



ENGLAND'S
PAST FOR
EVERYONE



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

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England's Past for Everyone is a Heritage Lottery funded project run by the Victoria County History and involving communities across the country. Authors and researchers are working alongside volunteers to bring local history to life, producing everything from books to exciting interactive materials for schools.

Making local history accessible



'England's Past for Everyone is about adopting a more populist approach to local history, while still using the best scholarly research. It is designed to bring a different form of text to a wider, younger and more socially mixed audience, tapping into what we know to be a very widespread interest in the history of our communities.'

John Beckett, Director, Victoria County History
History Today, May 2007

EVALUATION

The project has two years to run so, at just over half way, we're in a good position to reflect on what we've achieved so far. External analysis of the learning programme is underway, alongside ongoing internal evaluation and reporting of all aspects of the project. Feedback from staff and volunteers has proved very useful in shaping the project to date.

We are also looking ahead to starting new projects based on the lessons learned to secure a sustainable future for the project and the VCH. Please contact us with ideas for improvement and to offer support for future projects.

Pupils from Ledbury Primary School have been learning about life in Tudor Herefordshire. After a tour of the town, they took part in practical workshops looking at artefacts, making wattle and daub and writing using quill and ink.

Hylton Castle and landscape (County Durham) depicted as they may have looked in 1719, a significant date that marks the birth of modern Sunderland. This reconstruction painting was produced by English Heritage artist Peter Dunn and is based on fieldwork and documentary resources.

OUR PROJECT

England's Past for Everyone (EPE) is a five-year project aiming to make the Victoria County History (VCH) more accessible to a wider audience, by encouraging people to explore their local history. Begun in 1899, the VCH is creating an encyclopaedic history of the counties of England, from earliest times to the present.

This report showcases the work of England's Past for Everyone from January to December 2007. Volunteers and staff are researching local history across ten counties from Cornwall to County Durham. This year we have celebrated:

- the publication of four paperbacks
- active engagement of 380 pupils in three schools projects
- over 1500 documents/images/audio-visual files searchable via www.ExploreEnglandsPast.org.uk
- the involvement of over 275 volunteers to date, at least 200 of whom have received training
- four issues of EPE News and regular updates on the county websites
- historic environment consultancy reports for Bristol, Cornwall, Derbyshire, County Durham and Exmoor.



© English Heritage, Peter Dunn

The paperback series

The EPE illustrated paperback series provides a new approach to local history publishing. The books, driven by the internationally respected research standards of the VCH, explore the unique histories of the people and places around us.

'This is a richly textured book, full of compelling human stories, many of which have not been published before. It should prove a valuable resource for all those interested in not only how Bristol, but the nation as a whole, came to be what it is today.'

Trevor Phillips, Chair of Equality and Human Rights Commission
Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001



A key element of our paperbacks is the illustrated panels, which introduce readers to how historians interpret primary source material, and aim to inspire people to research their own locality. Our publisher, Phillimore & Co Ltd, is producing attractive layouts and helping to market the series to a wide audience, distributing them to outlets ranging from WHSmith to the local post office.

In April we launched our paperback series with our first book, *Codford: Wool and War in Wiltshire*. The event was presided over by John Bush, Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire. The launch was accompanied by a local history fair and lecture attended by over 100 people, including representatives of local museums, history societies and the University of the West of England.



On Michaelmas Day, 29 September we launched the first of our two Cornwall paperbacks, *Cornwall and the Cross: Christianity 500-1560*. The event took place at St Michael's Mount and incorporated a celebration of our religious sites school project. The Bishop of Truro, the Rt Revd William Ind, led pilgrims from Camborne Science and Community College wearing scallop shells from the Mount to the mainland, where the book was officially launched.

Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001 was published at the end of 2007. Trevor Phillips (Chair of Equality and Human Rights Commission) wrote the foreword for the book, and many members of Bristol's diverse communities contributed their knowledge and experience.

Sunderland and its Origins: Monks to Mariners is an authoritative account of Anglo-Saxon Monkwearmouth with a foreword by historian and broadcaster, Michael Wood. Research for both this and its sequel is available online.

