i>(Southern Europe)</i>	0%	2	
<b>Slovakia</b> <i>(Eastern Europe)</i>	0%	1	
<b>Romania</b> <i>(Eastern Europe)</i>	0%	1	
<b>Portugal</b> <i>(Southern Europe)</i>	0%	1	
<b>Denmark</b> <i>(Northern Europe)</i>	0%	1	
<b>Total</b>	100%	1,790	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		1,805	99%

*Sorted in descending order*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

Outside of the UK the largest individual group of respondents came from Australia.

Please tell us which continent / region you live in? Oceania:

	Column %	Count	%
<b>Australia</b>	86%	138	
<b>New Zealand</b>	14%	22	
<b>Kiribati</b>	1%	1	
<b>Total</b>	100%	161	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		162	99%

*Sorted in descending order*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

The ethnic profile of our UK residents taking part in the survey is predominantly White. This more or less matches the profile of our visitors to archives in the 2012 survey, where the result was 97% White.

**What is your ethnic group?**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>White</b>	98%	1,603	
<b>Other</b>	1%	18	
<b>Mixed</b>	1%	13	
<b>Asian</b>	0%	3	
<b>Black</b>	0%	2	
<b>Total</b>	100%	1,639	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		1,692	97%

*Sorted in descending order*

*Only asked if European and resident in one of: Channel Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Sark, or United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*

Interestingly respondents to this survey were more likely to have some form of disability or condition compared to visitors to archives. The figures below would suggest that some 19% of our respondents have one or more disability / condition whilst amongst participants in the 2012 visitor survey the equivalent figure was 14%.

**Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities / conditions:**

	Column %	Count	%
<b>None / not applicable</b>	81%	1,299	
<b>Mobility</b>	9%	141	
<b>Hearing</b>	6%	99	
<b>Other</b>	4%	60	
<b>Mental health problem</b>	2%	34	
<b>Dexterity</b>	2%	26	
<b>Eyesight</b>	1%	22	
<b>Learning disability</b>	1%	16	
<b>Total</b>	100%	1,605	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		1,692	95%

*Multiple choice question*

*Sorted in descending order*

*Only asked if European and resident in one of: Channel Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Sark, or United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*

Clearly the profile of distance users of archive services differs to a significant extent to the profile of residents in England and Wales.

**Are you currently:**

	Column %	Count	%	Census 2011
<b>Retired (whether receiving a pension or not)?</b>	52%	854		14%
<b>Employed or self-employed, full or part-time?</b>	36%	589		62%
<b>A student?</b>	5%	84		6%
<b>Looking after the home or family?</b>	2%	39		4%
<b>Other</b>	2%	25		2%
<b>Long-term sick or disabled?</b>	1%	22		4%
<b>Unemployed?</b>	1%	19		4%
<b>On a government sponsored training scheme?</b>	0%	1		3%
<b>Total</b>	100%	1,633		
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		1,692	97%	

*Sorted in descending order*

*Only asked if European and resident in one of: Channel Islands, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Sark, or United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*

*The above column does not appear to total 100%, this is due to rounding*

We asked respondents if they were prepared to have their responses / comments accredited directly to them, some 52% were happy to do so (Attributed to / connected with: Yes). However, only a minority requested a response to their feedback.

**If you are happy for your email address to be attributed to / connected with your replies to the Record Office AND / OR you require a response from them, then please do indicate this below by selecting 'yes' for each option as appropriate**

	Attributed to / connected with			Response required		
	Column %	Count	%	Column %	Count	%
<b>Yes</b>	52%	1,145		6%	137	
<b>No</b>	48%	1,049		94%	2,057	
<b>Total</b>	100%	2,194		100%	2,194	
<b>Base / Survey response rate</b>		2,221	99%		2,221	99%

## Appendices

**The survey** (see overleaf ...)

*This question only asked of respondents to Welsh archives:*

0%

**Would you prefer to complete this survey in English or Welsh?**  
Please select one option

**Fyddai'n well gennych gwblhau'r arolwg hwn yn Cymraeg neu Saesneg?**  
Deiwsiwch un opsiwn

English / Saesneg  
 Welsh / Cymraeg

0%

You recently contacted ##### by letter, email or other electronic method, e.g. via the web, to draw on our distance enquiry services. Your feedback and views will help improve our services to customers. Do note that:

- This survey is being conducted by CIPFA Research on behalf of #####
- This survey is conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct
- This survey should take you no more than 5 to 10 minutes to complete
- We, CIPFA Research, guarantee that your anonymity will be preserved unless you explicitly provide your consent for your details to be revealed or for your comments to be passed on.

