

## Publishing your findings in print

Congratulations. You've completed your research, and now you want to publish your findings in print. This guide will help you take the steps necessary to see your work published, but first you need to think about the different forms that publication can take, and what might be involved in each.

- Do you want to produce a small pamphlet, a trail leaflet, journal article or a book?
- Who is your intended audience?
- How will you ensure good quality in terms of both content and presentation?
- What is your budget?
- How many copies do you need?
- How will you publicise it?
- How will you manage sales?

### Producing a small pamphlet

For many groups, producing a small pamphlet will be the easiest way to see your work in print. It needs relatively little in terms of design skills and can easily be produced on a home computer. Costs are low and copies can be printed off as and when required. You might even be able to obtain local sponsorship, or accept advertising, which could cover all your costs. The cover price can therefore be set low to maximise sales, and people will be quite forgiving of small errors or typographical mistakes if they have not paid much for it.

## **Producing a trail leaflet**

A good trail leaflet needs to be visually appealing, with photographs and perhaps an element of professional design, unless you have someone with design skills in your group. It also needs to be printed on high quality paper, as those following the trail might be standing outside in light rain, or may transfer it in and out of a pocket or bag many times. Of course you want your work to be accurate whichever publication format you choose, but the more professional look and feel of a trail means that people have greater expectations of quality, so careful checking of facts and proof reading becomes more important. You will probably need to pay for a print shop to produce it, and you need to consider how many copies you need, the size of your budget and how you will collect and store them (leaflets on glossy paper can be bulky and heavy).

## **Writing a journal article**

Journal articles can reach a far wider audience than pamphlets, trails or books, but it will be a different audience, perhaps containing fewer local people. The journal's editors will take care of design, layout and proof reading. You will not have to pay for publication, nor worry about storage or marketing. It is a good idea to read a few back issues of the journal(s) you have in mind, to see where their interests lie, and if they publish the type of article you are writing. Most journals will also have specific submission guidelines, for example in respect of article length and footnote style, and you will usually find these details on their website or printed within each journal issue. You also need to check the journal website or contact the editor to establish deadline and publication dates, where to send your text and whether they just want an electronic copy or a printed copy as well. Their reputation depends on the quality of the pieces they publish, and those with a more academic leaning will send your article out for review before deciding whether or not to accept it as it stands, whether to request changes or additions, or whether simply to reject it.

There are numerous journals which accept articles about history and heritage, whose readerships range from those interested in a small area, to county or national journals, or those interested in a specific theme. Other options include village newsletters, county glossy magazines and the local newspaper. Never send an article to two prospective journal publishers at the same time.

## Some journals which publish articles about Leicestershire History

### Local

- ***Ashby-de-la-Zouch Past & Present***: published annually by Ashby-de-la-Zouch Museum - <http://ashbydelazouchmuseum.org.uk/Pastandpresent.htm>
- ***Harborough Historian***: published annually by Market Harborough Historical Society and Harborough Museum - [www.marketharboroughhistoricalsociety.org/](http://www.marketharboroughhistoricalsociety.org/)
- ***Hinckley Historian***: published twice a year by Hinckley & District Museum - [www.hinckleydistrictmuseum.org.uk](http://www.hinckleydistrictmuseum.org.uk)

### Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society (LAHS)

- ***Newsletter***: short articles and news items; submissions at any time; published twice a year (Spring and Autumn)
- ***Leicestershire Historian***: short articles; submissions at any time; published annually
- ***Transactions***: submissions up to 7,000 words at any time; published annually
- See: [www.le.ac.uk/lahs/publications/contributors.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/lahs/publications/contributors.html)

### Other 'county' options

- ***Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society***: quarterly journal for members; email [editor@lrfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@lrfhs.org.uk); website <http://lrfhs.org.uk>
- **'Mr Leicester' page in the *Leicester Mercury***: email [mrleicester@leicestermercury.co.uk](mailto:mrleicester@leicestermercury.co.uk)

### Regional and National

- ***Midland History***: published twice a year – [www.maney.co.uk](http://www.maney.co.uk)
- ***The Local Historian***: published quarterly by the British Association for Local History - [www.balh.co.uk/tlh/index.html](http://www.balh.co.uk/tlh/index.html)

## Publishing a book

It can be very satisfying to see your work published as a book, but it is also time-consuming and expensive.

One option is to use a commercial publisher, such as:

- The History Press ([www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk))
- Amberley Publishing (<http://amberleybooks.com>)
- Heart of Albion Heart of Albion Press: local history, folklore and mythology ([www.hoap.co.uk/](http://www.hoap.co.uk/))
- Pen and Sword: mainly military titles but some 'nostalgia' and social history ([www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/))

However, a commercial publisher is in business to make a profit, and is likely to have firm ideas about the type of book that will sell in sufficient volume to make publication worthwhile. Check the guidance on their websites and see what sorts of books interest them. By all means send a synopsis (not your full manuscript), but don't be too disappointed if you do not receive a positive response.

