



SUFFOLK LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL RECORDERS' SCHEME

Supported by the Ena Carter Bequest Fund

INFORMATION PACK

Charity No: 294270

This Scheme is administered by a Recorders' Secretary who is appointed and supported by the SLHC Executive Committee.

The Recorders' Secretary is your contact and the person to whom you can turn to for advice and support - recorders@slhc.org.uk

As a Recorder, you will receive the two SLHC newsletters each year. You will also be invited to attend an annual Recorders Conference where there will be talks and displays on relevant subjects and where you have the chance to meet other Recorders. This usually takes place towards the end of April.

In addition to the Information Pack, advice on a range of topics relating to being a Recorder is always available by contacting the Recorders' Secretary or any member of the SLHC Executive Committee.

It is not a requirement for Recorders to become full members of SLHC, but we would encourage you to do so to receive all our publications and to take part in other Conferences/Study Days throughout the year. Details are available on our website.

Our website is: www.slhc.org.uk

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
INTRODUCTION	4
STARTING OUT Publicising your Role – Recording the Present – Initial Report - Photographing your Parish – Recording Change – Use of Local Publications - Storing Material – Help and Advice	5
ANNUAL REPORTS Why we need an Annual Report – Report Content – How to Submit a Report	9
THE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE An Overview – Helping to Record the Past – Depositing Material at the SRO – How to Make a Deposit - SRO Addresses	10
PHOTOGRAPHS Recording the Past – Recording the Present – Storage and Handling of Images - Finance	13
RECORDING ORAL HISTORY Recording People’s Memories – Choice of Equipment – Points to remember whilst Recording - Copyright and Permissions	16
EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS Holding an Exhibition – Publicity – Attracting Visitors	18
USING DIGITAL STORAGE DEVICES FOR ARCHIVING Paper versus Digital Media – Scanning documents and photographs – Backing up disks	19
RECORDERS NAMES AND ADDRESSES SLHC Recorders database – Data Protection – Encouraging Your Neighbouring Parishes	20
APPENDIX Example of an Initial Report - Two Examples of Annual Reports - A Parish Survey	21

INTRODUCTION

THE RECORDERS' SCHEME was initiated in the early 1950s, by the SUFFOLK LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL. Its purpose is to establish and maintain a network of people across the county to ensure the survival of valuable material for future local historians. To do this, we ask Recorders to ensure that **THE PRESENT IS ADEQUATELY RECORDED** at local level but also to be on the look-out for items of historical interest that might otherwise be overlooked or lost forever.

HOW MUCH YOU DO AS A LOCAL RECORDER will depend on the time you have at your disposal. We do not expect you to cover every idea put forward in the following pages, but everything that is recorded or saved will be worthwhile and much appreciated by future historians.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A HISTORIAN to take on this task, though it may lead you in that direction; similarly local historians sometimes become Recorders because of their interests in the aims of the scheme. If you find your interests overlap, please do not forget that your primary aim as a Recorder is to **KEEP A RECORD OF TODAY** and to keep alert for the **UNRECORDED** past.

YOUR SUCCESS AS A RECORDER will depend on your parish knowing that *YOU* are the Local Recorder. Please do not hide your light under a bushel but advertise yourself, perhaps by writing occasional notes for your local newsletter or by speaking to parish organisations to gain people's interest and goodwill.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE MATERIAL YOU COLLECT? Initially we ask you to keep the Recorder's Collection at home while you are adding to it, and for the interest of your fellow parishioners; but the aim is that all material of permanent value will be offered to your local branch of the Suffolk Record Office and will become available to future local historians.

GIVING UP? Inevitably the time comes that you feel the need to resign from the role of Local Recorder for your parish. There are a myriad of reasons but moving away and ill-health are the usual ones, and we understand. However, it is *vital* that you inform us when you do wish to give up the task so we can quickly search for a successor. Advance notice of your wish to resign would be much appreciated.

If you are able to recommend a successor, please give us their name and contact details, preferably an e-mail address, so that he or she can be contacted. You will also have to decide whether to pass the Recorder's Collection on to the new Recorder, when appointed, or deposit it into your relevant Record Office. If there is no successor, arrangements should be made for the Collection to be deposited.

STARTING OUT

It is appreciated that a great number of our Local Recorders have been recording in their parish for many years. This set of notes is primarily aimed at newcomers to the role, but there may be some useful points to be gleaned by the more experienced.

There are many aspects to covering your parish history that we can mention in this guide but it is entirely up to the Local Recorder as to how they approach the role and how much, or how little, is recorded. Though we mention, for example, photographic surveys and/or recording oral history, these subjects are not mandatory. It may only be necessary to collect the monthly newsletter and to keep a small diary of events and occasions that occur throughout the year.

PUBLICISING YOUR ROLE

It should be made clear that a Local Recorder is not appointed by, or responsible to, their Parish Council, or any other parish organisation. A Local Recorder is a volunteer who works under the auspices of the Suffolk Local History Council to further the aims of the Recorders' scheme.

