



**in Lancashire**

# **Life in Lancashire Wave 11**

Fieldwork 12 May – 21 June

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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1	Lancashire Record Office	4
<b>2</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Research Objectives</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1	Limitations	7
<b>5</b>	<b>Main Research Findings</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1	Lancashire Record Office	8
5.1.1	Awareness and Potential Use	8
5.1.2	Contacting the Record Office	10
5.1.3	Opening Hours	13
<b>6</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1	Lancashire Record Office	15
<b>7</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>16</b>
7.1	Lancashire Record Office	16
<b>8</b>	<b>Appendix</b>	<b>17</b>
8.1.1	Socio-Economic-Group Definitions	17
8.1.2	Marked Up Questionnaire	18

## Table of Figures

Chart 1 - Which, if any, of the following things do you think you (or someone in your household) will do in the next three years?	8
Chart 2 - Before you received this questionnaire, had you ever heard of the Lancashire Record Office?	9
Chart 3 - Before you received this questionnaire, were you aware of this service? (free record deposits)	10
Chart 4 - Do you think that you (or someone in your household) will deposit any records at the Lancashire Record Office in the next three years?	10
Chart 5 - Have <u>you</u> contacted the Lancashire Record Office in the last three years?	11
Chart 6 - For what purpose(s) have you contacted or visited the Lancashire Record Office?	11
Chart 7 - The last time you contacted the Lancashire Record Office, were they able to help you?	12
Chart 8 - On that occasion, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the outcome?	12
Chart 9 - Preferred opening time vs Expected use	13

# 1 Executive Summary

This wave of the Life in Lancashire panel is about experience of crime, perceptions of safety and the Lancashire Record Office. All 2818 member of the panel were mailed one mailing and one reminder, 1783 replies were received at a response of 63%.

## 1.1 Lancashire Record Office

- A third (35%) of the panel think they, or someone in their household will research family history in the next three years.
- Two in five (43%) of the panel had heard of the Lancashire Record Office by name before, the same proportion had never heard of it.
- One in twelve (8%) of the panel have contacted the Record Office in the last three years. This varies from 14% in Preston to just 3% in Rossendale.
- Over half of contacts and visits were to research family history (54%).
- Four in five (79%) of those who had contacted the Office said the staff were able to help. 83% said they were satisfied with the service, (47% very satisfied).
- All possible opening times for the Office would be suitable for at least a fifth of the panel.

Awareness, usage and satisfaction with the Record Office have all remained steady since 2001. Researching family history remains the most likely reason for people to visit the Record Office. As in 2001 however, four in ten (43%) have never heard of it. Awareness is greatest in Preston and South Ribble and lowest in Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale and West Lancashire. The lowest awareness on this wave, Burnley 36%, is significantly higher than the lowest awareness on the 2001 wave, Rossendale at 21%. Actual usage of the Office follows similar lines.

The wide spread of preferred opening times indicates that weekday evening and Saturday opening would be suited to a large proportion of the population. Crucially, these would reach different demographic groups, particularly people in full-time work and parents. Also, people preferring to visit at evenings or weekends are just as likely to say they will visit in the next three years. Providing people were made aware of the changes, Saturday or evening opening could provide access to groups of the population that have not used the service before.

## 2 Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Life in Lancashire regularly since August 2001. A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research they complete and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a county wide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each Life in Lancashire wave is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning i.e. the views of panel members become too informed with County Council services to be unrepresentative of the population as a whole. The current panel was recruited in September 2003, so this effect should still be small.

### 3 Research Objectives

The research objectives for wave 11 focus on the topics of crime and the Lancashire Record Office. The main questions areas were:

- Assessing panel members' experience of crime in the last 12 months.
- Finding how safe residents feel in their neighbourhood and how much of a problem a variety of factors is in their area (eg vandalism etc).
- Investigating how safe people feel in their homes and while travelling.
- Finding out awareness of and likely usage of the Lancashire Record Office.

## 4 Methodology

Wave 11 of Life in Lancashire was sent to 2818 members of the panel on 12 May. A reminder was sent to non-respondents on 9 June. The fieldwork ended on 21 June 2004.

No incentive for respondents to complete the questionnaire was given. In total 1783 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 63%.

