



# Living in Lancashire Survey

**Lancashire Archives**

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[www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)





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## 1. Executive summary

This wave of Living in Lancashire looked at people's views on Lancashire Archives. The survey was sent by email or by post to all 2,779 members of the panel on 15 February. A reminder was sent on 7 March and the fieldwork ended on 23 March 2012. In total 1,971 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 71%.

### 1.1 Key findings

- To find out more about the history of their local community, over two fifths of respondents would start their search on the internet (44%), while nearly two fifths would begin with a visit to a library (37%). Only around one in twenty respondents would start at Lancashire Archives (6%).
- To find out more about their family history, nearly three fifths of respondents would start on the internet (58%). Around one in seven would start at Lancashire Archives (15%).
- Over two fifth of respondents had heard of Lancashire Archives before they received the questionnaire (43%), but over half had not (55%).
- Over four fifths of respondents who have heard of Lancashire Archives have never visited it, either online or at the office in Preston (82% online and 86% in Preston).
- Nearly two fifths of respondents say they would not be more likely to visit Lancashire Archives if its opening times changed (37%). However, nearly a third of respondents would be more likely to visit if it was open more regularly on a Saturday (31%).
- Nearly half of respondents, or their immediate family, would be interested in attending sessions on how to trace their family history (49%). Over two fifths of respondents would be interested in attending open days with a chance to see archive treasures (43%).
- The online services respondents would be most likely to use are a guide to tracing their family history in Lancashire (54%) and the facility to view images of documents online (53%).
- The records that respondents would be most likely to view online are Lancashire church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials (57%), other documents, searchable by name, which can be used for family history (54%), and historic maps of Lancashire (53%).

- When asked what organisations and groups Lancashire Archives should collect records and documents from, the most common responses were local authorities (83%), faith groups (59%) and industry, business, other employers and business organisations (58%).
- Around a fifth of respondents would be interested in volunteering to work in a group near where they live, with documents about their community (20%), or to work at home on an indexing project (18%).

## 1.2 Conclusions and recommendations

When researching their family history or the history of their local community, respondents are most likely to start on the internet, which supports Lancashire Archives' decision to look at offering a number of new online services.

Significant proportions of respondents say that they or a member of their household would use many of the online services that Lancashire Archives is considering developing; suggesting that offering them would add value to the service Lancashire Archives provides.

If the decision is taken to provide more online services, it is recommended that Lancashire Archives start with those services that respondents say they would use which are the easiest to deliver eg a guide to tracing family history in Lancashire. Developing these first will enable Lancashire Archives to monitor and assess their impact before committing to delivering the more costly and time consuming options. This testing is necessary, as although the results here indicate respondents would want to use the online services, it doesn't provide any insight into how frequently they would use them.

Over half of respondents say that they or a member of their family would use the facility to view images online. This service is likely to be harder and more expensive to develop and deliver than many of the other suggested online services. It is therefore recommended that this should not be developed until other online services have been successfully shown to work. If the decision is taken to provide the facility to view images online, it is recommended that the first records that should be made available are Lancashire church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials as these are the records that respondents are most interested in viewing.

Significant proportions of respondents would be interested in attending a number of activities at Lancashire Archives. The activities that they would be most interested in attending are sessions on how to trace their family history and open days with a chance to see some archive treasures. It is recommended that Lancashire Archives runs these activities as pilot events as they are the most likely to be successful in attracting visitors to the office in Preston.

The findings from this research suggest that the current opening times of Lancashire Archives are not preventing the majority of respondents from visiting the office in Preston. This said, a third of respondents did say they would be more likely to visit if the office was open more regularly on a Saturday. If Lancashire Archives does want to extend its opening hours, then opening an extra Saturday each month is most likely to encourage people to visit.

## 2. Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Living in Lancashire regularly since August 2001 (formerly known as Life in Lancashire). 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 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 wave of Living in Lancashire 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 ie the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be representative of the population as a whole.