Also during 2007, the Oxfordshire volume on Burford was sent to the publisher, and manuscripts were received from Sussex and Derbyshire. All books are complemented by further research material on our interactive Explore website.

Over **1500**
local history
resources
searchable
online

Over **275** volunteers across the country

Exploring heritage resources online



In June 2007 the historian Michael Wood launched our interactive website to the sector at an event at the Houses of Parliament.

'This interactive website will enthuse new audiences to explore the history of their community.'

Michael Wood, June 2007

One of thousands of resources on our Explore website this image shows a view inside the pithead baths at Bolsover colliery. Pithead baths, which came into use in Derbyshire between the two World Wars, improved working conditions for the miners and reduced the squalor and unpleasantness of home life in mining villages.



© www.picturethepast.org.uk

www.ExploreEnglandsPast.org.uk

The Explore website provides free access to the local history materials produced by academics and volunteers as part of each county project. Resources include over 1500 transcribed documents, images and audio files that can be searched by location, theme, building type, time period, people and project.

Highlights include the Bristol slavery trail; a gazetteer of religious sites in Cornwall; life and work in Bolsover; riverside activities in Sunderland; Exmoor farms; wills and buildings in Burford, Ledbury and the Medway Valley; the architecture of Parham House and the influence of war on Codford.

The website is supported and hosted by Lexara Ltd, who are working with us to further develop the website. The *Schools Learning Zone* will go live when the Explore site is publicly launched at the 'Who Do You Think You Are?' event in May 2008 at Olympia, London.

Explore will be used by a wide range of people, including history students, teachers, school children and those simply interested in learning more about their local area. Visitors to the websites are gradually increasing and about 20% are international, including the United States, Australia, China, India, Russia, South America and Africa.

'...the whole story is refreshingly retold in this new approach to local history provided by the Victoria County History.'

Rex Sawyer, Historian

Codford: *Wool and War in Wiltshire*

With schools

Pupils between the ages of 5 and 14 have participated in cross-curricular activities at schools in Cornwall, Exmoor and Herefordshire. As with the first project in Wiltshire, our partners are keen to build on their success by repeating or adapting activities.

Collaboration with schools, led by education partners or consultants in each county, will result in free, online resources for schools in 2008. Methods of interpretation using primary evidence and selected themes will encourage the use of local history across the curriculum.

Evaluation of the first project at Wylve Valley School in Wiltshire showed that the input of professional historians was vital at both planning and delivery stages. Pupils in four mixed age groups studied agriculture through the ages for six weeks, and activities included field trips, writing in Latin and building a life-size Iron Age hut in the school grounds, complete with camp fire. The school rose to the challenge of working across both Key Stages 1 and 2, and another school in Wiltshire, Bemerton, is now developing the resources.

The Exmoor schools project was completed with Dulverton Middle School and education consultant Hilary Binding. Using maps and field trips to Cloggs Farm, Key Stage 3 pupils compared farm life in the 1940s with today, including examining artefacts and oral history.

80 Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils participated in the Herefordshire schools project run by consultant Carolyn Olney in cooperation with Ledbury Primary School and Hereford Museum. Children in period costume attended practical workshops on making wattle and daub, reading and writing wills, as well as taking part in a tour of Ledbury. Both the school and the museum are planning to deliver similar programmes in future years.



'Children taking ownership of their own learning, and developing key history skills, will give them a valuable appreciation of history in later life. As a school we continually strive to make our learning in school fun and relevant – this project will enhance the cross-curricular approach using our local environment.'

Debbie Downing, Head,
Wylve Valley School, Wiltshire

The first of two Cornwall projects took place with Camborne Science and Community College, led by John Welham. Key Stage 3 pupils explored religious sites, Christianity and pilgrimage in their locality. It is anticipated that the project will roll out into primary schools to help bridge the transition from Year 6 to Year 7. The project was celebrated in September with a pilgrimage to St Michael's Mount.

We are also feeding into Government initiatives including best practice in the heritage sector for Learning Outside the Classroom, which is supported by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is helping to promote the project through its history subject association.



