BENCHMARKS FOR DEVELOPING HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORDS
Resource needs for SMRs and UADs to reach the first stage benchmarks

Bound separately: Confidential

Archive A – the Database

Archive B – the survey reports ordered by interview

Archive C – the survey reports arranged by Benchmark

Archive D – notes of Steering Group meetings

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1   Assessments from 1998 onwards of development progress in Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs), and latterly Urban Archaeological Databases (UADs), led to the publication of Benchmarks for Historic Environment Records (HERs) in 2002. The costs of achieving the first stage Benchmarks for an SMR / UAD were assessed in December 2003 and January 2004 by a project for English Heritage, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, and the Association of Local Government Officers.

2   A 34% sample, 30 Records from a defined population of 88, was chosen for personal interview following a pilot stage involving seven of the sample group. Progress towards compliance with the Benchmarks was discussed, and estimates of costs for achieving compliance were provided where possible.

3   Estimates were classified for reliability on a four-point range from detailed to un-costable. Estimates of work required for compliance or actual compliance itself were recorded for 84% of the benchmarks in the Records of the sample. The un-costable benchmarks do not therefore appear to be a significant proportion, but there is a degree of uncertainty that must be taken in to account when aggregating from the sample to the total population.

4   The highest level of compliance with the 1st stage Benchmarks can be found in Counties, followed by Joint Services and Unitary Authorities, with the lowest level of compliance in Districts. Overall, UADs were significantly less compliant than SMRs.

5   The estimates provided by the sample Records were used to extrapolate the resources required for the whole population of 88 Records to achieve each of the Benchmarks. An average annual salary level of £20k was used, with 20% on-costs giving £24k and a daily cost of £120.

6   The global resource requirement is £8.28m. This comprises £4.85m for achieving the listed benchmarks (apart from the staffing benchmark 4.5), £2.53m for achieving 4.5, and £900k for bringing all listed UADs up to functioning database stage.

7   These figures must be considered together with various uncertainties and tendencies that might increase or reduce the global total. There are intrinsic difficulties in extrapolating and interpreting results from a small and varied population that was often unable to estimate accurately their requirements for particular benchmarks. A significant factor for future costs is the extent to which effective coordination, and in some cases merger, can be achieved between SMRs and UADs.

8   Some further work on definitions will be needed in order to apply the 1st stage Benchmarks effectively. They have considerable potential as the standard for Record maintenance, development and usage that might be linked to statutory status for SMRs or any similar requirement from government.

1   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1   This report describes the results of a research project to quantify and estimate the resources that would be required to bring Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) and Urban Archaeological Databases (UADs) held by local authorities in England up to the first stage HER performance measures as outlined in *Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice* (Chitty 2002).

1.2   The project was commissioned by English Heritage and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), working through a Steering Group representing English Heritage (Kathy Perrin – Project Officer; Gillian Grayson – National Monuments Record), the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (David Dawson), and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) (Stewart Bryant – Hertfordshire County Council).

1.3   The project was carried out by David Baker (Historic Environment Conservation), Dr Gill Chitty (Hawkshead Conservation Associates Ltd) and Rachel Edwards (Arboretum Archaeological Consultancy), between November 2003 and February 2004. The consultants are most grateful to Steering Group members and colleagues in local authorities who generously gave their time, information and opinions in the course of the work.

Aims and Objectives

1.4   The aims as stated in the Project Outline (issued July 2003) are to quantify the work necessary for SMRs and UADs to achieve the first stage benchmark for HERs, and to estimate the resources needed to carry out that work.

1.5   Three objectives were stated in the Project Outline.

(a)   To undertake a survey of a representative sample of SMRs and UADs in England in order to establish the quantification and cost of work necessary for each current Record to achieve the first stage HER benchmark in all four categories of achievement. These are User Services and Access, Information Coverage and Content, Information Management, and Organisation Management.

(b)   To use the survey results to produce an assessment of the scale of resources which will be required to move each SMR / UAD in England to the first stage HER benchmark.

(c)   To produce two final reports for the EH / ALGAO / DCMS HER Working Party, one on SMRs and one on UADs, which will enable the Working Party to develop an implementation plan for the HER Benchmark Scheme which incorporates sound financial planning.

1.6   This report describes the sample survey and the assessment of the scale of resources. Following the survey phase of the project, the Steering Group agreed that the current situation and the achievement of the benchmark is better addressed by a single report differentiating where relevant between SMRs and UADs, rather than two completely separate reports.

1.7 The project also offered a useful opportunity to review the 1st stage benchmarks (which had been devised by one of the consultants partly drawing upon the work of another of them), and to gain a broad assessment of how far the whole set of SMRs and UADs has travelled towards achieving them. In turn, this prompted some discussion about current issues of development, maintenance and usage.

Background

1.8 Complete coverage of England by about 100 SMRs, including 23 UADs in various stages of development, has been achieved over the last thirty years. Most remain based in local authorities. They have a fundamental role in the management, investigation and explanation of the historic environment.

1.9 ALGAO and English Heritage are committed to strengthening this coverage and working towards the goal of a national network of information about the local historic environment, accessible for depositors and users alike. To achieve this, it will be necessary to overcome the considerable variation between Records, in development generally, in computerised databases, use of GIS, coverage of area by topic, period and location, and accession and / or digitisation of presented material. Progress since the base-date of the first assessment in April 1998 (Baker 1999), recently reviewed by English Heritage's Heritage Information Partnerships (HIPS) team (Newman 2002), has shown both improvements and a continuation of significant variations. Another HIPS report is also relevant – *Progress in the Implementation of Baker's Recommendations for Sites and Monuments* (Newman 2003).

1.10 These variations and the need for further improvements have been thrown into sharp relief by recent commitments to ensure local authorities and others have access to adequate information systems for the understanding, management and explanation of the historic environment. Notably, these occur in the sector-wide statement *Power of Place* (English Heritage 2001) and the government's response to it, *A Force for our Future* (DCMS / DTLR 2002). These statements recognise the need for comprehensive Historic Environment Records with a remit going beyond the traditional archaeological and land-use planning aspects to which many SMRs / UADs are still confined. They are also a response to repeated calls for SMRs / UADs to be made a statutory responsibility of local authorities so as to ensure the availability of the stable and secure resources necessary for carrying out their remit. In July 2003, DCMS published the 'HER Consultation Paper' which provides the context for this project.