## 3. Research objectives

The objective of this survey is to look at people's views about Lancashire Archives. Questions looked specifically at:

- the awareness of and use of Lancashire Archives;
- what activities at Lancashire Archives respondents would be interested in attending;
- what online facilities and functions respondents would use;
- what current records respondents believe should be collected; and
- what volunteering opportunities would interest respondents.

## 4. Methodology

This wave of Living in Lancashire was sent to 2,779 members of the panel on 15 February. A reminder was sent on 7 March, with a final closing date of 23 March 2012.

The survey was conducted through a postal questionnaire, and an online version of the same questionnaire being emailed to members who had previously requested to take part online. The postal questionnaire was sent to 1,957 members and the online questionnaire was sent to 822 members.

In total 1,971 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 71%.

The data set is weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 1,358, 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%
1,000	3%	3%	2%
2,000	2%	2%	1%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1,000 respond with a particular answer, the chances 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.



The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of sample A	Size of sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
500	1,000	5%	5%	3%
2,000	2,000	3%	3%	2%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 2,000 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 3% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (eg of opinion, service usage).

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (eg age, gender, disability, ethnicity, geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report.

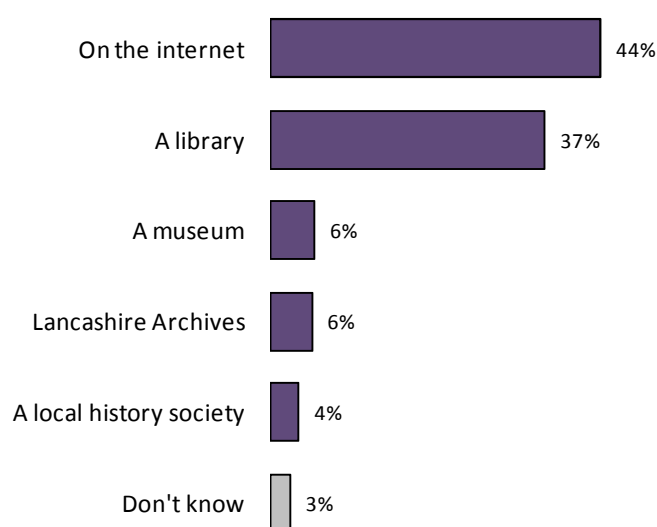
In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

## 5. Main research findings

This wave of Living in Lancashire asked panel members about their views concerning Lancashire Archives.

Panel members were initially asked where would be the first place they would look to find out more about the history of their local community. Over two fifths of respondents would start their search on the internet (44%), while nearly two fifths would initially go to a library (37%). Only around one in twenty respondents would start at Lancashire Archives (6%).

**Chart 1 - Where would be the first place you'd look to find out more about the history of your community?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,614, weighted 1,184)

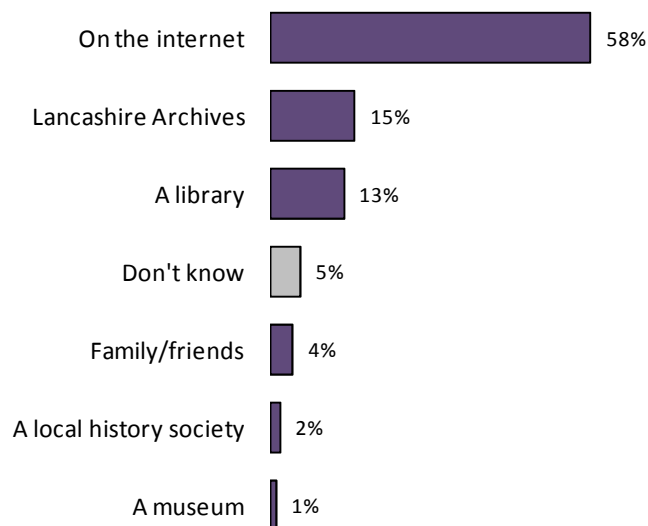
Respondents aged 25-44 are more likely to start with the internet to find out more about the history of their community (61%).

Older respondents (aged 60 and over) are less likely to start with the internet (23%), but are more likely to begin with a visit to a library (46%).

Respondents in Lancaster are more likely to visit a museum (15%); this may be because of the relatively high number of museums in Lancaster.