'I wish we could carry on, it was fun and I learnt a lot.'

Wylve Valley School
pupil

Getting involved



'I feel very excited about this project. There's so much to learn and become involved with.'

Derbyshire volunteer

Volunteers created a database of 30 farmsteads on Exmoor. This was used as a basis for surveying four nineteenth-century farmsteads in the National Park, which has resulted in a series of English Heritage reconstruction paintings, showing how the farmsteads operated.

Heritage Lottery funding of £3.4 million has enabled the VCH to undertake an ambitious programme of volunteer projects. In 2007, EPE reached its official participation target of 250, with over 275 volunteers actively engaged in the programme. Over 200 people of mixed age and ability have been trained in skills such as building survey, photography, palaeography, oral history, ICT and archive research.

'the day was a real treat...the volunteers left with a sense of having been appreciated for a job well done, but a certain sadness that there would be no more trips to Burford – a town that we have all grown to love.'

Oxfordshire volunteer, following project celebration

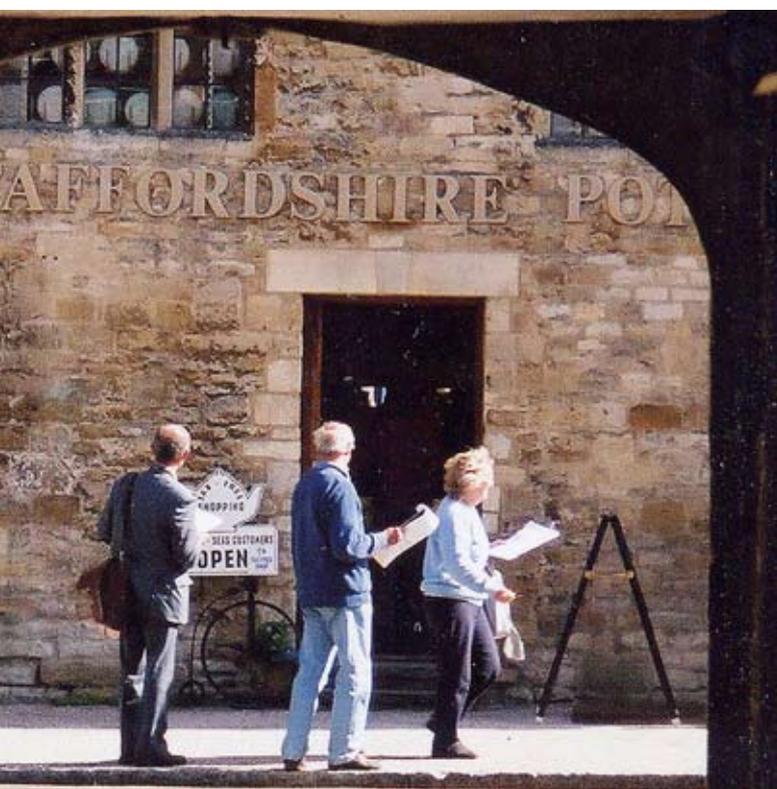
Research by volunteers is invaluable, as it means we can examine more historic sources, such as information from wills, censuses and newspapers. This work is published through our paperbacks, schools resources, interactive website and exhibitions. A two-month exhibition at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre in Strood showcased excellent research by the Kent volunteers, and exhibitions were also held in Cornwall and Burford this year.

We are fortunate that local people bring their own expertise, such as IT skills, events organisation and local knowledge. Our volunteers range from professional historians to those with no experience of history or archaeology. They are good ambassadors for our projects, not only helping to spread the word but gaining access to new people and places, such as farms on Exmoor.

CONTINUATION

Some volunteers are using their new-found skills to develop continuation projects in their local area. In May, Herefordshire volunteers produced a booklet on Ledbury street names, now sold in local bookstores. In Burford the wills group are continuing after the Oxfordshire EPE project has officially ended and in Bristol one of the volunteers will use oral history training to do a project on Sikh history.

Adult education and lifelong learning have always been part of the VCH ethos and we've produced a volunteer toolkit to promote best practice in the future, based on the ten projects completed to date. Over the next year we will be developing further training for volunteers.



