

**EXECUTIVE REPORT**

**Joint Archives Committee Report - 2012 Visitor Survey**  
**Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities**  
**Director Kevin Parkes**  
**14<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

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**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the outcome of the survey

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2. That members note the results of the survey

**IF THIS IS A KEY DECISION WHICH KEY DECISION TEST APPLIES?**

- 3. It is over the financial threshold (£150,000)   
It has a significant impact on 2 or more wards   
Non Key

**DECISION IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE**

- 4. For the purposes of the scrutiny call in procedure this report is

Non-urgent   
Urgent report

If urgent please give full reasons

## **BACKGROUND AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATION**

5. The Visitor Survey is organised by the Public Services Quality Group under the supervision of the National Archives. It takes place roughly once a year but the time of year that the survey takes place will vary. We surveyed each unique visitor to the archive service over a two week period commencing on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012.
6. The first section covered the visitor's experience of using the service with regard to facilities, catalogues, website, staff and opening hours. In the past, the service has performed very well in this survey and overall performance remains strong with 65% of visitors rating it as very good and 35% as good. There has been a drop in the number rating the overall service as very good from 87% in 2011. Areas highlighted for improvement are opening hours and on-site computer facilities as well as the website. The reduction in opening hours and the fact that the public Internet access was unavailable for one whole week of the survey goes some way to explaining this. The length of time taken to update the content of our website by IT services also has caused problems.
7. The next section focused on the visit to the archive. This included how people travelled, how long they stayed and other local facilities used. Most people stayed between 2-5 hours and travelled by private car (48%). 55% used the service for leisure with 18% being in education and 16% using the service in connection with their employment. There has been a decrease in the numbers using the service for family history, but this represents a shift in service delivery rather than a reduction in service, as the customers use resources housed elsewhere.
8. Visitors were asked how they valued the archive service. Most people believe (95%) that it is important for preserving culture and heritage. 79% of people believe the service provides opportunities for learning and 80% that it strengthens family and community identity.
9. The survey showed the age profile of visitors. 42% of users were older, between 55 and 74 years old. The 20-34 age group supplied 34% of users suggesting they were students. 68% of users were male and 92% were white British and a small minority had mental health or mobility problems.
10. In summary, the survey showed there had been a slight decline in the service provided, but that is to be expected with such a small staff, a vacant post and changes to opening hours. We can identify people using the archives for purposes other than family history and that helps us to plan for the future to attract more people in the younger age group who are studying or who use the archives for other reasons.
11. There is a need to reconsider how the service approaches issues such as customer consultation when the service is increasingly being delivered in other ways, than by users visiting the Archive building.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IA)**

12. N/A

## **OPTION APPRAISAL/RISK ASSESSMENT**

13. N/A

## **FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS**

14. There are no financial, legal or ward implications from this report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

15. For members to note the report

## **REASONS**

16. To inform members of the results of the survey.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

17. N/A

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