When asked where would be the first place respondents would look to find out more about their family history, the internet was again the most commonly given response; nearly three fifths of respondents would start on the internet (58%). Around one in seven respondents would start at Lancashire Archives (15%).

**Chart 2 - Where would be the first place you'd look to find out more about your family history?**



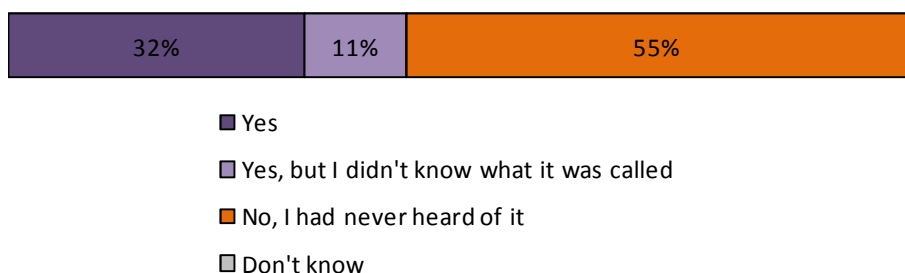
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,422, weighted 1,954)

Again, older respondents (aged 60 and over) are less likely to use the internet first (49%), but more likely to use a library (17%).

Respondents were then asked a series of questions specifically about Lancashire Archives.

Over two fifths of respondents had heard of Lancashire Archives before they received the questionnaire (43%), but over half had not (55%).

**Chart 3 - Before you received this questionnaire, had you heard of Lancashire Archives?**

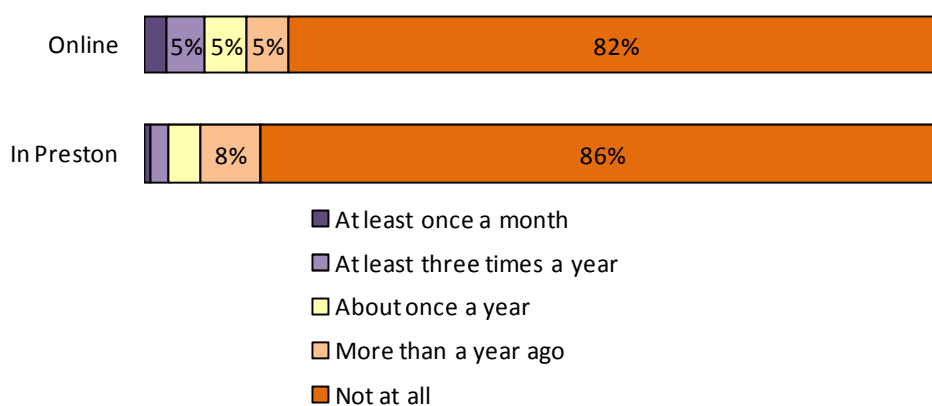


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,954, weighted 1,422)

Respondents in Hyndburn, Rossendale and West Lancashire are more likely not to have heard of Lancashire Archives (65%, 62% and 69% respectively had never heard of it).

Over four fifths of respondents have never visited Lancashire Archives, either online or at the office in Preston (82% online and 86% in Preston).

**Chart 4 - In the past 12 months, how often, if at all, have you or a member of your household visited Lancashire Archives?**