Volunteers in Oxfordshire are working on projects in Henley and Burford. They have been transcribing wills and inventories and have produced a survey of over 180 buildings in Burford. James Davies of English Heritage provided photography training on a voluntary basis.

The historic environment

The historic environment is a key element of the EPE paperbacks, Explore website and schools materials.



Industrial England: Volunteers in Kent surveyed a number of villages involved in the cement industry and created an exhibition of People and Work in the Lower Medway Valley 1750-1914. A comparative survey of the colliery villages around Bolsover complemented work by volunteers on the population history of Bolsover in the nineteenth century.



In Sussex specialist archaeological research at Parham House has produced some interesting results: 1) dendrochronological dating of sixteenth-century roof-timbers shows that the eastern range is of the same date as the long gallery and 2) geophysical survey has found possible medieval remains in the park south-east of the house.

TRAINING

Training has ranged from basic Latin to oral history interviewing and transcribing. In Exmoor, much of the training was to support accurate recording and identification of interesting features, while in Oxfordshire the focus was on building survey, photography and interpreting documents, such as wills, that shed light on buildings and people. Training helps ensure high-quality research and means volunteers get something in return for their work.

'We are recording all of the buildings on the farmstead, ranging from the farmhouse to the privies! We began by looking at 13th-century records and were then trained to survey structures. Using digital cameras we have made a photographic record of the farmstead as it is today.'

Exmoor volunteer

PARTNERSHIP

English Heritage, a major project partner, has provided training as well as photography and reconstruction drawing and we hope will continue to do so into the future. West Sussex Record Office helped run a volunteer project to catalogue the Parham House archive. The same volunteers are now researching topics for use in the education worksheets.

The success of the Burford project was largely down to our partnership with Oxfordshire Buildings Record, which promotes vernacular buildings and encourages people to record them, providing invaluable expertise and on-the-spot training. In Herefordshire, local expert Duncan James led a study of the vernacular architecture of Ledbury.

The success of collaboration between staff, local volunteers and professional consultants provides a model which the VCH is keen to adopt for future research. Study of the historic environment contributes to our paperbacks and school projects, with supporting information on the websites.

Volunteer case studies



PHILIP COUSINS

DERBYSHIRE VOLUNTEER

I live and work in Chesterfield and I am married with a grown-up daughter. I work at a 650 bed acute NHS hospital as an Electrical Maintenance Manager and I was formerly active in local government at parish council member level. My involvement with EPE came through membership of the Derbyshire VCH Trust; I have been interested in local history for many years. I edit the VCH Trust newsletter and organise the local history fair, both of which heavily feature the work of the EPE project.

I have been able to contribute to the project by bringing in my experience as a volunteer and my organisational and communication skills. I have also learned new skills, for example website editing. I particularly enjoy seeing things through: the local history fair and our launch event were enjoyable to work on. As an amateur, I am keen to see what EPE can bring to local history. The blend of local history and academic research with a popular edge appeals to me.

'Through its England's Past for Everyone project, the Victoria County History is encouraging local communities and volunteers to get involved in the heritage on their doorsteps.'

Anthea Case, Chair, Heritage Link



CARO PARKER BENNETT

BRISTOL VOLUNTEER

I am retired and have been living in Bristol since 1998. I used to be the Director of Education for the Bristol Diocese and I enjoy hearing and writing about people's life experiences. As an Industrial Chaplain in the 1980s I did some research about women workers on Tyneside. I heard about the EPE project through Madge Dresser and Peter Fleming at the Bristol Record Office. EPE gives me an opportunity to get involved in academic research in the St Paul's area and to work with retired and active headteachers.

As part of the project I have done some reminiscence work with elderly residents of the St Paul's area. We have heard about what it was like for those who came to Bristol from Jamaica and for those who have lived here all their lives. I have also interviewed six people who had been headteachers in multicultural primary schools between the mid-1970s and 2000. It was interesting to find out about the changes in approach to multicultural education over those years. I have enjoyed meeting new people and learning more about the lives of Bristolians in the recent, and not so recent, past.