To proceed please click **Next** below, thank you

5%

**How did you find out about our distance enquiry service?**  
Please select all that apply

The archive's website  
 Through the course of my education / training  
 A magazine / newspaper / other publication  
 A family history society  
 Leaflets / posters  
 A library / museum  
 Through the course of my employment  
 Word of mouth, including friends or family  
 Through a social media site, e.g. Twitter, Facebook  
 Other

11%

**What was your main reason for contacting ##### at this time?**  
Please select one option

Family history research  
 Formal education as a teacher  
 Non-leisure personal or family business  
 Work in connection with your employment  
 Personal leisure / recreation  
 Formal education as student / researcher  
 Other



16%

What were your main reasons for using email, letter or other electronic method, e.g. via the web, to contact ##### rather than making a personal visit?  
Please select all that apply

- Live too far away to visit
- Cannot visit during your opening hours
- Saves on travel costs
- In advance of a personal visit
- See if archive has relevant information
- Need advice on services available
- Email / phone / letter / other electronic method more convenient
- Used the archive's website but needed further help or advice
- Follow-up to personal visit
- Don't have time to visit
- Other

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22%

How good do you think the following aspects of the distance enquiry service are at #####?  
Please select one option per row

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Overall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clarity of response	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promptness of response	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charges for goods or services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of navigation to our website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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*This alternative question set only asked of respondents to Welsh archives:*

27%

How good do you think the following aspects of the distance enquiry service are at #####?  
Please select one option per row

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor
Overall	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clarity of response	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promptness of response	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charges for goods or services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ease of navigation to our website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of bilingual information at	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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27%

For how long have you been contacting ##### by email, letter or other electronic method, e.g. via the web?  
Please select one option

- This was the first time
- For less than a year
- One to four years
- Five to ten years
- More than ten years

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**Your gender**  
Please select one option

- Male
- Female

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**Your age, at your last birthday:**

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**Please tell us which continent / region you live in?**  
Please select one option

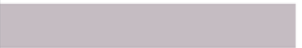
- Africa
- Americas
- Asia
- Europe
- Oceania

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**Which one of the following European countries do you live in?**

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Italy
- Jersey
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Monaco
- Montenegro
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Republic of Moldova
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- San Marino
- Sark
- Serbia
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen Islands
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



55%

**What is your home postcode?**

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41%

**What is your ethnic group?**  
Please select one option

- Asian
- Black
- Mixed
- White
- Other

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66%

**Please indicate if you consider yourself to have any of the following disabilities / conditions:**  
Please select all that apply

- None / not applicable
- Mobility, e.g. walking short distances or climbing stairs
- Hearing, e.g. deafness or partial hearing
- Eyesight, e.g. blindness or partial sight
- Dexterity, e.g. lifting and carrying objects
- Learning disability, e.g. dyslexia
- Mental health problem, e.g. depression
- Other

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72%

**Are you currently:**  
Please select one option

- Employed or self-employed, full or part-time?
- On a government sponsored training scheme?
- Unemployed?
- A student?
- Retired (whether receiving a pension or not)?
- Looking after the home or family?
- Long-term sick or disabled?
- Other

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77%

Are there any changes or improvements you would like to see made to the service at #####?

83%

Are you happy for your email address to be attributed to / connected with your replies to #####?

Yes  No

Do you require a response?