All data are weighted by gender, age, ethnicity and district and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled down to reflect the effective response of 1360, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

### 4.1 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1000	3%	3%	2%
1360	3%	2%	2%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1000 respond with a particular answer, the chance are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

## 5 Main Research Findings

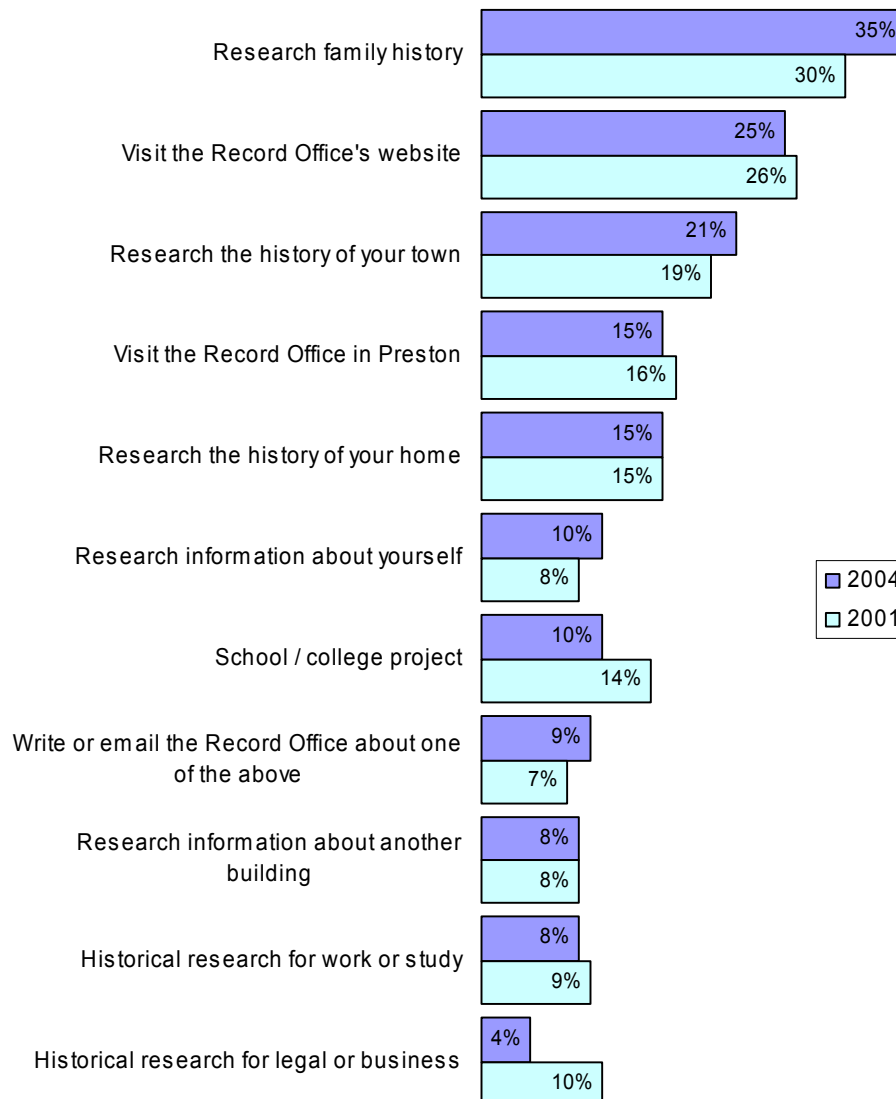
### 5.1 Lancashire Record Office

The second questionnaire theme was on the Lancashire Record Office. These questions were asked of the first Life in Lancashire panel in August 2001, allowing some comparison over time.

#### 5.1.1 Awareness and Potential Use

Firstly, potential use of the office was assessed by asking which of a list of activities panel members might be likely to do in the next three years. These are shown in Chart 1 below.