As a new Recorder, you should make yourself known to the parish as being the Local Recorder. Writing occasional notes for your local newsletter or speaking to meetings of parish organisations can be ways of achieving this to gain support.

It is also advisable to introduce yourself to the Clerk of your Parish Council so that they can keep you informed of impending changes (new houses, removal of old telephone boxes, closure of a business, etc.) thereby giving you the chance to record the situation *'before'* and *'after'*. A good way to make yourself known and learn of events and changes in your parish is to attend the Parish Council and/or Village Hall Committee meetings as a *'member of the public'*.

In some parishes, particularly the larger villages and towns, there may be a local history organisation. It is important that the Local Recorder and local history organisation co-exist and work together to achieve the twin aims of recording past and present history. By informing this organisation of your role in the community, you raise your profile and become a conduit for the recording of present history.

RECORDING THE PRESENT

The general aim of this aspect of recording is to build up a picture of the parish today and to record the changes that take place over time. Initially, the 'picture' could take various forms such as a PARISH SURVEY or a PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD. You may be taking over from a previous recorder where you may just need to CONTINUE recording changes in your parish.

By listing and briefly describing the buildings and amenities in your parish, and how they contribute to life in your community, you will be able to build up a picture of your community as it is today. This will not only help you to become more aware of the area, but it will provide an interesting document - a valuable piece of history - for the future. Some suggestions for the topics covered in a Parish Survey are available from the Records Secretary, if that is a project you wish to pursue.

Your principal role as a Local Recorder, though, would be to record the events and changes that take place in your parish week by week, month by month. Of course, life might be much slower in a small rural parish than in larger villages and semi-urban areas. Events taking place in your parish may be few and far between, but you are not expected to be constantly recording – we all have lives to lead!

Day to day happenings in your community can be recorded in a variety of ways: by saving items that so often get discarded after their initial usefulness (parish magazines, newsletters, programmes, notices, posters, electioneering leaflets and other ephemera which comes through our letter-boxes), keeping the occasional bill from a local garage or shop, collecting newspaper cuttings, photographs (not just of special events, but of ordinary every-day life as well) and so on. Some Local Recorders keep a diary, noting down significant happenings during the year, but remember that unless you feel that another viewpoint should be recorded, there is no need to spend time duplicating what is already being recorded in Minute Books or newsletters. You should, however, make sure such records are going to survive. All this material will help to build up a valuable picture of a living community.

INITIAL REPORT

New Recorders are asked to write an Initial Report, particularly if the parish has not been served by a Recorder for a while. The purpose is to set the parish in context for your future Annual Reports. How do you ‘see’ the parish - is it rural, coastal, urban, industrial? Is it a ribbon or concentric development? Describe the housing stock - is it traditional housing or a modern estate? What is the population? What facilities are there in the parish - school, church, village hall, shops, pub? Are there any businesses? Where are local people employed? Where do people shop? What activities take place - brownies, zumba, bowls club, history society, WI etc. These are just some ideas. Please send your Initial Report to recorders@slhc.org.uk and don't forget to put the parish name and date on it as well as your name as author.

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR PARISH

A photographic record at some point would be invaluable. This can now be done using a digital camera and transferring the images on to PC storage media such as a disk or memory stick. You might wish to print out your images for displays and exhibitions – this is discussed later in this document.

You might perhaps consider identifying all of the 'old' cottages, houses and buildings in your parish and photographing these buildings over a weekend in the summer, for example. Consider also asking someone else to help out with either the photography or the transfer of the images to a computer.

RECORDING CHANGE

As the Local Recorder, you need to be aware of the changes taking place in your parish. Memories can prove to be extremely short when it comes to recalling what the street looked like before *'those houses'* were built or how the landscape was altered when *'the new road'* went through. Such events can be recorded with *'before'*, *'during'* and *'after'* photographs accompanied by commentaries and/or newspaper cuttings.

Social change should not be forgotten either: the effect, on a community, of the school or village shop closing, the re-organisation of your benefice or the changes in employment opportunities in your community. All of these changes need to be recorded. Updating your survey will also reflect many of these changes, as will your collection of newspaper cuttings, ephemera and your Annual Reports.

Recording change is particularly important; how often do we hear the question "*Now when did the pub close down?*" It may not be a shop or the village pub; it might be an old cottage that has been left vacant or demolished or even an ancient tree cut down.

USE OF LOCAL PUBLICATIONS

Every parish will be different but there will probably be some form of community newsletter e.g. Benefice News, Parish Magazine. These publications will be a good source of information as to what might be happening in your community and archiving each edition will be useful and interesting to someone in the future. The publication that you receive today might look totally different to the one produced in five or ten year's time.

Do organisations such as the Village Hall Committee, School, Sports Club or W.I. produce leaflets or programmes for their events or meetings? Is it possible to obtain a copy and archive it?