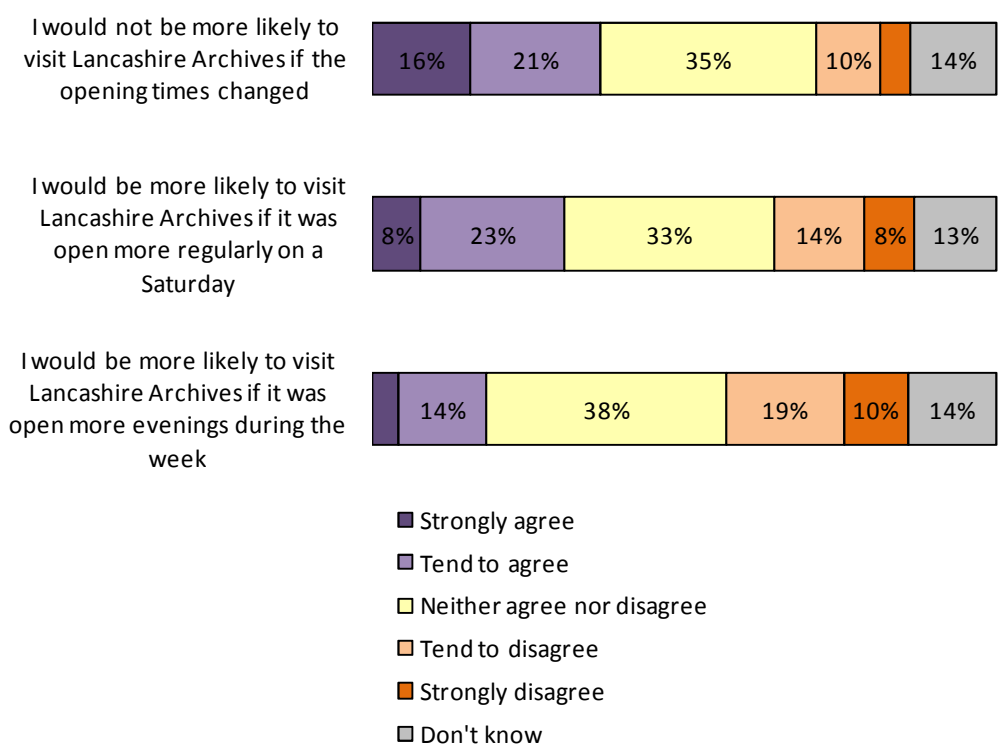
Base: Respondents who have heard of Lancashire Archives (unweighted 960, weighted 765)

Respondents were then asked how strongly they agree or disagree with three statements about whether increasing how regularly Lancashire Archives opens would make them more likely, or not, to visit the office in Preston.

For all three statements, around half of the respondents said that they don't know or they neither agree nor disagree; this suggests that for many respondents, the opening times are not a significant factor in influencing whether they visit Lancashire Archives.

Nearly two fifths of respondents agree that they would not be more likely to visit the Lancashire Archives if opening times changed (37%). However, nearly a third of respondents would be more likely to visit if it was open more regularly on a Saturday (31%).

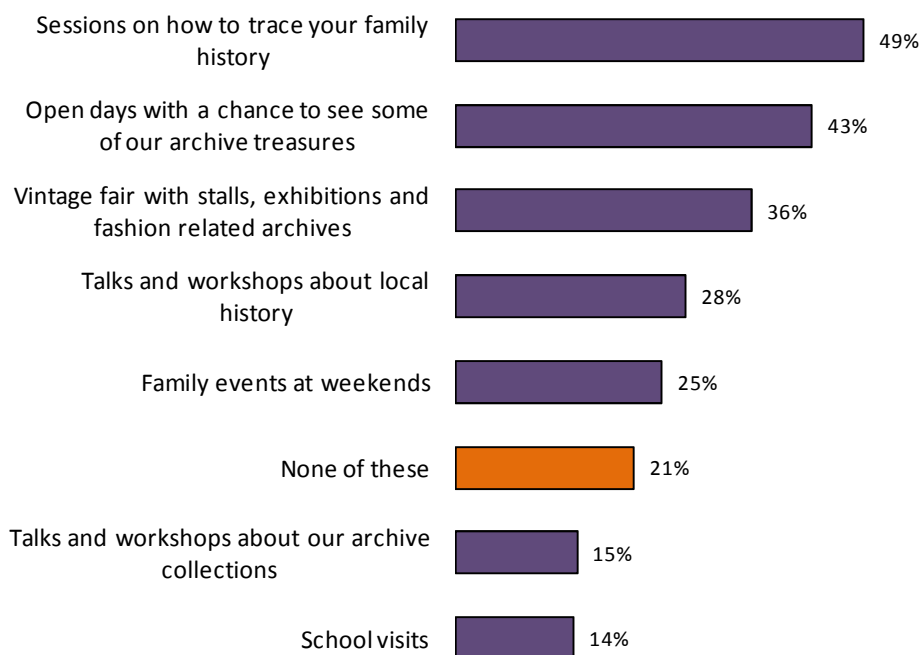
**Chart 5 - How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,740, weighted 1,295)

Nearly half of respondents, or their immediate family, would be interested in attending sessions on how to trace their family history (49%). Over two fifths of respondents would be interested in attending open days with a chance to see archive treasures (43%). Chart 6 shows that a large proportion of respondents are interested in attending many of the activities listed, and only a fifth of respondents aren't interested in attending any (21%).