**Chart 1 - Which, if any, of the following things do you think you (or someone in your household) will do in the next three years?**



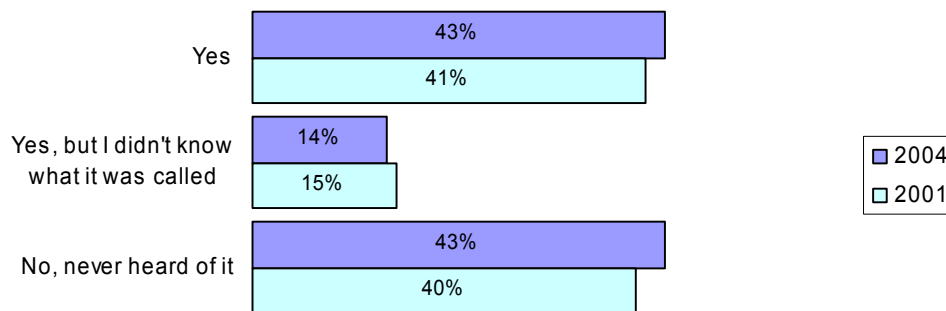
Base: All respondents: 2004 (1574 UW, 1239 W); 2001 (1411 UW, 1408 W)



**Researching family history** is the most likely use of the Record Office (35%), followed by a **visit to its website** (25%). There are also some clear differences by demographic, with people from social class AB (35%) being three times as likely to say they would visit the website as people from group DE (15%). This may well be because of greater computer ownership and familiarity amongst the AB group; the panel recruitment questionnaire asked questions on Information Technology access and internet access at home was more than twice as likely amongst AB's against DE's. Age also gives a difference, with the youngest age group 16-24 being often the most keen to research. Two in five (42%) of the panel say they would not do any of the options in the next three years.

Comparing with 2001, the reasons for visiting the Record Office have stayed broadly the same. This is also seen for the proportions having heard of the Lancashire Record Office asked next and shown below.

**Chart 2 - Before you received this questionnaire, had you ever heard of the Lancashire Record Office?**

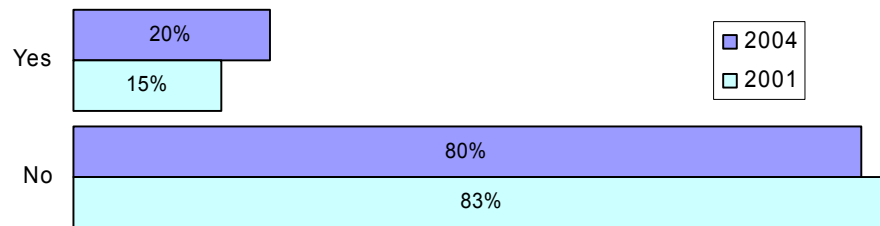


Base: All respondents: 2004 (1730 UW, 1359 W); 2001 (1411 UW, 1408 W)

There are some differences here by subgroup, with awareness increasing with each age group. Just under a quarter (23%) of 16 to 25 year olds say they knew the name of the office, compared with half of over 60s (51%). The district of residence also plays a part here, with 58% of Preston and South Ribble knowing the name compared with only 34% of Burnley residents. Rossendale (35%), Pendle (35%) and West Lancashire (36%) also have low awareness. While these are not significantly below the county average, they are significantly less than for Preston. This should not be too surprising since the people living in these districts are furthest away from the Office.

Significantly less people had heard that they could deposit records at the office (20%). Awareness is similar across all subgroups, the only significant difference being between the over 60s at 27% awareness and 25-44 year olds at 15%.

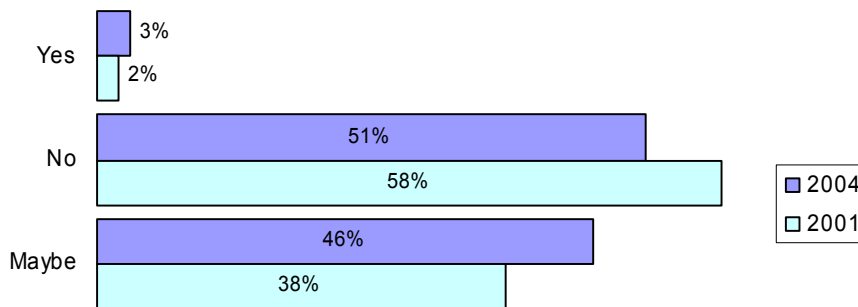
**Chart 3 - Before you received this questionnaire, were you aware of this service? (free record deposits)**



Base: All respondents: 2004 (1722 UW, 1354 W); 2001 (1411 UW, 1408 W)

As in 2001, only a small percentage of the panel thinks that they would deposit any records in the next three years. This small percentage means that there are no significant differences between subgroups.