STORING MATERIAL

There are a number of ways of storing the various materials that you might collect. Much of your material, such as single sheets, event programmes, bills, newspaper cuttings, etc., should be photocopied and then the copies can be mounted on A4 copier paper and put into ring-binder files. The advantage of a simple ring-binder file system is that you can easily add to it or re-arrange and sub-divide it or even temporarily remove things for display or photocopying.

Mounting original items on paper should be done without using sellotape and/or glues, perhaps using photo mounts. Alternatively, the originals should be protected in A4

transparent plastic sleeves. If the originals have been photocopied, the copies can be mounted using sellotape or glue into scrapbooks. This allows for the use of your material for public displays and exhibitions whilst preserving the integrity of the originals.

Folders or boxes can be used for relatively bulky items such as newsletters, pamphlets or local magazines. If you keep a diary, it can be in a separate notebook or merely on pages put in the appropriate places in your filing system.

Some people like to file their material into subjects - church, houses, school, organisations, people, etc. - and others prefer to put everything together in date order. Use whatever method suits you best, let it be simple so that keeping up with it does not become a burden. Make sure everything is dated (notice how many local programmes or posters bear the relevant day and month, but not the year) and also that the source is given, for example, record the name of the newspaper from which a cutting is taken.

Some kind of indexing or listing of the contents of your archive is advisable to accommodate the accumulation of your material. This will be particularly valuable when your collection comes to be deposited in the Record Office.

When considering what to keep your archive in, large transparent storage boxes are a perfect way of keeping binders, books and other bulky materials. There are a huge variety of sizes available. Storage boxes cost money, of course, as do all the other materials that a Local Recorder may require. It may be appropriate to suggest that a small amount of funding for storage boxes and other stationery might be available from your Parish Council. Alternatively, there may be scope within a County Councillor's Locality Budget for a small grant to be given towards these costs. Many of our Recorders, past and present, make their own arrangements for archiving and storage, using their own funds. This is a very generous, and largely unappreciated, effort on the part of those recorders.

For further advice on storing material or considering whether to submit material to the Suffolk Record Office, expert advice is available at each of the three branches. Contact details are given in the Appendices at the back of this Pack.

HELP AND ADVICE

Help and advice is always at hand at recorders@slhc.org.uk. Alternatively, you can phone or write to the current Recorders' Secretary, Geoff & Janette Robinson at 2 Willow Green, Worlingworth, IP13 7LP – 01728 628768. They will always be willing to listen to you.

ANNUAL REPORTS

WHY WE NEED AN ANNUAL REPORT

Recorders are asked to write and send in a short report at the end of each calendar year, giving a brief account of the activities in their community and the changes that have taken place. These reports will be filed in the appropriate branch of the Suffolk Record Office for researchers in the future. Even now, those that have already been deposited are a valuable source of information but, in time, their value for future historians will increase.

We would like you to write this report on A4 paper. Please put the name of your parish, and the year, at the top of the page and your name as author at the end. If you are a Recorder who covers more than one parish, we would be grateful if you would write each report on a separate page. Please note that these reports are to show what has been happening in the parish - not what you yourself have been doing as the Recorder.

REPORT CONTENT

We are often asked about the format and the content. The most popular formats are by '*subject*' e.g. Parish Council, School, Village Hall, Activities & Events, etc. or with headings for '*month by month*'. There are no hard and fast rules for the content of your report as each parish is different. Included in the Appendices of this 'pack' are examples of some recent annual reports to give you an idea of how the task can be approached. The length of the report will vary from parish to parish but we would hope a couple of pages is achievable.

HOW TO SUBMIT A REPORT

Your Annual Report could be sent to the Recorders' Secretary by e-mail recorders@slhc.org.uk or by post - address on previous page. Or it could be submitted directly to the relevant Record Office but it would be preferable, in terms of administration, if the report was sent directly to the Recorders' Secretary, who would then liaise with the Suffolk Record Office. Most Annual Reports are received in January and February following the calendar year to which they refer.

THE COUNTY RECORD OFFICE

AN OVERVIEW

The Suffolk Record Office holds an amazing range of information about the history of Suffolk and its people, with much of it officially designated as 'unique'. Its brief is to continue to locate and preserve the documentary heritage of the county, ranging in time from the distant past to the present day. Local history studies depend on a variety of documentary sources such as: letters, maps, account books, diaries, title deeds, parish and manorial records. These are just a few examples, but the range is limitless.

Printed material, including books, pamphlets, newspapers, parish & village magazines and all kinds of printed ephemera, are also very important. Documents can relate to families and individuals, trades and professions, churches and chapels, clubs and societies, schools, charities, units of local government and so on. There are very few areas of human activity that are not illuminated by documents and there are very few documents that cannot be used to extend our knowledge of the past in some way.

Documents, ancient or modern, should be taken to one of the three branches of the Suffolk Record Office (Bury St Edmunds, Ipswich or Lowestoft). They are sorted and if necessary cleaned and repaired before cataloguing and indexing. The catalogues and indexes are kept on open shelves in the search rooms where any member of the public can consult them. The records themselves are stored in fireproof strong rooms where temperature and humidity are constantly monitored.