Left: Princess Campbell as a young nurse in the 1960s. She became Bristol's first Black nursing sister in mental health. From our paperback Bristol: Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001

For everyone

How do we reach the community beyond our immediate projects?

Culture Minister, Margaret Hodge addressed Heritage Link, the umbrella for heritage voluntary organisations, at their annual Heritage Day. She identified ways to generate a lifelong enthusiasm for heritage by:

- economic generation and sustainability
- creating a feeling of belonging
- widening participation

The VCH is trying to address these challenges through England's Past for Everyone, in partnership with record offices, historical and archaeological societies and other local and national organisations, including universities and local authorities.

BELONGING

We aim to deepen people's understanding of their own locality through its local history. Whether by working with individual schools, or the resulting resources intended for use in any school, we are helping children learn about their surroundings.

By enabling communities to study their local history, we are producing models for volunteering and empowering people to undertake their own, independent research. Readers of the paperbacks and websites also have access to illustrated panels on particular themes showing how historic sources can be interpreted.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION

We supported two outreach projects over the year by:

- engaging an artist to work with the University of the Third Age at Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance, Cornwall
- contributing to the Bristol Black Archives Partnership calendar for the second year running.

As part of the third sector, we encourage participation through our volunteer projects. We are also promoting our activities to reach a wide audience through a range of publications and events.



English Heritage's photograph of the Imam of Green Street Mosque, taken for EPE Bristol, was displayed at the National Portrait Gallery; it was among 60 out of 7000 entries short listed for the Photographic Portrait Prize.
© English Heritage (James Davies)

'There is nothing more important than engaging people with the past of where they live and identify with. This is a ground-breaking project that deserves wider recognition'.

Don Henson, Head of Education
Council for British Archaeology

ADVOCACY

The third annual Learning Forum was attended by representatives from DCMS Engaging Places, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), and representatives from the museum and heritage sectors.

Our Education and Skills Manager presented the schools and volunteer projects to the heritage sector partnership of the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto (DCSF), and took part in the 'Why History Matters' Institute of Historical Research conference, supported by Ofsted, in February.

Left: EPE Education and Skills Manager, Aretha George, at Heritage Link's Diversity Day.

Sustainability



In Cornwall we worked with Penlee House Gallery and Museum, and artist Tamsin Pender, to deliver an outreach project to individuals from the Lands End and District, University of the Third Age. Participants used artefacts from the museum to learn about the history of their community and to inspire their own designs for copper foil matchbox covers and copper stencils.



2008

There are many more things to look forward to in 2008, including our web-based learning resources, hundreds more digital assets online, and six new paperbacks.

Partnership is essential to the sustainability of the volunteer and schools projects. We are endeavouring to ensure our publications retain their relevance and have a long life.

Research by the Victoria County History contributes to the future of places, by promoting understanding and informing planning decisions. For example, the database of historic farmsteads in Exmoor is becoming a key resource in the conservation of the National Park's built environment.

By helping people learn about where they live, we stimulate a sense of belonging. Discoveries about the local history of places have included the reinterpretation of Hylton Castle and mapping the distribution of places of worship in Bristol.

We would like to build on the successes of our historic landscape survey work with volunteers. However, we require partnerships and funding to continue our work after February 2010.

NEW PROJECTS

Continuing the dissemination of our work through new projects is vital but depends on the support we can raise. Further funding will enable us to facilitate research by partner organisations and continue our work with diverse communities. We are also keen to increase the scope of historic environment investigation, expand our databases, develop the web resources and undertake more publishing projects.

- New projects in Kent and Cornwall are building on the publishing, schools and volunteer achievements of EPE.
- Additional learning projects are being led by VCH Hampshire and VCH Wiltshire, and further oral history work is planned for EPE Exmoor by the National Park, in conjunction with VCH Somerset.
- The research from EPE Bristol is informing another Lottery-funded project – the Museum of Bristol, a £35m initiative also supported by Bristol City Council.

CONTACT

Keep up to date with our free quarterly newsletter, EPE News, via the website or by emailing info@englandspastforeveryone.org.uk

Alternatively, please contact us for more information about our existing projects and to support our future plans.