The other option is to self-publish. This means that you will be shouldering the financial risk, storing the unsold books, and you will be responsible for marketing. Of course you are also responsible for content, proof reading, design and layout and indexing. You can pay someone to do some of these tasks if you don't feel confident yourself, and if you don't have any group members who will take this on, but that will add to costs.

There are companies that will help you to self-publish, and some also offer other services (for a fee), such as proof-reading or advice on writing style. Some offer a 'print on demand' service, once the proof has been agreed, so you do not have to worry about financing or storing a large quantity of books. Two such companies are:

- Lulu ([www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com)) – an American company that operates internationally. Its website contains some tips that are worth reading, even if you don't want to use them to produce your book, for example on the page sizes that Amazon will accept if you want them to stock your book. There is also a very useful calculator for printing costs.
- Short Run Press Ltd (<http://www.shortrunpress.co.uk/>)

You need to think about design at an early stage of the process. The number of pictures you want, and whether you want a separate section of plates or will integrate them within the text, will affect cost. A 'modern' layout with lots of 'white space' can look attractive, but will also add to cost. Will your book be hardback or paperback? What page size and type of binding do you want? (A spine will require at least 48 pages, and is the best option if your books will be 60 pages or more; it is often also a prerequisite if you want booksellers to

stock your book.) Do you want a full colour laminated cover? Now estimate the length of your book, and get some quotes.

### Obtaining a quote

Do you just want a printer (who will simply print what you supply), or do you want someone to help with design and perhaps also marketing? You need to approach someone who will provide the type of service you require.

If you only want a print service, your printer will require the following information to provide a quote:

- Title of book
- Number of pages
- Page size (multiples of 4 for stapled publications, and may be a minimum for other types of binding)
- Paper weight (at least 120 gsm to prevent the print showing through, and 160 gsm may be better), and whether glossy or matt
- Cover paper weight (e.g. 250 gsm), and whether it is to be laminated
- Type of binding (e.g. perfect bound, i.e. with a spine)
- Cover colour (two colour or 4-colour printing, outside only or both sides)
- Text colour (usually black)
- Page design and margins (remember to allow for binding)
- Whether there are to be coloured diagrams or photographs on the text
- If you want a section of plates or photographic frontispiece
- How it will be submitted (i.e. the computer programme you will use)
- Quantity required (get quotes for print runs of various sizes, but don't overestimate your sales, as books take up a lot of storage space)

Local options for Leicestershire groups

- University of Leicester Print Services: design and print - [ww2.le.ac.uk/offices/printservices](http://ww2.le.ac.uk/offices/printservices)
- Matador Self-Publishing: based in Kibworth Beauchamp; design, print, marketing and distribution - [www.troubador.co.uk/matador.asp](http://www.troubador.co.uk/matador.asp)
- There are also other options – look for advertisements in local or family history magazines.

Once you have your quote, you need to think about print runs and pricing. How many copies do you think you can sell? How many will you give away? You have a legal obligation to deposit a copy of your publication with the British Library, and the other UK copyright libraries are also entitled to a copy if they request one (see below). You will probably also want to give copies to anyone who has helped you, and perhaps also to the local record

office and/or local studies library. You may also wish to send some copies out for review (for example, to your local historical society). What other costs do you need to bear in mind, for example for marketing? You might need to pay for advertising or printing flyers. If you want to sell through a bookshop, they may expect to purchase at a discount. Large stores might want as much as 60% discount on the cover price, and might expect sale or return terms (and could return well thumbed copies that you can't then sell to someone else). Add these costs to your quotation for printing, make a reasonable estimate of how many copies you can sell, and see what your sales price would have to be to break even. Now do some market research on the level of demand and what people would be prepared to pay. Does it stack up? How much additional marketing effort would be required?

### Example of cost calculations

Assume your book will be A5 size, perfect bound, and will have 100 pages. The calculator at [http://www.lulu.com/calculators/bookCalc.php?cid=publish\\_book](http://www.lulu.com/calculators/bookCalc.php?cid=publish_book) provides a cost of £265.50 for 100 copies, or £513.30 for 200 copies.

You want to print some flyers, which will cost £20, you aim to sell 10 copies through a local shop which wants a 50% discount, and you want to give 12 copies away (including legal deposit). You are considering a retail price of either £5 or £6.