The Record Office holds literally thousands of documents but, despite the fact that records are constantly being deposited, there are still huge gaps in documentary evidence. Suffolk is a large county and the Record Office depends very much on local contacts to bring chance finds to its attention. **This is an area where Local Recorders are able to help.**

HELPING TO RECORD THE PAST

Though you are primarily concerned with the records of the present, you are well placed to hear of documents, or photographs, in the parish, which have recently come to light or might be in danger of destruction. If you do hear of such items, please discuss the matter of their preservation with the owner, whether it is an individual or an organisation, and encourage them to ask the relevant Record Office for advice (addresses of all three branches are given on page 12).

If you or the owner is unable to take them into the Record Office, an Archivist can visit to inspect them. They will advise if they are historically important. Ideally the

Record Office would prefer the material to be donated, or deposited on loan. Even if the owner wishes to retain the documents, *the Record Office should still be told*, as they need to know where the raw material of Suffolk's history is located, and whether local historians can consult it. Sometimes it can be arranged for a photocopy or digital image to be made for consultation by the public in the Record Office.

DEPOSITING MATERIAL AT THE SUFFOLK RECORD OFFICE

The Suffolk Local History Council's policy is that the Local Recorders' material should be deposited at some point, usually when the Recorder resigns. The following notes deal with the material you will have carefully collected in your capacity as a Recorder. This will probably include scrapbooks, photographs, surveys, special projects and perhaps diaries and tapes - the evidence for tomorrow's history.

Many Local Recorders are also interested in local history and may wish to separate what has been collected and written as a local historian from what has been written and collected on behalf of the Suffolk Local History Council's Recorders' Scheme. The Record Office is also interested in acquiring written-up historical work, or well-ordered research notes, for the benefit of future researchers. Such material may be donated or loaned to the Record Office in your own name at any time.

Additionally, while you are the Local Recorder for your parish, you may want to deposit some of your material, for instance, if storage space is limited at your home. However, when you give up being the Local Recorder for your parish, your collection should either be deposited in the relevant branch of the Record Office for your area or passed on to your successor.

HOW TO MAKE A DEPOSIT

It is important when you make a deposit that you follow the method given below to ensure the safety of your work and allow for the withdrawal of material on a temporary basis from the Record Office, if needed. (There may be occasions when you or your successor may want to use some deposited material for a parish exhibition, or for research.)

1. Prepare a note to be taken in with your material, stating clearly that it is to be deposited ON LOAN in the name of the SUFFOLK LOCAL HISTORY COUNCIL.
2. Include your name as compiler of the records in your capacity as the Recorder for (parish).
3. Ask for a receipt to be sent to the Suffolk Local History Council with a copy to you.

SUFFOLK RECORD OFFICE ADDRESSES:

For parishes in the former West Suffolk County Council area:

The Public Services Archivist
Suffolk Record Office
77 Raingate Street
Bury St. Edmunds IP33 2AR

Telephone: (01284) 741212
E-mail: bury.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

For parishes in the former East Suffolk County Council area, *except* Waveney District:

The Public Services Archivist
Suffolk Record Office
Gatacre Road
Ipswich IP1 2LQ

Telephone: (01473) 263909
E-mail: ipswich.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

For parishes in the Waveney District Council area:

The Public Services Archivist
Suffolk Record Office
Central Library
Clapham Road
Lowestoft NR32 IDR

Telephone: (01502) 405357
E-mail: lowestoft.ro@suffolk.gov.uk

We trust that the information given is up to date. Please contact the Recorders' Secretary if there are any problems.

PHOTOGRAPHS

RECORDING THE PAST

An important and interesting aspect of the Local Recorder's work can be the collecting of photographs. It is surprising how many there are tucked away in shoe boxes or at the bottom of desk drawers. Photographs of just a few years ago, as well as those stiffly posed Victorian and Edwardian portraits and family groups can be a wealth of information and interest. In addition, photographs of street scenes and houses can be especially valuable to contrast with those taken of the same neighbourhood today.

Naturally, most people prefer not to part with their photographs, but they will usually lend them to a Local Recorder to enable the image to be scanned and copied. Scanning is the best means of copying images and the copies can then be held on a computer memory stick or other storage device as it can be expensive to have each image printed out on photographic paper. For the purpose of reference an image could be printed onto plain white paper, and onto photographic paper for displays and exhibitions.

Care should be taken to record as much information about the subject as possible, for without details of the place, date, names of people etc., photographs lose much of their historical value. When putting information on the photograph itself, a soft pencil should be used as this is less likely to do permanent damage than a ball-point pen or you may want to consider using a self-adhesive label on the back of the image to record the information.