**Chart 6 - Which, if any, of these activities would you or your immediate family be interested in attending at Lancashire Archives?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,941, weighted 1,413)

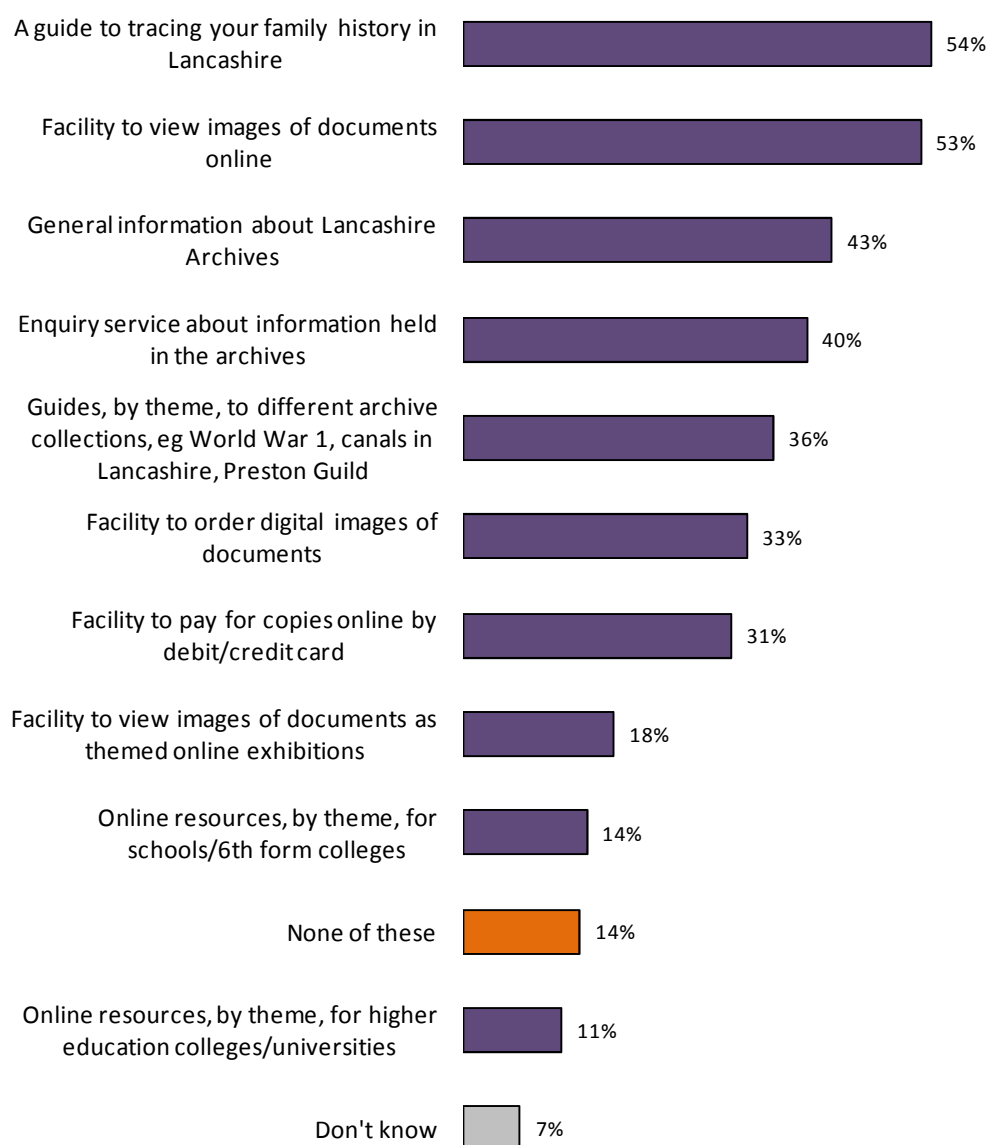
Older respondents (aged 60 and over) and men are more likely to say that they are not interested in attending any of the activities listed (26% and 25% respectively).