Yes  No

88%

Please provide your email address in the box below:

So we can check we've got your email address recorded correctly, please enter your email address again:

94%

If you wish to submit your responses please click **Next** below:

**Participating archives** (ordered alphabetically)

<b>Archive</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Number canvassed</b>	<b>Number completed</b>	<b>Survey response rate</b>
Anglesey Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	14	6	43%
Bangor University Archives	University	Wales	Wales	18	16	89%
Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre	Local	England	London	17	14	82%
Berkshire Record Office	Local	England	South East	76	49	64%
Borthwick Institute Archives	University	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	452	22	5%
Carmarthenshire Archive Service	Local	Wales	Wales	60	41	68%
Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies	Local	England	South East	106	54	51%
Ceredigion Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	40	39	98%
Cheshire Archives and Local Studies	Local	England	North West	316	105	33%
Conwy Archive Service	Local	Wales	Wales	25	16	64%
Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre	Local	England	North West	18	6	33%
Cumbria Archive and Local Studies Centre, Whitehaven	Local	England	North West	14	11	79%
Cumbria Archive Centre, Carlisle	Local	England	North West	23	5	22%
Cumbria Archive Centre, Kendal	Local	England	North West	19	14	74%
Denbighshire Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	31	24	77%
East Riding Archives and Local Studies Service	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	46	15	33%
Flintshire Record Office	Local	Wales	Wales	55	27	49%
Glamorgan Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	135	71	53%

Archive	Type	Country	Region	Number canvassed	Number completed	Survey response rate
Gwent Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	130	54	42%
Herefordshire Archive Service	Local	England	Eastern	47	22	47%
Lancashire Archives	Local	England	North West	245	105	43%
London Metropolitan Archives	Local	England	London	521	204	39%
Lothian Health Services Archive	National	Scotland	Scotland	31	13	42%
National Library of Scotland, Manuscript Collections	National	Scotland	Scotland	87	59	68%
North Yorkshire County Record Office	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	146	51	35%
Nottingham University: Manuscripts & Special Collections	University	England	East Midlands	77	32	42%
Nottinghamshire Archives	Local	England	East Midlands	305	80	26%
Parliamentary Archives	National	England	London	140	51	36%
Pembrokeshire Archives	Local	Wales	Wales	72	27	38%
Public Record Office of Northern Ireland	National	Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland	340	39	11%
Richard Burton Archives, Swansea University	University	Wales	Wales	41	22	54%
Rotherham Archives & Local Studies	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	89	33	37%
Shropshire Archives	Local	England	West Midlands	54	31	57%
Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds	Local	England	Eastern	24	13	54%
Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich	Local	England	Eastern	49	21	43%
Suffolk Record Office, Lowestoft	Local	England	Eastern	24	12	50%
Surrey History Centre	Local	England	South East	300	106	35%

Archive	Type	Country	Region	Number canvassed	Number completed	Survey response rate
The British Postal Museum & Archive	National	England	London	175	52	30%
The Dorset History Centre	Local	England	South West	112	48	43%
The National Archives	National	England	London	1,570	83	5%
The National Library of Wales	National	Wales	Wales	669	210	31%
Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives	Local	England	London	186	58	31%
West Glamorgan Archive Service	Local	Wales	Wales	60	19	32%
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Bradford	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	76	39	51%
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Calderdale	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	30	18	60%
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Kirklees	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	24	9	38%
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	116	59	51%
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Wakefield	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	185	89	48%
Wrexham Archives and Local Studies Service	Local	Wales	Wales	14	6	43%
York Archives and Local History	Local	England	Yorkshire and the Humber	29	21	72%
<b>Totals:</b>						
UK	Total: UK	Total: UK	Total: UK	7,433	2,221	30%
England	Total: England	Total: England	Total: England	5,611	1,532	27%
Local	Total: Local	Total: Local	Total: Local	3,833	1,622	42%
National	Total: National	Total: National	Total: National	3,012	507	17%
Wales	Total: Wales	Total: Wales	Total: Wales	1,364	578	42%

## Survey response rates

As can be seen in the chart below survey response rates varied from as low as 5% to as high as 98%. In total archives described as 'local' achieved a 42% response rate compared to 17% for 'national' archives. It was also the case that Welsh archives did better than those in England (42% and 27% respectively).