Some of the photographs you collect will be of interest to the Suffolk Photographic Survey, which is held at the Ipswich branch of the Suffolk Record Office. The Survey was begun in the 1950's to help preserve a photographic record of the County. There are now almost 18,000 prints and negatives in the collection, which is looked after by one of its archivists. The Record Office welcomes the opportunity of adding new material to the Survey by copying items of special interest. They can also give advice on storage and care of photographs, and provide illustrated talks on the subject. Local Recorders, in their turn, can often help the Record Office by identifying images already in the collection. The archivist concerned can be contacted via the Ipswich branch.

RECORDING THE PRESENT

This has already been briefly mentioned in the preceding pages. Taking photographs in your parish is a very useful way of recording changes.

The idea of photographing every dwelling in your parish and mounting the photographs in albums for display and exhibitions is one with many good points. It has also been suggested that the above should be attempted with the residents of each dwelling standing outside their front door. If a complete survey of the parish is to be undertaken, the cost of printing could perhaps be shared amongst those parish organisations who think the project worthwhile.

Exhibitions of photographs are a useful way of showing your work, and the interest aroused frequently results in the addition of older photographs to your collection.

With so many people owning digital cameras, it may be possible to ask people taking photos of a village function or special occasion to 'take one for you'.

STORAGE AND HANDLING OF IMAGES

We can still advise on the traditional form of photography, where photographic film is used. Photographs and negatives should be stored in a cool, dry atmosphere, not near to radiators or in damp cupboards. They should be kept away from direct sunlight, artificial light and preferably in dust-free conditions.

Digital cameras have settings which, in effect, automatically cause a photograph to be taken under optimum conditions and allow a large number of images to be taken over a short period of time.

The images taken should be downloaded onto computer and backed up on a memory stick or a CD-Rom. It is still advisable to keep albums of images for displays and exhibitions. Copies rather than original photographs should be put on display to allow for accidents. It may not be necessary to print the images onto photographic paper – copier paper may be adequate enough for some display purposes – it is your decision as to which media you wish to display the images. If you are experienced in manipulating computer software, you may wish to display images as a 'rolling' PowerPoint presentation via a projector and screen.

Original images should be stored electronically as well as in albums. Care should always be taken to obtain the owner's permission before using their photographs, particularly in publications, as the complicated laws of copyright have to be taken into account. Written permission from the **owner**, filed in your record, is usually sufficient.

Ideally, prints are best kept loose in special photographic storage sleeves made from translucent paper or acetate material free from acid and chlorine. Photographs can be mounted using photo corners, but should not be put into the 'family snap-shot' type albums with sticky-covered pages. Sellotape, ballpoint or felt pens, blu-tac, drawing pins and of course, food or drink should also be avoided when handling photographs.

FINANCE

Photographing your parish as it is today, and having old photographs copied is an aspect of the Local Recorder's work which can be costly. The Suffolk Local History Council is unable to help in this respect as it does not have the funds. If you are unable to meet the expenses involved, it is usually possible to look to your own community for help.

For instance, Parish Councils have the power to use some of their funds on anything they consider of benefit to their parish and its residents. Expenditure of this nature will have to be authorised by a special resolution, and the money has to be precepted but many Parish Councils have a standard form on which to apply. It may be preferable to approach the Clerk of your Parish Council before the beginning of the financial year, preferably in October. Be aware that some Parish Councils only meet once every three months.

Other bodies in the parish, such as the Women's Institute, Community Council or Local History Group may also lend their support - this is where talks and exhibitions can prove their worth if you feel able to do so.

If you intend to produce a publication relative to your parish, a project that will require significant funds, it may be worthwhile to approach your local County Councillor to seek advice on grants available such as from his/her County Councillor's Locality Budget. A number of Recorders have also successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

RECORDING ORAL HISTORY

RECORDING PEOPLE'S MEMORIES

There is an amazing amount of local history locked up in people's memories. It is not only the highlights of their lives and the unusual incidents that need recording, but also the pattern of everyday life when they were younger.

The ideal method of recording these memories is with a digital voice recorder (DVR), but it is best NOT to take it along when making the first approach. You should reserve the first meeting to explain the purpose of your work (i.e. the preservation of material for research by future students of local history) and obtaining their goodwill.

Before any recordings are made, the need for copyright exemption should be explained. The form of words can be found under "COPYRIGHT AND PERMISSIONS". In raising this essential point, always remember that consideration must be shown to the personal wishes of the interviewee. If he or she is NOT prepared to give this exemption, even with a time restriction, there is little point in making the record.

CHOICE OF EQUIPMENT

The popular means of recording speech is to use a digital voice recorder. These devices are small, compact and relatively straightforward to use, providing one actually reads the accompanying instructions! The days when one used a cassette recorder have long since gone. We would not discourage people from using their old cassette recorder but the modern digital voice recorder is much more attractive to use, given its advantages in terms of size and length of recording time/memory. It also has the ability for the interviewee to forget they are being recorded because of its size.

As a general rule of thumb, a good quality mains/battery digital voice recorder can be purchased for £20-£30 and it will record a conversation for at least two hours battery use and also have a built-in memory which is able to store some five hundred hours of recordings. DVRs can be obtained from major supermarkets or through the major on-line retailers.