**Chart 4 - Do you think that you (or someone in your household) will deposit any records at the Lancashire Record Office in the next three years?**



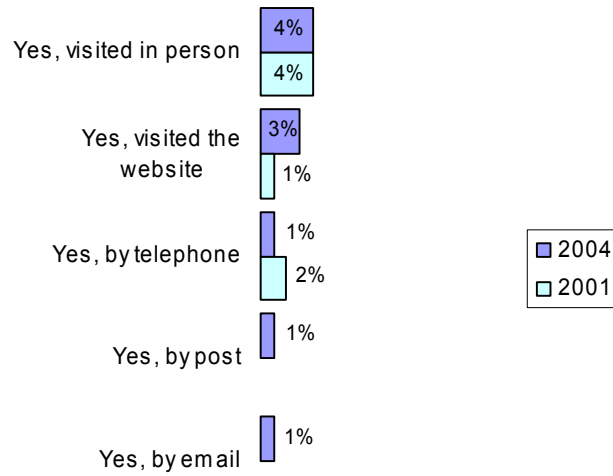
Base: All respondents 2004 (1730 UW, 1363 W); 2001 (1411 UW, 1408 W)

### 5.1.2 Contacting the Record Office

About one in twelve (8%) of the panel have contacted the Record Office in the last three years, half having visited in person (4%). Panel members saying they have **not** visited the Record Office varies again with geography, from a high of 97% in Rossendale and Hyndburn, to Preston where 14% have had some contact.

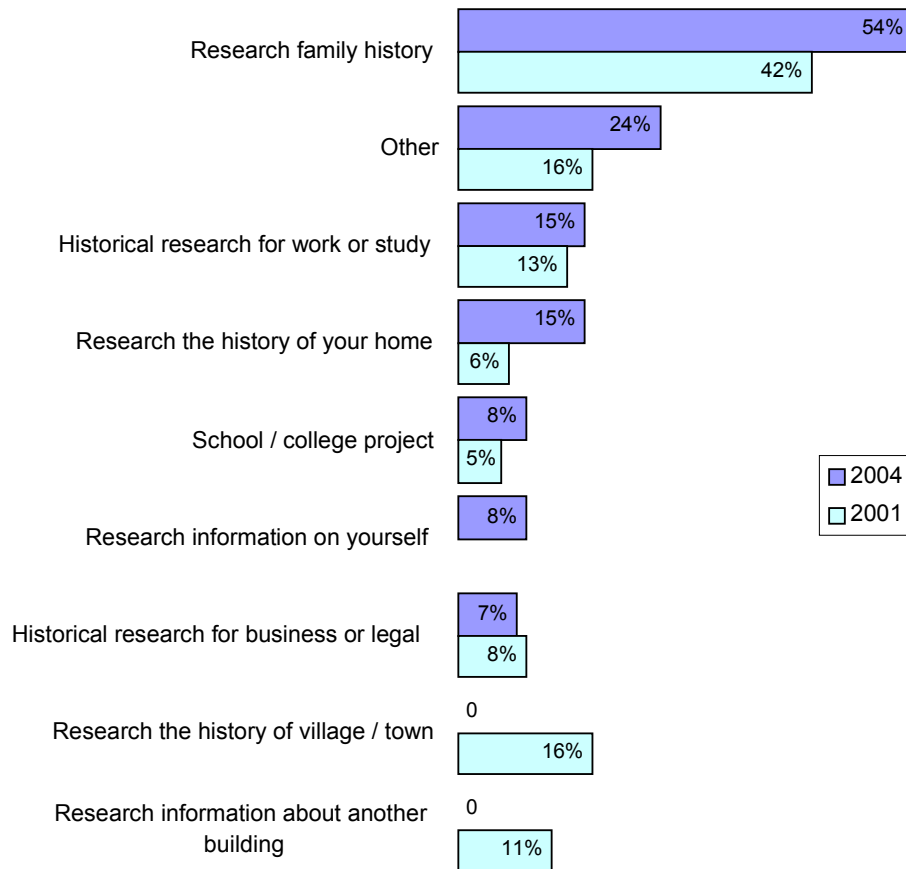
Researching family history (54%) is by far the most common reason for having visited or contacted the Record Office, followed by the 'other' option on the question (24%), though what this could be is unclear. (Care should be taken on these questions, since sample sizes are small, not all differences are significant).

