

## **MESSAGE FROM SARAH BRIDGES,**

**County Archives And Heritage Manager**

I am sure that you are aware of the current debates within the county as to the appropriate structure for local government. Consultation on a unitary solution, with a proposal for two authorities covering the former county area, has just been published and your views on this are welcomed. Please follow this link to view an explanatory document plus the questionnaire, together with some supplementary information: [www.futurenorthants.co.uk](http://www.futurenorthants.co.uk)

For your information, my intention over the next year and more is to advocate for the Archives & Heritage Service and argue that it should remain as a countywide service. At its simplest, it would be very expensive to build another archives building to serve North Northants (assuming the current building at Wootton Hall Park would serve West Northants) and it would be challenging, if not impossible, to divide up archive collections between the two new authority boundaries.

**The current proposal, if implemented, could be managed with some form of joint agreement between the two new unitary authorities to fund and support the service. There are precedents for this approach elsewhere and it will be important to learn from others' experience to inform planning.**

The consultation questionnaire does not easily lend itself to comments about services such as this one that, I believe, should still be delivered on a countywide basis. However, there is a free text box on the third page of the questionnaire that might be used to mention the need for certain services to be provided across the historic county, irrespective of your opinions on the wider issue.

With many thanks for your support,  
Sarah

Should you not wish to use the electronic questionnaire, you can respond direct to:

ORS,  
FREEPOST (SS1018),  
PO BOX 530,  
Swansea SA1 1ZL.

Please respond as soon as you can and by July 22nd at the latest.

### **Message from Executive Committee, NFHS**

As a member of the Society, we assume that many of you use the Northants Archives from time to time, whether in person or online. We ask that you please support the County Archivist and respond to either the online questionnaire or send a letter supporting the proposals for a single Archives for the county which could be jointly funded by the resultant unitary authorities.

Angela Malin