Retail price £5		Retail price £5		Retail price £6	
Cost of printing 100 copies	265.50	200 copies	513.30	100 copies	265.50
Cost of flyers	20.00		20.00		20.00
Discount	25.00		25.00		30.00
Total cost	310.50		558.30		315.50
Break-even sales	62 copies 310.00	112 copies	560.00	53 copies	318.00
Maximum profit if all sold (allowing for 12 given away)	129.50		381.70		212.50

Before you get carried away with the thought of that profit (especially on 200 books), think carefully about how many copies you could sell at your chosen price. Selling your book may

### Content

There is not enough space here to tell you how to write good history that will sell, but remember that style and accuracy are important. It would be heartbreaking to invest a lot of money in a large hardback publication that few people purchase because your writing style is poor, or a book that fails to include a key source which totally contradicts your analysis. To avoid such mishaps, always:

- Read widely around your topic – your village, building or other subject will be unique, but will share features with places elsewhere. Good quality histories of other places may lead you to sources you did not know existed.
- Qualify statements where your evidence is weak ('It is likely ...').
- Read through your work and cut out all unnecessary wordiness and repetition.
- Retain the detail when reducing your word count. Local history is about the particular, and not the general.
- Set your facts in the wider context of local, regional or national changes or events.
- Include footnotes or end notes. These give the reader confidence that your work is grounded in fact, and allow others to follow up things they find interesting.
- Either employ a professional proof-reader (for example through the Society of Freelance Editors and Proofreaders <http://www.sfep.org.uk/pub/faqs/fusing.asp>), or ask **several** people you know to read your manuscript, perhaps giving each of them a specific task, such as (1) to check grammar and spelling; (2) to check for consistency, for example in the use and layout of headings, use of capital letters, paragraph indentations, alignment/justification of text, etc.; (3) to ensure the text makes sense, with no missing words, unexplained points or jargon; (4) to comment on overall narrative style.
- Ask someone who knows about the subject matter (perhaps from an academic viewpoint) to read your manuscript and provide comments about your sources and interpretation. That may sound daunting, but it's better to receive criticism before you publish than afterwards; one bad review could ruin your sales. Your county history society or local university may be able to suggest someone.
- Ensure you have not breached any copyright considerations (see previous section)

You may find one of the following useful:

- D. Dymond, *Researching and Writing History: A Practical Guide for Local Historians* (BALH, Harnham, 1999)
- R.N. Trubshaw, *How to Write and Publish Local History* (Heart of Albion Press, Wymeswold, 1999)
- Alan Crosby, 'Village Local History: top tips' (BBC History - [www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/local\\_history/village/village\\_local\\_history\\_tips\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/local_history/village/village_local_history_tips_01.shtml))
- East Midlands Oral History Archive, Information Sheet 'How to publish oral history', - [www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/no10.pdf](http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/no10.pdf)

When you have completed your manuscript, decide whether you want to apply for an ISBN (International Standard Book Number) and a barcode. An ISBN is a unique 13-digit number (formerly 10 digits) which identifies your book. It is not essential to have one, and there is a charge, but an ISBN will be needed if you wish to sell your book through a major retailer or internet bookseller. They are also used in bibliographic databases and by some libraries, so can help to raise awareness of your publication. ISBNs are allocated by the UK ISBN agency,

and the minimum purchase is ten. It should be printed on your copyright page at the front of your book, and on the back cover, where it can be accompanied by a bar code to help retailers.

For more information about ISBNs see <http://www.isbn.nielsenbook.co.uk>

For more about barcodes and barcode suppliers, see <http://tinyurl.com/ouq47zb>

## **When your book arrives back from the printers**

By law you must send one copy of your book to the British Library within one month of publication. Address it to:

Legal Deposit Office  
The British Library  
Boston Spa  
Wetherby  
West Yorkshire  
LS23 7BY

The Bodleian Libraries, Cambridge University Library, the National Library of Scotland, the National Library of Wales and the Library of Trinity College Dublin are each entitled to delivery, free of charge, of one copy of every publication **that they request within 12 months of the date of publication**. If they don't request a copy, you don't need to send one, but you are bound to comply with any request within one month of receipt. Copies for these libraries must be sent to the agency for legal deposit libraries in Edinburgh (full details will be provided within their request).

You can now think about marketing and selling your publication. One outlet might be your local record office, for example the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland carries a small stock of local publications for sale to the public.

There are many ways in which you can promote your publication, and the following list is not intended to be exhaustive:

- Flyers in appropriate places (local shops, county libraries, museums, etc.)
- Flyers at history/heritage themed events
- Press release – see our guide for community history and heritage groups: 'Engaging the public' for some helpful tips
- Short articles for local publications
- 'Mr Leicester' column in the *Leicester Mercury*
- Local radio – e.g. 'Talking History' programme on BBC Radio Leicester on Sundays (contact: Dave Andrews)
- Send review copies to journal editors
- Give talks to local societies
- Promote it on your website



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