**Chart 5 - Have you contacted the Lancashire Record Office in the last three years?**



Base: All respondents 2004 (1727 UW, 1365 W); 2001 (1411 UW, 1408 W)

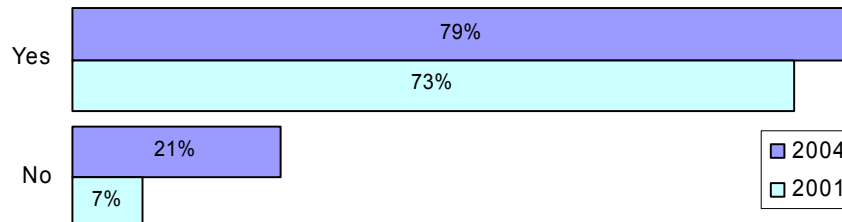
**Chart 6 - For what purpose(s) have you contacted or visited the Lancashire Record Office?**



Base: All respondents: 2004 (156 UW, 118 W); 2001 (114 UW, 112 W)

Aside from just in the last three years, respondents were asked whether the office was able to help them, the vast majority considered the office were able to help, though a fifth (21%) did not.

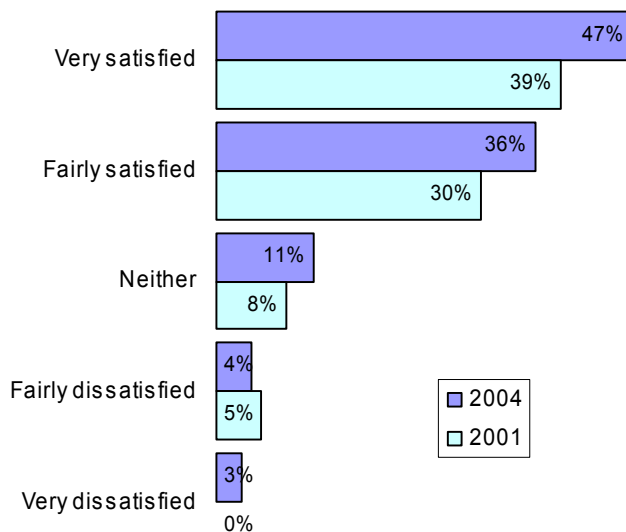
**Chart 7 - The last time you contacted the Lancashire Record Office, were they able to help you?**



Base: All respondents: 2004 (191 UW, 145 W); 2001 (114 UW, 112 W)

More than four in five (83%) of panel members who have used the Record Office say they are satisfied with the service.

**Chart 8 - On that occasion, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the outcome?**



Base: All respondents: 2004 (173 UW, 131 W); 2001 (114 UW, 112 W)

Comparing the type of contact with the satisfaction shows that only one person giving their contact type and expressing an opinion was very dissatisfied and 87% considered themselves satisfied. There were no significant differences by contact type, though this maybe due to the very small samples of people not visiting in person.

### 5.1.3 Opening Hours

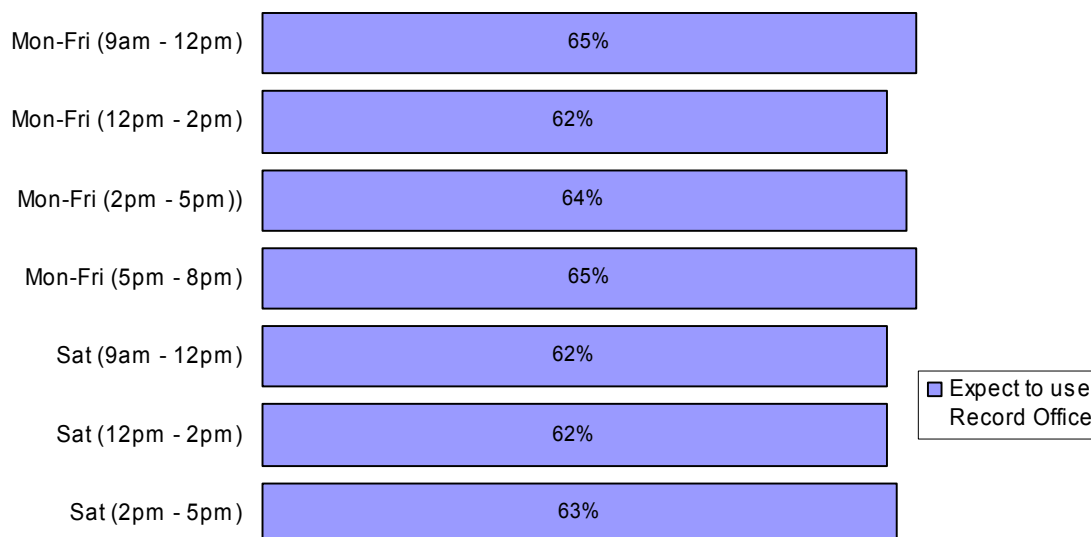
**Table 1 - Please indicate below when you would be most likely to use the Record Office.** (Please tick the three times you would be most likely to use the Record Office)