Women are more likely to be interested in attending vintage fairs and family events at weekends (43% and 29% respectively).

BME respondents are less likely to be interested in attending a session to trace their family history (39%), but more likely to be interested in attending family events at the weekend (59%).

The online services respondents or a member of their household would be most likely to use are a guide to tracing their family history in Lancashire (54%) and the facility to view images of documents online (53%). Although respondents were most likely to say they would use these two services, significant proportions would use many of the other listed services. Only a fifth of respondents are not interested in any of the online services (none of these 14% and don't know 7%).

**Chart 7 - Lancashire Archives would like to develop the online services they offer. Which, if any, of the following services would you or a member of your household use?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,935, weighted 1,409)

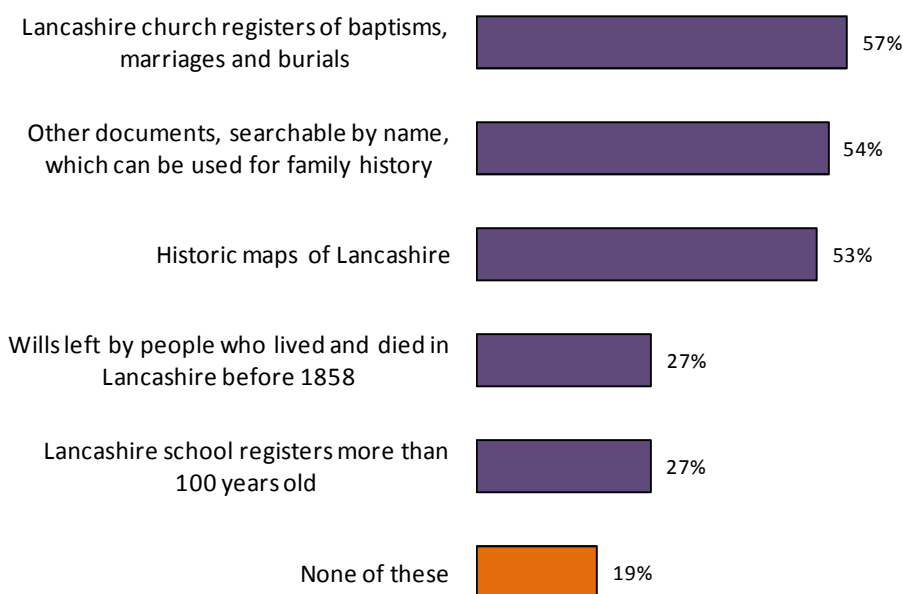
Older respondents (aged 60 and over) are more likely to say that they would use none of the online services listed (19%).

Male respondents are more likely to say they would use the facility to view images of documents online (58%), general information about Lancashire Archives (47%) and guides, by theme, to different archive collections (40%).

Full-time workers are also more likely to say they would use the facility to view images of documents online (62%), general information about Lancashire Archives (47%) and guides, by theme, to different archive collections (41%). They are also more likely to say they would use the facility to order digital images online (39%).

Chart 8 shows that at least a quarter of respondents would like to be able to view all of the online records listed and only a fifth of respondents would not be interested in viewing any (19%).

