

## 1 The Survey

The Royal Berkshire Archives, formerly the Berkshire Record Office, took part in the 2022 Survey of Visitors to UK Archives between 11<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022. The survey is run by the Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland) Surveys Groups in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

### 1.1 The results

#### Headline scores for RBA

- Our service was rated **9.3** out of 10 for the **archive overall**
- Our service was rated **9.8** out of 10 for the **availability of staff**
- Our service was rated **9.9** out of 10 for the **attitude of staff**
- Our service was rated **9.8** out of 10 for the **quality and appropriateness of staff advice.**

Overall satisfaction ratings of satisfied and very satisfied over 90%:

- our **opening hours** at 98%
- the **ease of finding us** at 100%
- the **appearance/upkeep of the building** at 98%
- the **access to and in the building** at 100%
- the **lockers/toilets/rest or refreshment areas** at 100%
- the **welcome/reception** at 100%
- the **appointment/online booking system** 98%
- the **availability of our computers** at 100%
- the **speed of our computers** at 100%
- the **quality of our online catalogue** at 92%
- the **quality of our other online resources** at 91%
- the **availability of seating** at 100%
- the **quality of our paper catalogues** at 95%
- the **quality of our other paper resources** at 93%
- the **document ordering system** at 95%
- the **document delivery system** at 97%
- **our copy services** at 92%

Overall satisfaction ratings below 90%:

- the **usability of our online catalogue** at 84%
- the **access to other online resources** at 76%
- the **access to WiFi** at 77%
- the **facilities to charge personal computing devices** at 78%
- the **microfilm and microfiche facilities** at 83%.

Our typical visitor:

- arrives by **private transport** (67%)

- stays **3.2 hours** (89%)
- undertakes **family history** research (31%)
- is **male** (54%)
- has an **average age of 58**
- ethnicity is **white** (100%)
- is in the 10<sup>th</sup> decile (least deprived).

There has been a slight decline in the number of visitors carrying out family history research since 2018. Other areas of research were academic at 24%, buildings at 22% and local history at 20%.

10% of our visitors were visiting an archive service for the first time. Of those for whom it was not their first time, 86% had visited the RBA before and 57% were regular visitors.

80% of visitors prepared for their visit by emailing or telephoning the archives and 69% went online to check opening times/find directions.

For 60% of our visitors, coming to RBA was the sole reason that they were in Reading that day, though 20% indicated that they would be using local hospitality, retail and/or transport facilities.

10% of our visitors indicate that they have a long lasting physical or mental health condition, but 100% of those who responded (5 cases) advised that they did not experience any barriers to accessing the service.

Our visitors were also asked what benefits they had experienced from visiting the archive:

- 88% agree that they **developed news skills or improved existing skills**
- 96% agree that they gained a **greater understanding of (their) community, its history and people**
- 100% agreed that they **found the evidence I was looking for**
- 85% agreed that they **learnt something unexpected**.