	Monday-Friday	Saturday
9am – 12 noon	36%	39%
12 noon – 2pm	23%	27%
2pm – 5pm	39%	29%
5pm – 8pm	32%	N/A

Base: All respondents (Unweighted 1424, Weighted 1144)

The preferred opening times have a wide spread, with all of the options being given by more than one in five of the panel. It also varies substantially by subgroup. The over 60s would most likely to visit during the week in the morning (60%) or the afternoon, 2pm-5pm (59%). People in full-time work are most keen for weekday evenings 5pm-8pm (54%) and Saturday morning (55%). These two times are also the most preferred for people with children in the household. People from social grade C2 (skilled manual workers) are most likely to suggest Saturday afternoon 2pm-5pm (45%).

**Chart 9 - Preferred opening time vs Expected use**



Base: All giving a preferred opening time and saying they were likely to use the Record Office in the next three years (Unweighted 1321, Weighted 1068)

By comparing the time given as a preferred opening time against actual expected use, we find that people who would wish to use the Record Office in the evening or on Saturday consider themselves just as likely to use its services.

## 6 Summary

### 6.1 Lancashire Record Office

- A third (35%) of the panel think they, or someone in their household will research family history in the next three years. Two in five (42%) say they will not have any contact with the Record Office.
- Two in five (43%) of the panel had heard of the Lancashire Record Office by name before, the same proportion had never heard of it.
- A fifth of respondents knew that they could deposit records in the Record Office; only three percent think that they will do so however.
- One in twelve (8%) of the panel have contacted the Record Office in the last three years. This varies from 14% in Preston to just 3% in Rossendale.
- Over half of contacts and visits were to research family history (54%).
- Four in five (79%) of those who had contacted the Office said the staff were able to help. 83% said they were satisfied with the service, (47% very satisfied).
- All possible opening times for the Office would be suitable for at least a fifth of the panel.

## 7 Recommendations

### 7.1 Lancashire Record Office

Awareness, usage and satisfaction with the Record Office have all stayed steady since 2001. Researching family history remains the most likely reason for people to visit the Record Office. As in 2001 however, four in ten (43%) have never heard of it. Awareness is greatest in Preston and South Ribble and lowest in Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale and West Lancashire. The lowest awareness on this wave, Burnley 36%, is significantly higher than the lowest awareness on the 2001 wave, Rossendale 21%. There is correlation with usage since Preston has the highest usage (14% in the last 3 years) and Rossendale the lowest at just 3%. Awareness still needs to be increased in East and West Lancashire; attention will need to be paid to how this can be improved and how access can be made easier for people who may need to travel some distance to reach the Office.

There is greater awareness of record deposits on 2001 but only one in five knew of it and only 3% of the panel think they would use this facility.

Satisfaction amongst service users is very high (87%).

The wide spread of preferred opening times indicates that weekday evening and Saturday opening would be suited to a large proportion of the population. Crucially, these would reach different demographic groups, particularly people in full-time work and parents. People who would wish to use the Record Office in the evening or on Saturday consider themselves just as likely to use its services, as those preferring the week, making this appear even more attractive. Any change in opening times would need to be publicised well, since these groups are probably the most time pressured; they will need definite reasons to visit and a family-friendly environment. Communications will need to be targeted and the correct message delivered to ensure an efficient reach of the population. Frontline staff will be able to help with the specific requirements that people from different backgrounds have, enabling the right messages to be put out.



## 8 Appendix

### 8.1.1 Socio-Economic-Group Definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

#### Group A

- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants.
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows

#### Group B

- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications
- Principle officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people previously grade B, and their widows

#### Group C1

- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows

#### Group C2

- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers for responsibility for other people
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

#### Group D

- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

#### Group E

- All those entirely dependant on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without a regular income

## 8.1.2 Marked Up Questionnaire