**Chart 8 - Thinking about the facility to view images of documents online, which, if any, of the following types of records would you or a member of your household like to be able to view online?**



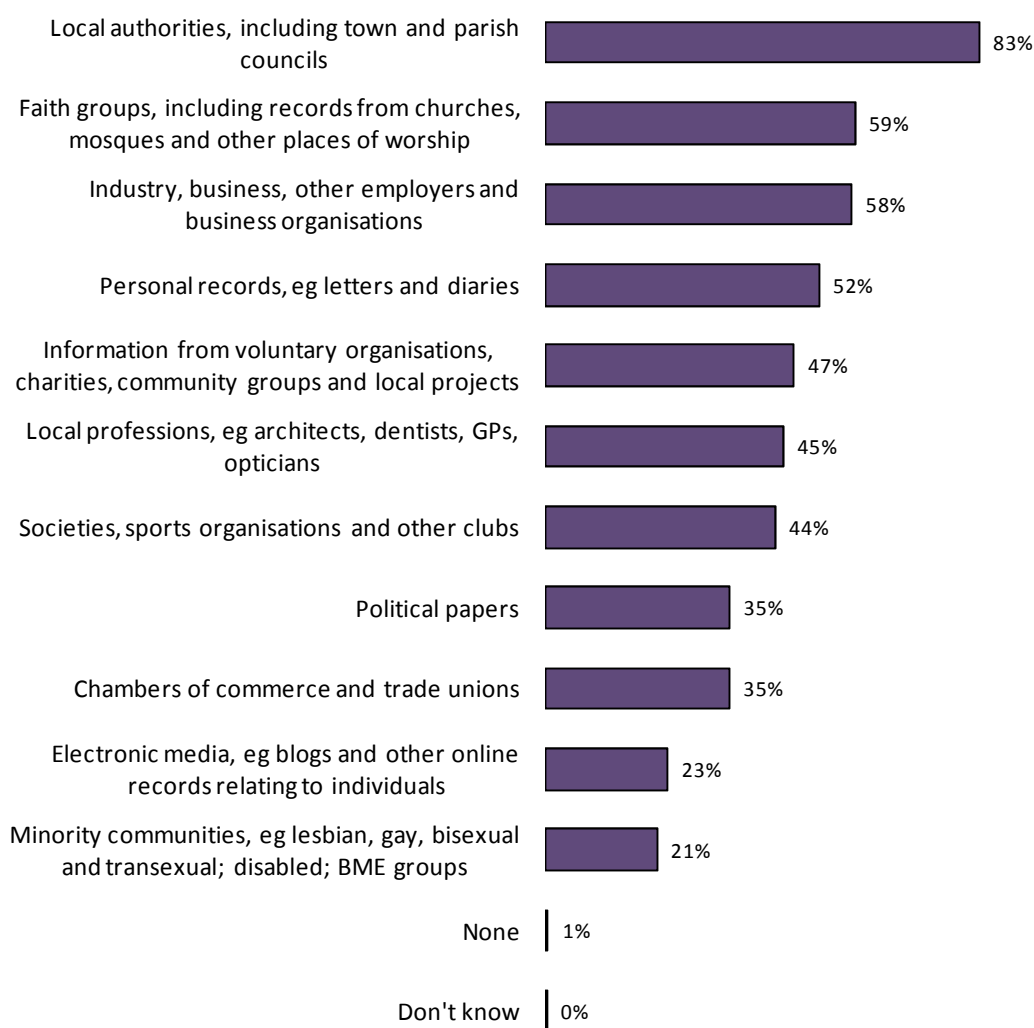
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,913, weighted 1,395)

Again older respondents (aged 60 and over) are more likely to say that they are not interested in viewing any records online (26%). BME respondents are also more likely to say they would not like to be able view any of the online records listed (27%).



When asked what organisations and groups Lancashire Archives should collect records and documents from, respondents most frequently chose, local authorities (83%), faith groups (59%) and industry, business, other employers and business organisations (58%).

**Chart 9 - In order to preserve a picture of what life is like in Lancashire today, what type of organisations/groups do you think we should collect documents from?**



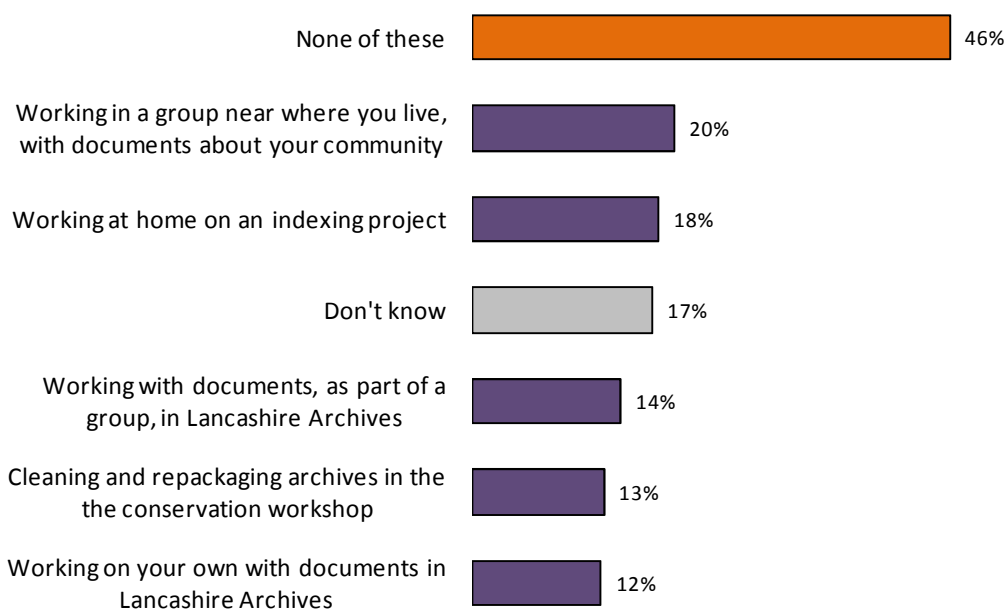
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,834, weighted 1,349)

BME respondents are more likely think that Lancashire Archives should collect records from faith groups (74%), as well as voluntary organisations, charities, community groups and local projects (58%).

When asked if they would be interested in a number of volunteering opportunities, nearly half of respondents said they are not interested (46%) and a further sixth said they don't know (17%).

Around a fifth of respondents would be interested in working in a group near where they live, with documents about their community (20%), or working at home on an indexing project (18%).

**Chart 10 - Which, if any, of the following volunteering opportunities would interest you or a member of your household?**



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1,917, weighted 1,400)

BME respondents are more likely to be interested in working in a group near where they live, with documents about their community (33%) and working with documents, as part of a group, in Lancashire Archives (26%).

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

When researching their family history or the history of their local community, respondents are most likely to start on the internet, which supports Lancashire Archives' decision to look at offering a number of new online services.

Significant proportions of respondents say that they or a member of their household would use many of the online services that Lancashire Archives is considering developing; suggesting that offering them would add value to the service Lancashire Archives provides.

If the decision is taken to provide more online services, it is recommended that Lancashire Archives start with those services that respondents say they would use which are the easiest to deliver eg a guide to tracing family history in Lancashire. Developing these first will enable Lancashire Archives to monitor and assess their impact before committing to delivering the more costly and time consuming options. This testing is necessary, as although the results here indicate respondents would want to use the online services, it doesn't provide any insight into how frequently they would use them.

Over half of respondents say that they or a member of their family would use the facility to view images online. This service is likely to be harder and more expensive to develop and deliver than many of the other suggested online services. It is therefore recommended that this should not be developed until other online services have been successfully shown to work. If the decision is taken to provide the facility to view images online, it is recommended that the first records that should be made available are Lancashire church registers of baptisms, marriages and burials as these are the records that respondents are most interested in viewing.

Significant proportions of respondents would be interested in attending a number of activities at Lancashire Archives. The activities that they would be most interested in attending are sessions on how to trace their family history and open days with a chance to see some archive treasures. It is recommended that Lancashire Archives runs these activities as pilot events as they are the most likely to be successful in attracting visitors to the office in Preston.

The findings from this research suggest that the current opening times of Lancashire Archives are not preventing the majority of respondents from visiting the office in Preston. This said, a third of respondents did say they would be more likely to visit if the office was open more regularly on a Saturday. If Lancashire Archives does want to extend its opening hours, then opening an extra Saturday each month is most likely to encourage people to visit.

## Appendix 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 with 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 dependent 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