Business report

Over **400**
children
involved
in school
programme

At November 2008, the project was slightly under spent against the estimated budget, mainly due to re-scheduling consultancy work to fit with our partners' timetables. The money is committed and will be spent. The budget reflects the cumulative position to date and will be revised in March 2008. We have so far exceeded our match funding requirement by the equivalent of £35,000 in volunteer hours.

CUMULATIVE SPEND BUDGET FOR EPE

ALL PROJECTS	Budget at Feb 07	Actual Spend to Nov 07	Remaining Budget
	£	£	£
Equipment	169,735.36	145,686.01	30,159.20
Total Capital Costs	169,735.36	145,686.01	30,159.20
Staff costs	2,141,520.57	1,288,255.15	853,480.15
Recruitment	22,353.44	22,355.60	-2.16
Freelance workers	48,648.99	44,974.90	2,574.09
Design & printing	65,929.00	53,017.87	16,537.28
Training costs	23,386.00	5,434.81	17,951.19
Professional fees	301,973.86	155,372.24	163,301.62
Travel & expenses	158,700.17	98,534.36	61,465.81
Overhead expenditure	133,416.68	80,579.93	53,436.75
Measuring project success	20,000.00	2,000.00	19,500.00
Office stationery costs	39,940.47	22,448.86	21,146.61
Other activity costs	20,784.11	6,684.04	14,100.07
Total Activity Costs	2,976,653.29	1,779,657.76	1,223,491.41
Contingency	142,393.83	0.00	110,002.83
VAT	85,217.52	54,674.92	30,542.59
Total other costs	227,611.35	54,674.92	140,545.42
TOTAL HLF CLAIMS	3,374,000.00	1,980,018.69	1,394,196.04
CONTRIBUTIONS			
Staff costs	512,344.00	296,680.17	215,663.83
Overheads	216,119.00	153,259.56	62,858.44
Volunteers	788,201.00	523,077.44	265,123.56
Total sunk costs	338,086.00	209,706.00	0.00
Total Match Funding	1,854,750.00	1,182,723.17	543,645.83
Total Project Costs	5,228,750.00	3,162,741.86	1,937,841.87

THANK YOU

Our Heritage Lottery Fund grant supports archival work, field survey and oral history interviews, which feed directly into our publications and are closely linked to volunteer and schools projects. Photographs and support in kind from English Heritage are also a key component of the project. We are pleased to be located at the Institute of Historical Research in the University of London.

We are pleased to acknowledge the enthusiasm and achievements of staff and volunteers throughout England.

OUR COUNTY PROJECTS

Bristol

Ethnic Minorities and the City 1000-2001

Cornwall

Cornwall and the Cross: Christianity 500-1560

Cornwall and the Coast: Fishing and Farming Communities

County Durham

Sunderland and its Origins: Monks to Mariners

Sunderland: Building a City

Derbyshire

Bolsover: Castle, Town and Colliery

Hardwick: Hall and Estate

Exmoor

The Making of an English Upland

Herefordshire

Ledbury: Medieval Town

Ledbury since 1500

Kent

Working in the Medway Valley

Oxfordshire

Burford: Buildings and People in a Cotswold Town

Henley: River and Rowing

Sussex

Parham: a Sussex House and its Restoration

Wiltshire

Codford: Wool and War in Wiltshire

'EPE has allowed us to reach different generations and share with them our passion for our local heritage and the sense of continuity that is so important in creating a local community.'

Anne Trevett, Chair,
Bemerton Local History Society, Wiltshire

Each county project receives additional funding from partner universities, local authorities and VCH Trusts where they have been set up. The work of our volunteers now represents over £1/2 million in match funding. Many others give their time to sit on advisory panels or to peer review books, to all of whom we are extremely grateful.

OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND
VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUSTS
ENGLISH HERITAGE
INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND
CORNWALL COUNTY COUNCIL
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
DURHAM UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND
EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK
NORTH DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL
SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL
THE EXMOOR SOCIETY
HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL
UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTER
UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
OXFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
SALISBURY DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL