

Writing a VCH Short

The Victoria County History Shorts series of parish and urban histories produced in paperback aims to bring local research to publication as swiftly as possible, and to inspire readers to get involved with VCH ventures in their own localities. The series grew out of *The Victoria County History 1899–2012: A Diamond Jubilee Celebration* experimental publication which was published in 2012 in both print and digital formats. It is hoped that these publications can assist counties with fundraising and inspire local groups to get involved with local history.

Type of publication

The VCH Shorts series is initially printed in paperback with an e-book version released shortly after. If the county sells out of their initial print run and wish to have more printed a revised quote can be obtained from the printer for these additional copies. The title remains available for individual print-on-demand purchase via Lightning Source and digitally for e-readers once all hard copies have been sold.

Content

It is intended that VCH Shorts should do what VCH publications have traditionally done, that is to provide accurate, well-researched text, fully referenced and of a high-scholarly standard, distinct in design and content from the England's Past for Everyone series. Attention should be paid to explanation and context of information used. The layout, headings and structure should be compatible with red volume practice. The standard length of these publications is between 25 000 and 35 000 (including footnotes) with around 30 000 words being ideal. We will consider longer publications if there is good academic justification for the extra length.

Scheduling

The usual time between submission of final text and the production of hard copies will be approximately 6 months. All titles must be peer reviewed and this process is built into the production schedule. Editing, formatting (e.g. image editing, copy-editing) and typesetting are provided by central office and the School of Advanced Study's (SAS) publications team.

Design & Copyright

Printing

The VCH shorts are printed in paperback with a perfect binding and typeset in Minion Pro. The initial print run is usually 200–300 copies. The print run should be discussed and agreed early on in the process as it will affect the cost of image reproduction licences.

Illustrations

The standard volume has around 30 illustrations. The cover should be a colour image placed on the VCH grey background; agreement of the choice of image is in consultation with the VCH Publications Manager. All internal images appear in black and white unless the county has sufficient funds to include some colour illustrations. The county is responsible for sourcing all images and obtaining permissions to publish where necessary.

Maps

Maps should be drawn in VCH house style rather than re-used from elsewhere (unless you intend to reproduce an historical map). The VCH can offer guidance on house style and send maps to a cartographer if necessary.

Copyright

Forming part of the publications output of the Victoria County History, the copyright of all VCH Shorts resides with the University of London.

Sales and Marketing

The county will take responsibility for marketing and distributing the publication locally. SAS have the facility to sell copies on behalf of the county but be aware that these numbers will be small in comparison to local sales. The VCH Publications Manager can help market the volume via the VCH website, VCH News, Twitter and IHR blogs but again, it is expected that the majority of this work will be undertaken locally by the county.

Costs and fees

Counties bear all costs for printing their Shorts plus an additional production fee due to VCH central office which contributes (but does not fully cover) typesetting costs, editorial time, and digitisation. At the time of writing (June 2016) the standard production fee due to VCH central office is £500.

Please contact Jessica Davies Jessica.davies@sas.ac.uk to discuss precise costs for your project. As each short may differ slightly in pagination, use of colour etc. she is able to provide a more accurate quote for the final cost of your publication.