

CORRESPONDENCE

Letters intended for publication in **LPS** should be sent to Richard Wall, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA.

Editors' Note

LPS readers are reminded that the editorial board is always prepared to offer advice on subjects within the scope of **LPS**. Sometimes queries which have been raised are discussed in print in this section of the journal but there are many others which are not published, so if you think we can help do not hesitate to contact us.

A new consultative process: the Archive Users Consultative Council of Tyne and Wear County Council

Dear Sir,

At the Local Population Studies Weekend Residential Conference, held at Knuston Hall, 9-11 July 1976, concern was expressed about the accessibility of many of the sources which were frequently required by those engaged in local population studies. This is, of course, part of a wider concern for the provision of adequate and efficient archives services. In view of this readers of the journal and members of the **LPS** Society will be interested in a recent development in the northeast.

In 1975 the Tyne and Wear County Council established an Archive Users' Consultative Council as a means of enabling regular and meaningful consultations to be held with archives users concerning proposals and developments relating to the archives service. The AUCC has become a channel of communication and a forum for the interchange of ideas between the users and the custodians concerning the operation and development of the archives service. It has county council membership as well as representing the interests of a broad spectrum of archives users from, for example, universities, polytechnics, adult education departments, colleges of education, schools, local societies, history teachers' associations, libraries and, indeed, interested members from the community at large.

The council meets regularly and has received reports from the County Archivist and the Archives Department Education Officer. It has considered a wide range of topics, very many of which will be of great interest to all concerned with local population studies. Such topics include opening hours (particularly evening and Saturday opening), accommodation and the provision of facilities for educational visits, services and facilities required by archives users, the publishing of guides to collections, the availability of papers to the public (e.g. public records, private records in public care, private records in private hands, etc.). In addition, the AUCC helps the Archives Department to know quickly of records which ought to be preserved and particularly records at risk (which is vitally important in an industrial conurbation where high costs and very rapid developments put records most at risk).

All concerned with local population studies will, without doubt, welcome this pioneering venture in the metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear, and it is to be hoped that this valuable example will be followed elsewhere.

Yours sincerely,
Terence Gwynne.

14 Kensington Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2HP.

Editors' Note

Mr. Gwynne is a member of the Tyne and Wear Archives Users Consultative Council. We should be pleased to hear from any other readers with experience or views on the subject of consultation and liaison between the custodians and the users of archive and library material.

Fees for consulting registers in Record Offices: the Guildford regulations

Dear Colleagues,

I recently paid my first visit to the Guildford record office to have a look at some south Surrey registers. In conversation with the archivist there I discovered that if I wanted a xerox of a register, I first had to have the appropriate rector's permission and then, in addition to the cost of the xerox, I had to pay a fee to the rector on the same scale as if it were a certified copy — I was thinking of a demographic project to be undertaken by the boys here — the fee might be waived but this would be at the rector's discretion. To my comment that I understood that the fee was supposed to reimburse the rector for his time and effort, in this case nil, I received the rejoinder that the fee was intended to make up for the fact that when people visited the parish to look at the registers, 'many put a pound in the box'. The charging of a fee is Guildford diocesan policy and struck me as a totally illogical one. Genealogists who merely want to check and copy a few entries may do so without charge, whereas the demographer is faced with either the laborious task of transcribing all of the register he wants or paying a fee for presumably each page xeroxed. The final idiocy was that there was no way in which I could take a copy of the Cranleigh register as there is a vacancy there at the moment, hence no-one from whom permission to copy may be obtained!

Yours sincerely,
Derek Turner.

Northgate, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Sussex.

Editors' Note

The Editors would be pleased to hear from any other readers who have experience of record office policy on this subject.