Always discuss your needs with a reputable dealer first before settling on a particular model, then cast around for a competitive price. Most DVRs will come with a pause button, a 'recording level control', a 'level indicator' and a 'memory display counter'.

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHILST RECORDING

Normally, you might expect to use mains electricity but if you have to use batteries, make sure that you have some spares available. Choose a location or room with the

minimum of hard reflecting surfaces. A carpeted, furniture-filled room makes a better 'studio' than a quarry-tiled kitchen. Position the DVR as near to the interviewee as possible. Record the date, time and interviewee's name and address at the beginning of the tape for archiving purposes.

Be aware of noises that could intrude on the recording - the loud ticking from the clock on the mantle-piece, the budgerigar in its cage, the dog barking, a tea-cup rattling in a saucer, cars passing outside or interruption by a friend or spouse. See if you can find ways of minimising these. Try to set your interviewee at ease and remember that too many comments by *you*, can spoil a recording. Constant repetition of "yes" or "how interesting" should be avoided. Having worked out in advance your general approach to the subject, restrict your questions to those which you feel will encourage detailed memory. Should your speaker 'dry up', stop the machine and have a few minutes informal chat before continuing.

COPYRIGHT AND PERMISSIONS

At the end of the interview, ask the interviewee to speak the following copyright exemption.

"I confirm that I have no objection to the retention of copies of this recording by the Suffolk Record Office and to their use for public record, educational and research purposes. I am willing for members of the public to have access to it by means of a recording or transcript". If the interviewee insists, add after 'transcript' the additional words *"after, but not before. ..(month, year)."* Then you should announce *"That is the end of ...(repeat the subject title) recorded at ..in. ..(month, year)".*

You should also ask the interviewee to sign and date a written document which repeats the verbal permission given at the end of the recording.

Finally, you should arrange to make a verbatim transcription of the recording as soon as possible after the session and deposit it in the Suffolk Record Office.

EXHIBITIONS AND DISPLAYS

HOLDING AN EXHIBITION

For comparatively new Recorders, an exhibition may be an aim that has to be carried out with the Local History Group or another parish organisation such as the local Women's Institute. You may be limited in what you can offer to exhibit unless there are parishioners who hold material such as old photo albums and documents that they are prepared to offer for display. However, if you have taken over from a previous Recorder, you might have 'inherited' a great deal of archive material.

Initially it might be a good idea to have a table with a display board at a larger event. Display boards can be borrowed from the SLHC. Contact the Recorders' Secretary well in advance of the date for information and to make a booking.

The intention would be to show the visitor/parishioner what is possible and to encourage them to bring out their own photographs and documents to be loaned and copied for eventual display at a future event. You may also wish to ask for donations of material by advertising on local notice-boards and via the parish website.

It would help even more if an exhibition, whether it is done by you or in partnership with another organisation, is themed. For example, it may have the 'School' or the 'Church' as the central theme. Working with the School or the Parochial Church Council beforehand would undoubtedly reap benefits towards the success of an exhibition.

PUBLICITY

There can never be enough advance publicity. The traditional methods can still be the best with 'notices' placed in prominent places in the parish and surrounding area. Coverage of the proposed event in the parish newsletter (at least a month in advance) will also be of great advantage. Some other forms of media publicity suggested are via the Parish Council, Community Centre, the parish website or even social media such as Facebook or Streetlife (www.streetlife.com) . IpScene (www.ipscene.co.uk) is a community website that covers the IP1-17 postcode area.

ATTRACTING VISITORS

You are mainly appealing to your fellow parishioners to visit your exhibition or display, and one of your aims should be to encourage these neighbours and friends to bring their own '*memories*' of the parish to the exhibition. Consider setting up a few tables for people to display their own material – advertise this fact and you might be pleasantly surprised at the response. Always provide a warm environment with continuous refreshments (tea and coffee, plus biscuits) and a separate seating area for visitors to be able to chat!

USING DIGITAL STORAGE DEVICES FOR ARCHIVING

PAPER VERSUS DIGITAL MEDIA

Digital media could mean a PC laptop, a PC notebook, a portable hard drive, CD-Rom, a DVD or memory sticks. New technology can be confusing and overwhelming at first but digitisation is the way forward. This does not preclude you from relying solely on paperwork, ring-binders, storage boxes and shelves to store material that you collect during the course of any year.

However, it is becoming increasingly preferable that any paper records are scanned and stored on digital media. This may be done with the help of someone in your parish who is familiar with the manipulation of digital media. It may even be your local history group if you have one in your parish or you may be able to call on the help of your parish council.

The advantage of scanning materials onto digital media is that, at some point, this material will be submitted to the Record Office for archiving, and digitising. Obviously, digital storage takes up a minimal amount of space and the risk of losses by a fire may be ameliorated.

SCANNING DOCUMENTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

A good scanner should come with easy to understand software, but do read the scanner manual. Ensure that the scanner glass is clean and free of dust and foreign material. Scanning documents correctly can be by trial and error initially but generally speaking it is not too arduous or difficult a task.

BACKING UP DISKS AND MEMORY STICKS

This is a very important aspect of storing digital media and files on your day-to-day computer. If you surf the Internet with the same computer, it is almost impossible to have a virus-free virtual life! Anti-virus software is, of course, essential but there is always a chance that a computer could be seriously compromised by viruses or Trojans with the possible consequence of losing much of the data on your computer so a *regular* back-up procedure is *essential*.

RECORDERS NAMES AND ADDRESSES

The policy of the Suffolk Local History Council is that the personal details of a Recorder are *not* passed onto anyone, and that they are kept in a confidential way. We are registered with the Information Commissioner's Office for Data Protection - our registration number is Z2305634.

SLHC RECORDERS' DATABASE

The Recorders' name, postal address, e-mail address and telephone number are stored electronically on our databases, of which there are two – one held by the Membership Secretary and the other held by the Recorders' Secretary. The information is only available to members of the SLHC Executive Committee - if necessary.

If you wish to become a Recorder, you must agree to this information being kept on computer, so that we may contact you easily.

Occasionally we may be asked for information about your parish. If an enquiry is received by the Recorders' Secretary – it is passed onto the relevant Recorder to deal with as they think best – your contact details are *not* passed on to the enquirer by SLHC.

Many of these enquirers could be family historians seeking to know more about their forebears. Whether or not you respond to such requests is entirely up to you. As the Local Recorder you are not required to carry out local history or family history research, but you may have the information that has been requested at your fingertips, or you may know someone who can help the enquirer. On the other hand, you may know nothing about it. We would certainly not want you to think that you are obliged to go to a lot of trouble to do research in response to a request.

ENCOURAGING YOUR NEIGHBOURING PARISHES

Briefly, you may discern that one or more of your neighbouring parishes does not have a Local Recorder. Being close to that or those parishes and perhaps knowing a good many people there, you may be able to encourage someone to take the role of Recorder in that parish. Whilst SLHC is continually striving to fill the vacancies in the Scheme, it is common sense that local people have a better opportunity to achieve filling a vacancy. We would therefore encourage you to talk to people in neighbouring parishes and to advocate the benefits of the SLHC Recorders' Scheme.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLE OF AN INITIAL REPORT

An example of an initial report for a small parish can be found on the next page. The original report is in the relevant Record Office.

EXAMPLES OF RECORDERS' ANNUAL REPORTS

The first page of two examples of Recorder's Annual Reports follows. One is set out by 'subject' and the other as a diary. The full reports are available at the relevant Record Office.

A PARISH SURVEY

It was originally envisaged to set out here the many and varied subjects that could be included in a Parish Survey. In order to keep the length of this document to manageable levels, this list of subjects has been omitted.

The Recorders' Secretary would be delighted to discuss the fundamentals of a Parish Survey with any Recorder who is keen on implementing such a project.

Initial Report for Coney Weston

Coney Weston is a small rural village in the north of Suffolk, just within the landscape region known as Breckland and two miles from the Norfolk/Suffolk border. There are 308 people on the electoral roll and 159 houses.

The name Coney Weston has nothing to do with rabbits but is a hybrid from the Old Norse *knungr* meaning king and the Old English *tun* meaning town. The name was recorded as *Cunungestuna* in the Domesday Book in 1086. The West first appeared in a reference in 1326. The ancient trackway, *Peddars Way* passes through the parish and it is thought that the existing road running north to south through the village is part of the old main route from Norwich to Bury St Edmunds.

The small church of St Mary is of the English Decorated style of the mid-14th Century. Its nave roof is thatch on the original scissor truss roof. The tower fell in 1690 and was not rebuilt. The church stands a mile away from the village close to the original settlement presently being excavated by the Local History Club under the auspices of Suffolk Archaeological Services.

The appearance of the village changed little from the 17th century, when most of the listed houses were built, until the Second World War when the whole village was engulfed by the Knettishall USAAF base. Most of the village lay within the camp boundary and several groups of huts were built in the village. The 388th Bomb Group flew 306 missions from this base and up to recent years Coney Weston has seen many of the former airmen coming back to revisit the airfield.

In 1988 the population of the village was doubled by a boundary change which officially incorporated the Swan end of Barningham into Coney Weston. This was a logical move as that particular outlying part of Barningham was a mile from the main village and adjoining Coney Weston.

Although fewer than in past years there are still businesses operating in the village. There are no shops but there is a pub, two farms, two builders' yards, a cattery, a saw-mill and timber yard, a tree sculpture yard and a telephone exchange.

For recreation there is a playing field with a new children's playing area, a well-used village hall and a bowling green. There are 5 public footpaths. Knettishall Nature Reserve is two miles away with miles of footpaths and a river.

There is a Book Club, a Local History Club, a Short Mat Bowls club (winter only) and a Bowls Club (summertime only). Whist evenings are held monthly in the village hall.

The village school was closed in the 1950s but there is educational provision nearby at Barningham and Hopton for primary school age children whilst older children are catered for by Ixworth Free School and Thurston Community College.

Medical facilities are provided by local surgeries at Hopton, Stanton and Ixworth.

Chris Flood
2014

2014 Annual Report for Wickham Market

Weather: Winter was mild and wet. Allotment Holders complained about weeds. There were also moves to try and get the Glebe allotments into better order but asking Holders to get them into better shape or relinquish them. Several allotments were made available this way and some younger growers moved in. A lot of crops failed on some sites because it was dry and there were a lot of cabbage white butterflies around this year. Legumes were generally successful in a warm, dry summer – autumn but some growers struggled with cabbages and sprouts. A new policy of offering smaller plots was started to good effect.

Church: The re-modelling really paid off as far more people started using the Church building. “Messy Church” – still proved a great success. Most sessions there were at least 30 children. The meetings were held on the second Wednesday of each month until the autumn, when they were moved to the third Wednesday.

Boys Brigade continued meeting in the church, and the Saints Youth Club continued in the Bee Hive. Both groups still met on Thursday evenings.

The “Open Door” coffee morning held each Friday still kept a small but steady increase in the number of people coming.

The Mother and Toddler Club continued to increase in numbers. The Women’s Fellowship, which meets in the Lounge at Kitson Court not only continued but started to increase slightly in numbers. Home groups continued to thrive.

The Church Away Weekend in late April was a great success.

Monthly services continued at Lehmann House.

Funds had to be raised for new Headstocks for the bells. It took a surprisingly short time to raise the money, with many local people who were not churchgoers feeling the need to keep the voice of the Village sounding freely and clearly for the generations to come. The Faculty was granted in April for the work on the Bells to go ahead.

Shopping and amenities news: The Monthly Market continued. It seemed to falter in winter and early spring, however, it then picked up with more stalls and some new stall holders coming on the scene. The decision was taken to close the Market during the colder months, though a very successful Christmas Market was held.

Segars and the old Co-op premises remained closed, though towards the end of the year news started to be heard that Segars had been sold to an Art Dealer who wanted to open a Gallery. There was talk of a micro-brewery coming to the old Co-op but this came to nothing. The Council continued to put pressure on the Co-op to be less stringent about how and what should take the premises over.

Gloria Theobald
2014

LAXFIELD RECORDER'S REPORT 2014

April '14

The death recently occurred of Sylvia Read, a lady of 73, who was related by marriage to the Grayston family, who have owned the garage in Laxfield for many years. The garage was originally run by the three Grayston brothers, Harold, Brian and Rex. The man in charge now is Rex's son, Neil, who gave up selling petrol a few years ago, but the garage sells a good selection of tools and essentials for house and garden and still does small jobs in the motoring line like mending punctures etc.

The Old Boys' School, a Grade II listed building in the centre of the village, has been bought by Norman Sutton, who lives in Peasenhall. It had been up for sale for a short time; for several years it had been used as the village playgroup, but since the playgroup moved to the Primary School, it remained empty; no use could be found for it, so it was put up for sale.

A very popular teacher, Mrs Sue Meek, is retiring after 27 years of teaching Class 1 at Laxfield Primary School. A farewell party is being held for her.

May '14

On May 3rd, Laxfield & District Museum organised a World War One Commemoration Day at the village Primary School. Events put on by the WW1 Living History Group included a re-enactment camp. Contemporary food and drink, children's activities, singing along to songs popular at the time, archive newsreel and pony & trap rides were some of the attractions. The Museum put on an excellent WW1 display, with some very impressive life size models of soldiers and a nurse.

The afternoon ended with a Sequence of Words and Music written from 1914 to 1918, (some of the pieces of music were by composers who died in the war; George Butterworth and Ivor Gurney; and Vaughan Williams, who served as a medical orderly). Pupils from Stradbroke Secondary School performed two songs they had written, accompanied by guitar, drums and keyboard. The afternoon ended with an address from Vice Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham, after which everyone walked to the village war memorial, where wreaths were laid and the last post played. It was a very enjoyable and moving event.

October/November '14

Laxfield Church was absolutely full for the Memorial Service for Bob Wilson, who had been landlord of The King's Head (Low House) in Laxfield for 7 years. He died of colon cancer on October 28th, aged 69.

He was born in King's Lynn, moving to London aged 19 to join the Metropolitan Police, rising to the rank of Detective Sergeant in the Flying Squad, a branch of the police aimed at breaking up serious armed crime.

After he retired he became landlord of the Royal Oak in Laxfield at the end of the 70s; then moved to several other pubs in the area, ending up at the Angel in Halesworth. He and his wife, Linda, moved back to Laxfield in 2000 and in 2007 became landlord of the Low House.

Obviously, many people wanted to say farewell to this very popular landlord.

Jill Taylor
December 2014