1.11 ALGAO, English Heritage and DCMS are working to develop a national standard for HERs. A commissioned report – *Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice* (Chitty 2002) – produced two sets of HER performance measures, a baseline standard for existing SMRs and a second more developed standard for HERs.

1.12 This project is concerned with the first measure, the baseline standard for existing SMRs / UADs. That sets out a defined level of essential good practice in four areas of performance, covering User Services and Access, Information Coverage and Content, Information Management, and Organisation Management.

1.13 These four areas of performance are based on those used in the 1998 Assessment to score individual SMRs, so it is possible to track change across a five-year period in the standards attained by the 75 then covered. The recent survey by the HIPS records

some of the progress that has been made (Newman 2003), but many SMRs / UADs still have to achieve all the criteria identified in the proposed baseline standard. The purpose of this current project is to quantify and cost the resources necessary to ensure that all current SMRs / UADs held by local authorities can achieve what are considered in 2004 to be the essential elements of that standard.

1.14   The 1998 *Assessment* excluded most UADs. *Benchmarks for Good Practice in Historic Environment Records*, based upon the *Assessment*, makes no specific reference to them. Most SMRs are nearly 20-35 years old and the background analysis exists for relating them to those standards and quantifying the work needed to reach them. The same does not hold good for the group of 23 UADs, which are mostly less than 10 years old and variable in content and operational context. Accordingly UADs receive some separate consideration in the study.

Organisation of this report

1.15   **Chapter 2** describes the approach to the project and the methodology adopted, including the sampling strategy.

1.16   **Chapter 3** presents the main body of findings from survey of the selected sample, as a combination of tables, diagrams and comment.

1.17   **Chapter 4** uses the main findings as the basis for quantifying the resource requirements for all SMRs / UADs to achieve the first benchmark. The methodology by which sample is converted into total population is also discussed.

1.18   **Chapter 5** provides a narrative of the survey results by benchmark.

1.19   **Chapter 6** discusses Urban Archaeological Databases assessed as part of the sample survey, and more generally.

1.20   **Chapter 7** makes some concluding observations about devising and implementing a programme of improvement towards a universal achievement of the 1st stage benchmark. It also presents some recommendations that have emerged from the study.

1.21   **Appendices** list the SMRs / UADs chosen for the sample (not otherwise identified individually in the main report), reproduce the Project Design, provide technical information about the Database, and reproduce the survey information pack.

1.22   Confidential **Annexes** include the Database itself, and the actual survey reports by SMR / UAD. The project **Archive** also contains the survey reports arranged by Benchmark.

6

2   APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

2.1   The required approach to the project involved using a sample of SMRs / UADs, chosen to represent the complete range of types and provide representative results that could be safely extrapolated to the whole population. A pilot phase of interviews to test the approach with different Record types preceded the main sample. Interview results recorded on a standard *pro forma* were checked with each SMR / UAD before final incorporation into the database. Interviews were conducted on the basis of confidentiality: no reference to a specific SMR / UAD has been made in the final report without prior agreement; the individual reports form part of a confidential archive deposited with English Heritage.

Defining the total population and selecting the sample

2.2   Establishing the population of SMRs and UADs did not prove straightforward, especially in relation to UADs. The starting point was the list of 101 Records in Appendix 4 of the *SMR content and computing survey 2002* (Newman 2002). It was agreed with the Steering Group that the following categories should be excluded from that total:

(a)   national databases (Ministry of Defence SMR, National Trust SMR)

(b)   copy Records, where the status of a copy Record is mutually agreed between copy and parent Records (Boston Borough, Dartmoor National Park, North Kesteven, South Kesteven, Test Valley)

(c)   Records which have ceased to exist and been merged with another since 2002 (North Hertfordshire, Stafford Borough)

(d)   stand-alone UADs which have not completed the database stage and become operational in use (Canterbury, Carlisle, Chester, Nottingham)

The status of some Records in these categories only became clear during the course of the survey. The total population, as redefined above, on which the sample and analysis are based, is therefore 88 Records. This represents a 'point in time' count of Records whose status was known in February 2004. Later, it became clear that Sandwell SMR is now separate from the Black Country SMR, but this change has not been included in the calculations.

2.3   The sample group was selected in accordance with the criteria outlined in the Project Design (**Appendix B**), to 'represent the complete range of types'. 'Willingness and ability to cooperate' were also important factors, given the short timescale of the project. All SMRs and UADs were invited to participate as members of the sample group. The list of volunteers was then considered in relation to four sets of criteria:

(a)   Region – Government Office Region

(b)   Type of record – SMR, UAD, Joint SMR, SMR / UAD

(c)   Local Authority type – County, District, Unitary, National Park

(d)   Urban / Rural balance – mostly rural, rural with some urban, mostly urban, urban with some rural.
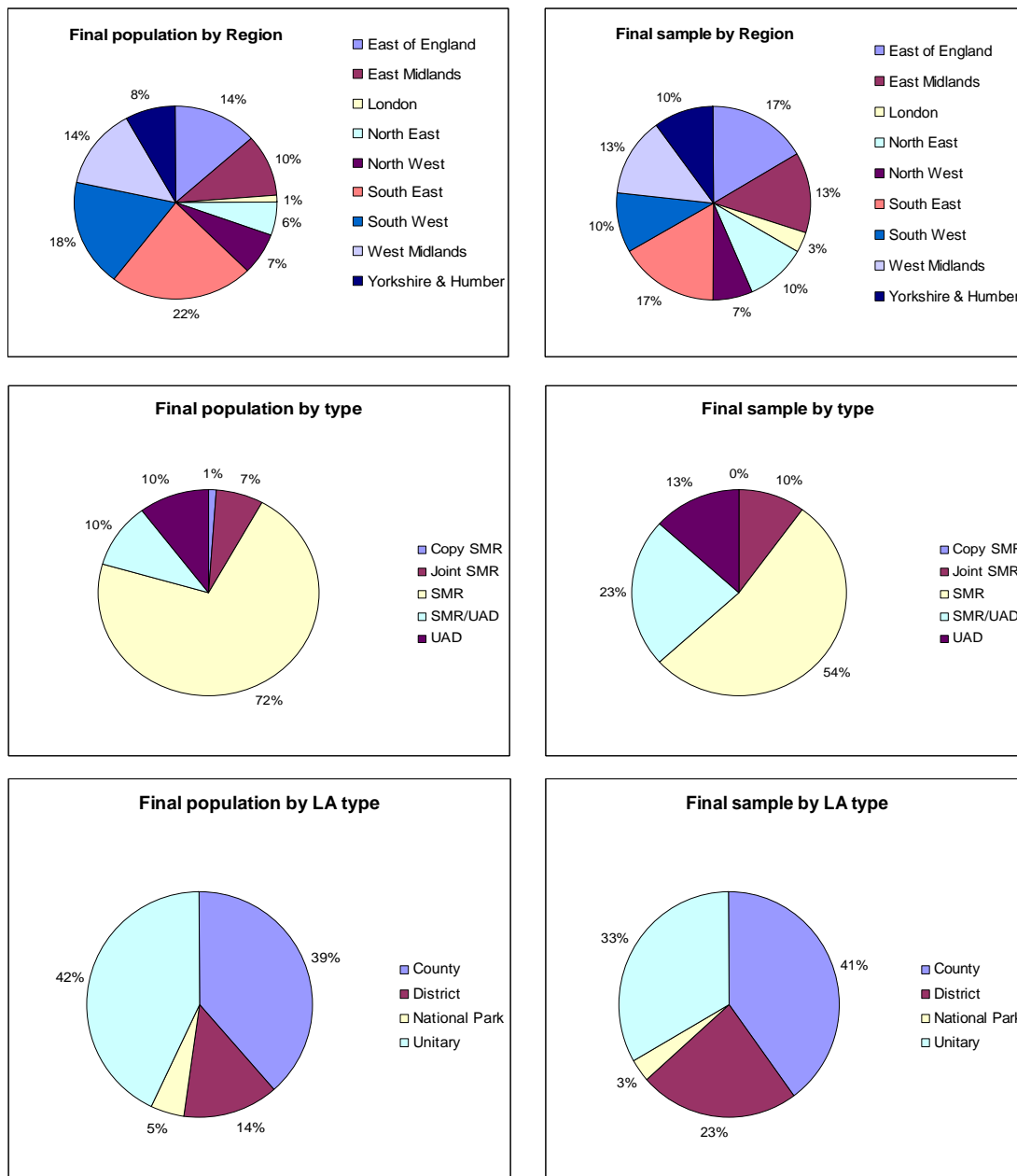
In order for the sample to be representative, some of the volunteers could not be included, and other Records which had not volunteered were asked to participate to balance the coverage of different Record types. From their knowledge of the whole SMR / UAD population, the consultants are satisfied that there was no distortion of the drawn sample due to the use of a large proportion of volunteer participants.
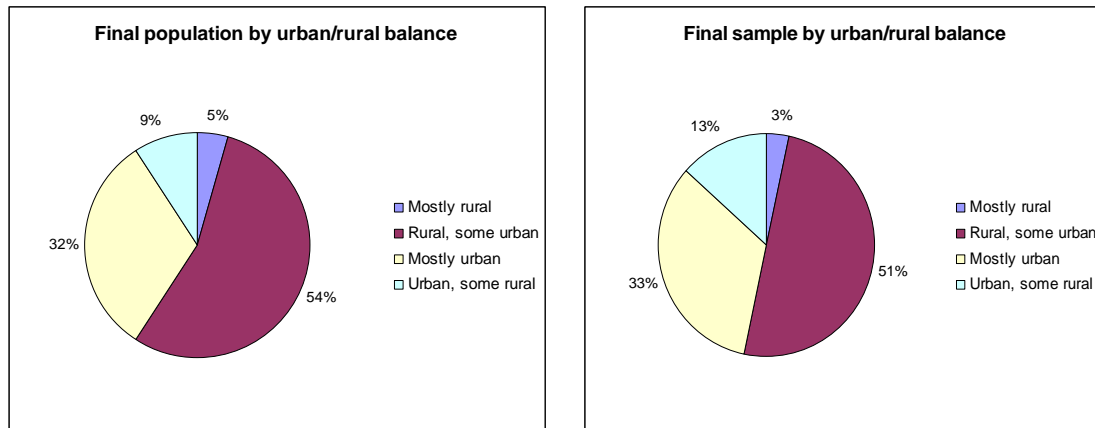
2.4   The proposed sample consisted of 31 Records, including five stand-alone UADs and a further five UADs which were integrated into SMRs. One of the integrated UADs proved to be insufficiently advanced to be included in the population, so an SMR in the same Region was selected as a substitute; one SMR withdrew from the sample group at the last minute. The final total was therefore 30 Records. The Project Brief had indicated a total of 20-25 SMRs and approximately five UADs, so the total of 30 Records including nine UADs was in excess of requirements.

2.5   The Project Design indicated that the methodology would be tested on up to six SMRs which would also be used as part of the full sample. Thanks to a useful offer from Buckinghamshire, seven were visited in pilot interviews.
- Worcestershire – a strong 'traditional' County SMR
- Merseyside – a weak 'traditional' Joint Service SMR
- Essex – a County SMR already operating at least partly as an HER
- Northampton – a UAD linked with a County SMR
- Lincoln, – a stand-alone District UAD
- West Berkshire – a Unitary SMR in the south of England
- Buckinghamshire – a County SMR that had already measured itself against the 1st stage benchmark.

2.6   The full sample of 30 was categorised by Authority type and Record type.

(a)   *County SMR:*
Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Durham County, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Worcestershire (10, 33%)

(b)   *County SMR + UAD:*
Cambridgeshire / Cambridge, Northamptonshire / Northampton (2, 6%)

(c)   *District SMR + UAD:*
Gloucester, Winchester, Worcester City (3, 10%)

(d)   *District UAD*
Colchester, Durham City, Lincoln, Norwich (4, 13%)

(e)   *Joint Service SMR*
Greater London, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire (4, 13%)

(f)   *Joint Service SMR + UAD*
Tyne & Weir / Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1, 3%)

HEC / HCA / AAC
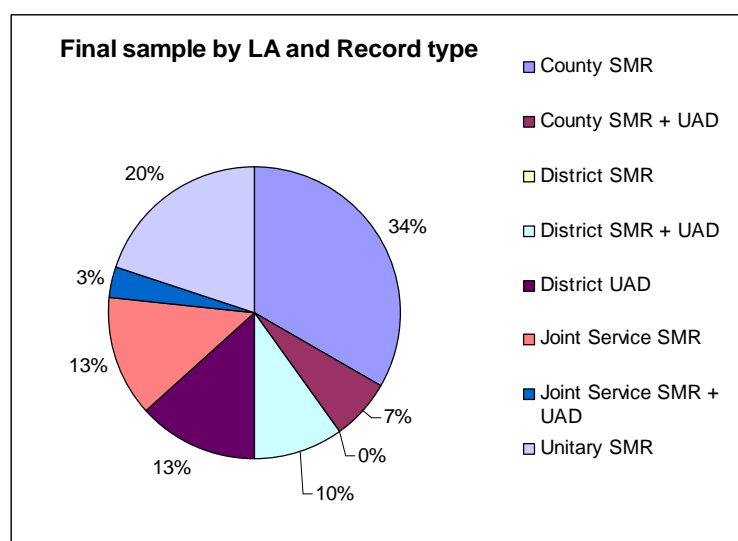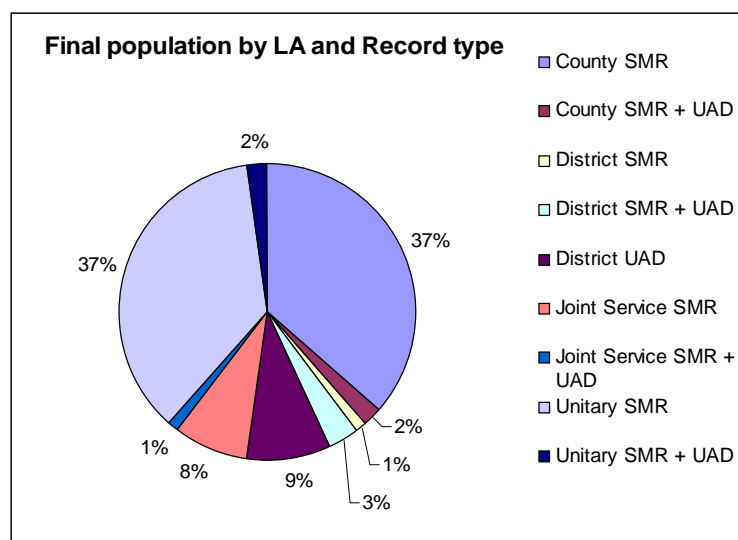
(g)   *National Park*
      Yorkshire Dales (1, 3%) (to maintain the anonymity of this Record, it was
      included in overall analysis as a Unitary Authority

(h)   *Unitary Authority*
      Birmingham, Coventry, North Lincolnshire, Portsmouth, West Berkshire (5,
      17%)

2.7   The following pie charts illustrate the relationship between the final population (88) and final sample group (30) in relation to the four criteria described in (2.3 (a) – (d)).

Final population by Region

East of England	14%
East Midlands	10%
London	1%
North East	6%
North West	7%
South East	22%
South West	18%
West Midlands	14%
Yorkshire & Humber	8%

Final sample by Region

East of England	17%
East Midlands	13%
London	3%
North East	10%
North West	7%
South East	17%
South West	10%
West Midlands	13%
Yorkshire & Humber	10%

Final population by type

Copy SMR	1%
Joint SMR	7%
SMR	72%
SMR/UAD	10%
UAD	10%

Final sample by type

Copy SMR	0%
Joint SMR	10%
SMR	54%
SMR/UAD	23%
UAD	13%

Final population by LA type

County	39%
District	14%
National Park	5%
Unitary	42%

Final sample by LA type

County	41%
District	23%
National Park	3%
Unitary	33%

10

Final population by urban/rural balance

9%   5%

32%

54%

- Mostly rural
- Rural, some urban
- Mostly urban
- Urban, some rural

Final sample by urban/rural balance

13%   3%

33%

51%

- Mostly rural
- Rural, some urban
- Mostly urban
- Urban, some rural

2.8   The following charts and table illustrate the proportions of the nine categories of combined Local Authority and Record type, adopted for use in analysing the results. Whilst some of the proportions are similar as between population and sample, others are not representative of their type. Consequently, these categories have been used with care in the analysis which follows.

Final population by LA and Record type

County SMR
County SMR + UAD
District SMR
District SMR + UAD
District UAD
Joint Service SMR
Joint Service SMR + UAD
Unitary SMR
Unitary SMR + UAD

2%
37%
37%
8%
1%
9%
3%
1%
2%

Final sample by LA and Record type

County SMR
County SMR + UAD
District SMR
District SMR + UAD
District UAD
Joint Service SMR
Joint Service SMR + UAD
Unitary SMR

20%
3%
13%
13%
34%
7%
0%
10%

Local Authority and Record type	Population		Sample	
	No.	%	No.	%
County SMR	32	36%	10	33%
County SMR + UAD	2	2%	2	7%
District SMR	1	1%	0	0%
District SMR + UAD	3	3%	3	10%
District UAD	8	9%	4	13%
Joint Service SMR	7	8%	4	13%
Joint Service SMR + UAD	1	1%	1	3%
Unitary SMR	32	36%	6	20%
Unitary SMR + UAD	2	2%	0	0%

2.9   Working with a relatively small population of less than 100 records, within which there is a relatively wide range of Local Authority and Record types, presents difficulties for drawing a representative sample. Whilst the project brief indicated that

there should be 'a list of back-up substitutes' to cover for any unable to participate, this was not possible to achieve in practice, given the small total population. In some instances no alternative Records existed which fulfilled all the same criteria illustrated above (eg one region only has five Records, so the withdrawal of any one could not be successfully substituted by another). In practice no substitute could be found in the case of the last-minute withdrawal of one Record from the sample group. The final group of 30 Records in the sample comprises 34% of the defined population (as compared with the 20-25% required by the project brief) and is considered to cover the range and proportion of Record types satisfactorily.

Briefing and interviewing

2.10 The sample Records were circulated before interview with an Information Pack. This comprised a single sheet explaining the project, and a landscape table listing the Benchmarks, qualifying them as necessary, and indicating what information was needed. (**Appendix D**).

2.11 Interviews were carried out in person by the consultants, principally by David Baker and Rachel Edwards, jointly in the pilot phase, and divided according to geographical accessibility for the main survey. Doing this over the Christmas – New Year period caused some difficulties, but only one interview had ultimately to be done by telephone.

2.12 The Project Outline indicated that the individual interviews should comprise detailed discussion and physical assessment where necessary. On the advice of the Steering Group it was decided that the latter would comprise no more than broad categories and quantities. If a SMR / UAD could not provide information at that level, it was not appropriate for the consultants to do that work for them.

2.13 Interviews lasted from between 1.5 to 3.5 hours, depending upon the complexity of the SMR / UAD and the issues raised. Interviewees were consistently helpful: all understood that quantifications of resources needed for benchmark achievement did not constitute any commitment on either side, and that detail from a specific SMR / UAD would not be identified in the final report without prior agreement. All were open in their responses, and at no point did any of the interviewers feel that the progress reported was exaggerated or underestimated.

2.14 The interviews were written up on a *pro forma* that included general information about the SMR / UAD, software (database and GIS), staffing, departmental context. A figure and comment were added to a table of the 23 benchmarks. Most interviewees were also asked whether they supported statutory status for SMRs / UADs, whether they would welcome formal validation for the benchmarks, and, if so, by whom. Written-up results were returned to the interviewee for comments, corrections and additions.

Processing results

2.15 The interview reports were processed separately by David Baker and Rachel Edwards and the results were then compared. This allowed discrepancies in interpretation to be clarified and removed, and has ensured that conclusions regarding the level of compliance of each record at each benchmark are robust. However, this process did

indicate that differences in interpretation can occur quite easily, which needs to be taken into account for any future benchmark validation process. An overall assessment of progress for each Record towards each benchmark was made on a three-point scale: compliant, partially compliant and non-compliant.

2.16 Interviewees provided information on the estimated numbers of person-days needed to achieve each benchmark. They also gave each estimate an indication of reliability or confidence rating as follows:

(a)   detailed and likely to be accurate

(b)   ball-park figure based on broad knowledge of work required

(c)   approximate estimate only

(d)   no quantification possible for the reason(s) stated.

Where time was given in terms of months or years the following conversions were used: 1 month = 21 person days, 3 months = 50 person days, 6 months = 100 person days and 1 year = 200 person days. The majority of costs were provided in the form of numbers of days, so these conversions were rarely required.

2.17 The first stage in processing results was to assess the level of compliance against each benchmark for the sample group. These findings are summarised in the first part of **Chapter 3**, itemised first by benchmark, then by groupings of benchmarks. This is followed by calculations of the resources required for the sample group to achieve the benchmarks (i.e. the sum of the estimated days required plus any additional costs provided as financial estimates). Although information was requested on historic costs, i.e. how long it had taken to achieve compliance, very few interviewees were able to provide that information, so the quantifications include estimates for future costs only. An indication of the reliability of the sample figures, and therefore of the quantifications for resource requirements, is provided through an analysis by confidence rating.

2.18 The findings from the sample group were then multiplied up to achieve estimated totals for the whole population. These results are presented in **Chapter 4**. The detailed methodology relating to the quantification for resource requirements is presented alongside the results, for clarity. It was agreed with the Steering Group that costs for benchmarks 1.3 *Research into user profiles*, 4.6 *Appropriate internal management arrangements*, 4.7 *Availability of technical advice on IT and archive / records management* and 4.8 *Staff development programme and resources* would not be calculated, as these are part of expected service provision.

Salaries and daily costs

2.19 To arrive at costs for each benchmark, it was necessary to establish daily rates for SMR staff. Information on salaries was taken from *Profiling the Profession* (Aitchison and Edwards 2003), and was collected from the sample SMRs visited. The average salary for the financial year 2002-03 reported to *Profiling the Profession* was £18,841, and includes the full range of SMR staff reported to the survey, from SMR Assistants to SMR Managers. It falls within the Local Government Scale 6 pay band,

which in April 2002 was £18,357 – £19,584, and for 2003-04 is £19,185 – £20,469. In the SMRRA sample group, the average salary for SMR Officers also lay within the Scale 6 range, and the average for SMR Assistant corresponded to Scale 4; few figures were provided for SMR managers' salaries, and these were regarded as unrepresentative.

2.20   It was proposed at the outset of the project to divide SMR / UAD benchmark tasks into three levels, strategic / managerial, professional / technical, and administrative / clerical. However, this proved difficult to achieve, as many of the benchmarks are composed of a variety of different tasks, which would require different staff levels to complete. Consequently, a single level was used, calculated at the level of an average salary for an SMR Officer. Overall it is considered that this will balance out between tasks which would be carried out by less- or more-experienced staff, on higher or lower salaries than the average.

2.21   The salary level therefore used to calculate daily rates was £20,000 per annum, plus a figure of 20% to cover on-costs of employer's National Insurance and superannuation (Tim Cromack pers. comm.), giving an annual cost of £24,000 and a day rate of £120 (i.e. within the Scale 6 range as above).

16

3   SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1   This chapter presents the findings of the sample survey. It sets out the progress towards the benchmarks achieved by the sample group, by benchmark, by benchmark category, and by groups of Record and LA type. The estimated costs for the sample to achieve benchmarks are presented; the level of confidence in the estimates is given and its implications for the reliability of the survey are discussed.
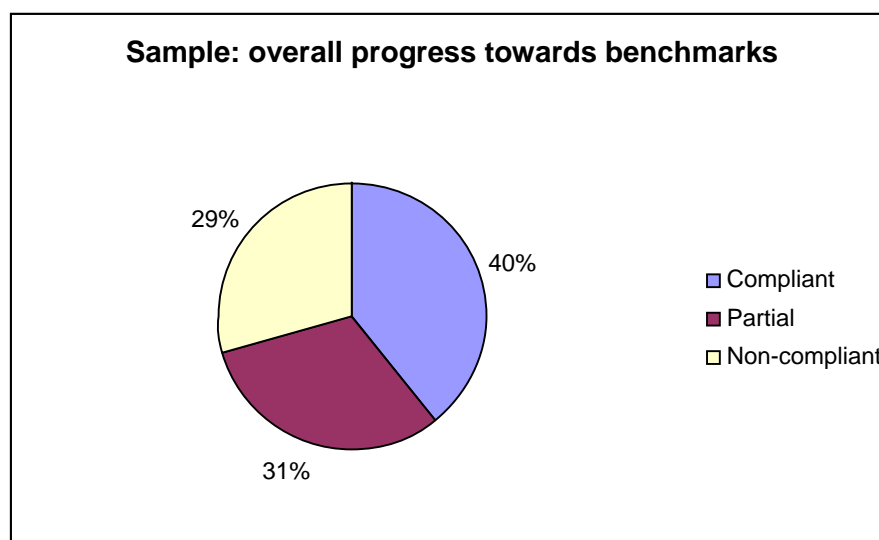
Progress towards benchmarks

3.2   The following table lists the numbers of sample Records which were fully compliant, partially compliant or non-compliant with the 1st stage HER benchmark requirements. This is illustrated graphically in the cumulative bar chart following the table.

| Benchmark	Item	Compliant	Partial	Non-compliant	Total
1.1	Information services policy	3	12	15	30
1.2	Access to services	8	18	4	30
1.3	Research into user profiles	25	0	5	30
1.4	Development of outreach programme	9	9	12	30
2.1	Information policy	3	18	9	30
2.2	Information coverage and content	11	18	1	30
2.3	Management of primary or unique archive material	14	11	5	30
3.1	Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice	3	18	9	30
3.2	Computerised database to national data standards	14	13	3	30
3.3	GIS linked to Record database and manual	6	20	4	30
3.4	Supporting reference collections	6	17	7	30
3.5	Data security	2	26	2	30
3.6	Information audit on quinquennial basis	11	1	18	30
3.7	Data validation and currency	9	0	21	30
3.8	Safeguards against foreseeable risks and disaster	3	13	14	30
4.1	Formal adoption as maintained public information resource	14	4	12	30
4.2	Formal agreement with partners/service providers	7	0	23	30
4.3	Statement of purpose or mission statement	16	6	8	30
4.4	Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision	8	9	13	30
4.5	Professional post with primary responsibility for Record	18	2	10	30
4.6	Appropriate internal management arrangements	27	0	3	30
4.7	Technical advice on IT and archive/records management	27	0	3	30
4.8	Staff training and development programme and resources	27	1	2	30
Total		271	216	203	

Sample: summary of progress towards benchmarks
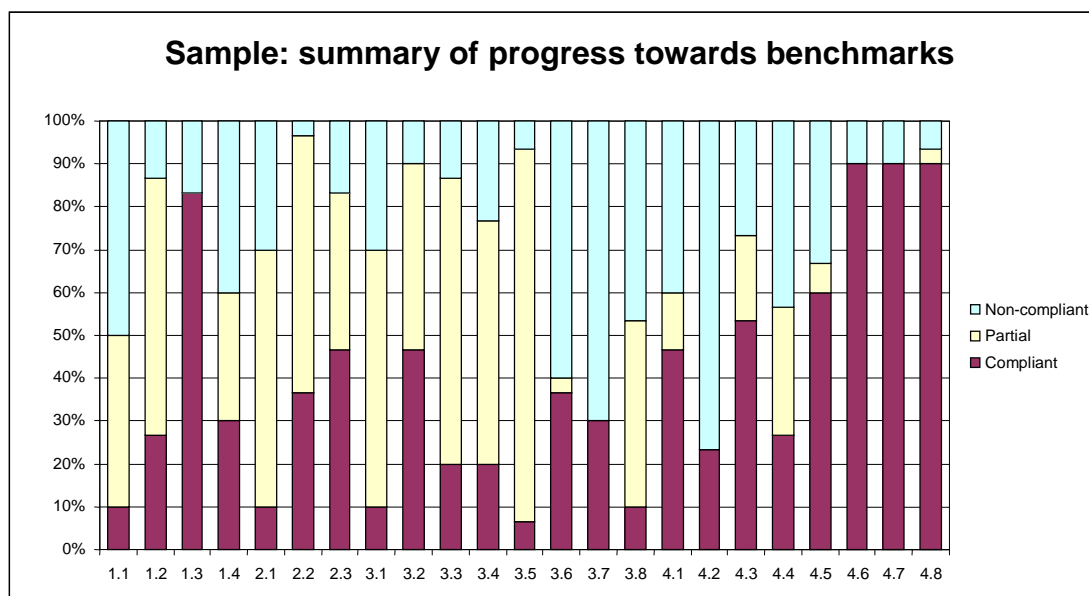
3.3   The following pie chart illustrates overall progress towards all the benchmarks. It is clear that a considerable amount of work remains to be done, especially since the 40% compliance includes Benchmarks 1.3 and 4.6-4.8 (3.2 above), which have a high compliance rate but are also generally elements of good practice within LAs.

Sample: overall progress towards benchmarks

Progress towards benchmarks by benchmark category

3.4   The benchmarks as published are divided into eight categories; levels of compliance are summarised against each of these categories in the following table. The same information is illustrated graphically in the cumulative bar chart following the table.

Category	Benchmark	Compliant	Partial	Non-compliant
Serving user needs	1.1-1.2	11	30	19
Satisfying user needs	1.3	25	0	5
Reaching new audiences	1.4	9	9	12
Information content	2.1-2.3	28	47	15
System organisation & procedures	3.1-3.4	29	68	23
Quality and security measures	3.5-3.8	25	40	55
Corporate & business arrangements	4.1-4.4	45	19	56
Staffing and support services	4.5-4.8	99	3	18

Sample: Benchmarks grouped by categories
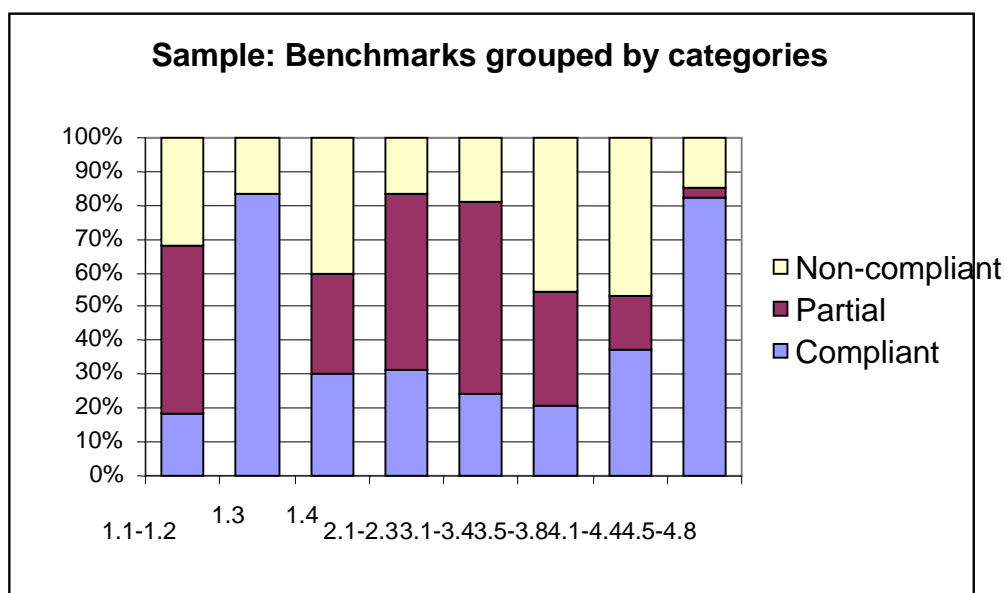
Progress towards benchmarks by Record and LA type

3.5 Benchmark compliance differs between different groups of Record and Local Authority types. Using the nine categories outlined above (**Chapter 2**), the level of compliance of the following four groups can be compared. These allow the anonymity of individual Records in the sample to be preserved. The groupings are made up of:
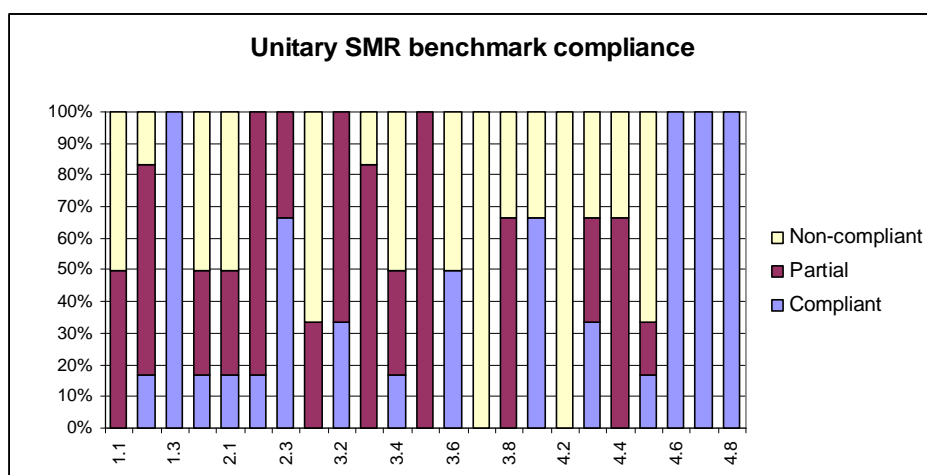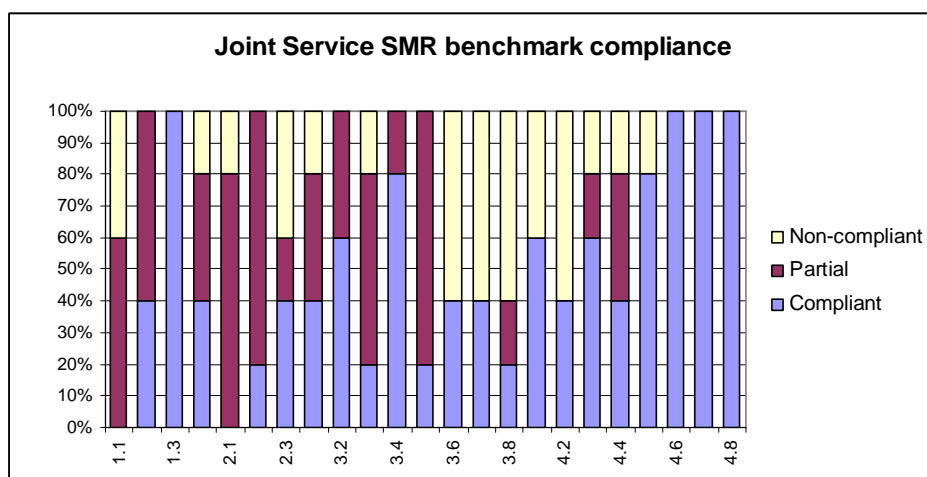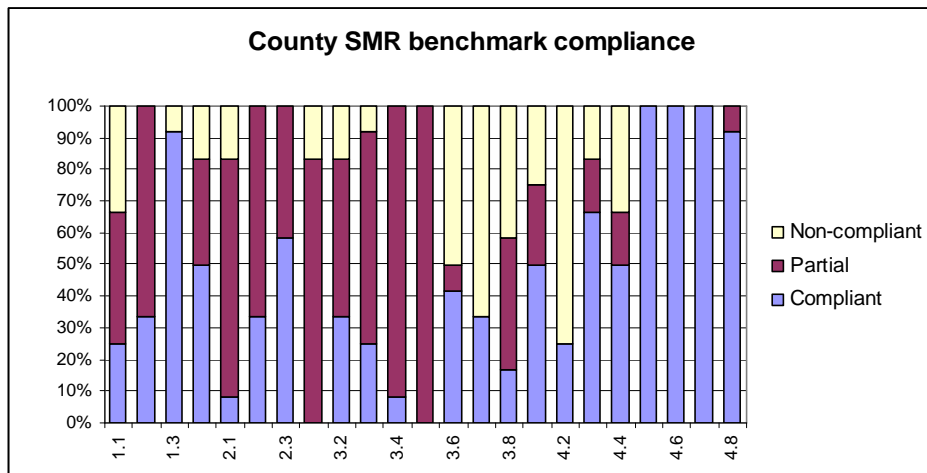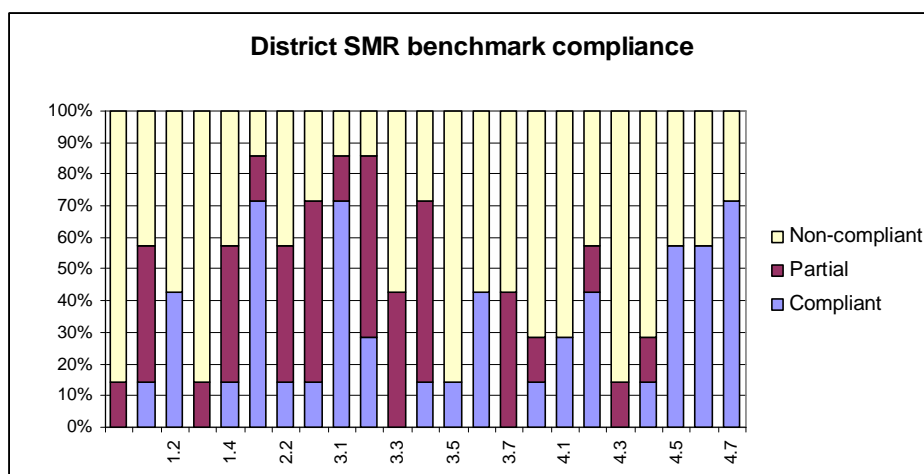
County SMR + County SMR&UAD (12 Records)

Joint Service SMR + Joint Service SMR&UAD (5 Records)

Unitary SMR (6 Records)

District SMR + District SMR&UAD + District UAD (7 Records)

The charts which follow illustrate that the highest level of compliance can be found in Counties, followed by Joint Services and Unitary Authorities, with the lowest level of compliance in the District group.

County SMR benchmark compliance

Joint Service SMR benchmark compliance

Unitary SMR benchmark compliance

District SMR benchmark compliance

Costs for the sample to achieve the benchmarks

3.6   The following table gives the total number of days needed for the sample group to achieve the Level 1 benchmarks. In most cases, the sums identified (as opposed to estimates in days) represent the costs of proposed projects, rather than capital items.

| Benchmark	Item	Days needed	£ needed
1.1	Information services policy	164.5	
1.2	Access to services	119.0	
1.3	Research into user profiles	0	
1.4	Development of outreach programme	323.0	£88,000
2.1	Information policy	154.0	
2.2	Information coverage and content	4105.0	£7,500
2.3	Management of primary or unique archive material	121.0	£50
3.1	Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice	264.5	
3.2	Computerised database to national data standards	1527.0	£7,500
3.3	GIS linked to Record database and manual	374.0	£21,200
3.4	Supporting reference collections	327.5	£15,000
3.5	Data security	465.0	£10,700
3.6	Information audit on quinquennial basis	234.0	£4,000
3.7	Data validation and currency	147.5	
3.8	Safeguards against foreseeable risks and disaster	160.5	
4.1	Formal adoption as maintained public information resource	88.0	
4.2	Formal agreement with partners/service providers	76.5	
4.3	Statement of purpose or mission statement	47.0	
4.4	Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision	137.0	
4.5	Professional post with primary responsibility for Record	0	
4.6	Appropriate internal management arrangements	0	
4.7	Technical advice on IT and archive/records management	0	
4.8	Staff training and development programme and resources	0	

Confidence rating: benchmark resource estimates

3.7   The following table and bar chart present the reported confidence level for benchmark resources estimates. The confidence rating was as follows:

(a)   detailed and likely to be accurate

(b)   ball-park figure based on broad knowledge of work required

(c)   approximate estimate only

(d)   no quantification possible for the reason(s) stated.

Benchmark	Number of estimates				% of sample group (30)				Compliant	
	a	b	c	d	a	b	c	d	No.	%
1.1	12	12	3	1	40%	40%	10%	3%	3	10%
1.2	10	6	3	4	33%	20%	10%	13%	8	27%
1.3	1			4	3%	0%	0%	13%	25	83%
1.4	2	6	6	8	7%	20%	20%	27%	9	30%
2.1	16	8	3	2	53%	27%	10%	7%	3	10%
2.2		6	8	5	0%	20%	27%	17%	11	37%
2.3	3	6	2	3	10%	20%	7%	10%	14	47%
3.1	8	10	6	3	27%	33%	20%	10%	3	10%
3.2	1	6	5	4	3%	20%	17%	13%	14	47%
3.3	4	6	7	7	13%	20%	23%	23%	6	20%
3.4	4	8	8	3	13%	27%	27%	10%	6	20%
3.5	4	9	4	11	13%	30%	13%	37%	2	7%
3.6	4	4	6	8	13%	13%	20%	27%	11	37%
3.7	9	7	6	1	30%	23%	20%	3%	9	30%
3.8	9	12	3	3	30%	40%	10%	10%	3	10%
4.1	4	4	3	4	13%	13%	10%	13%	14	47%
4.2	2	5	4	7	7%	17%	13%	23%	7	23%
4.3	3	4	1	5	10%	13%	3%	17%	16	53%
4.4	5	6	5	5	17%	20%	17%	17%	8	27%
4.5				12	0%	0%	0%	40%	18	60%
4.6				2	0%	0%	0%	7%	27	90%
4.7	1			3	3%	0%	0%	10%	27	90%
4.8				2	0%	0%	0%	7%	27	90%
Total	102	125	83	107					3	10%
Average (mean)	4.43	5.43	3.61	4.65	15%	18%	12%	16%	11.78	39%

The percentages are of the whole sample group (30), and total 100% if added to the proportion of benchmarks fully achieved.

Sample group: confidence rating for benchmark estimates
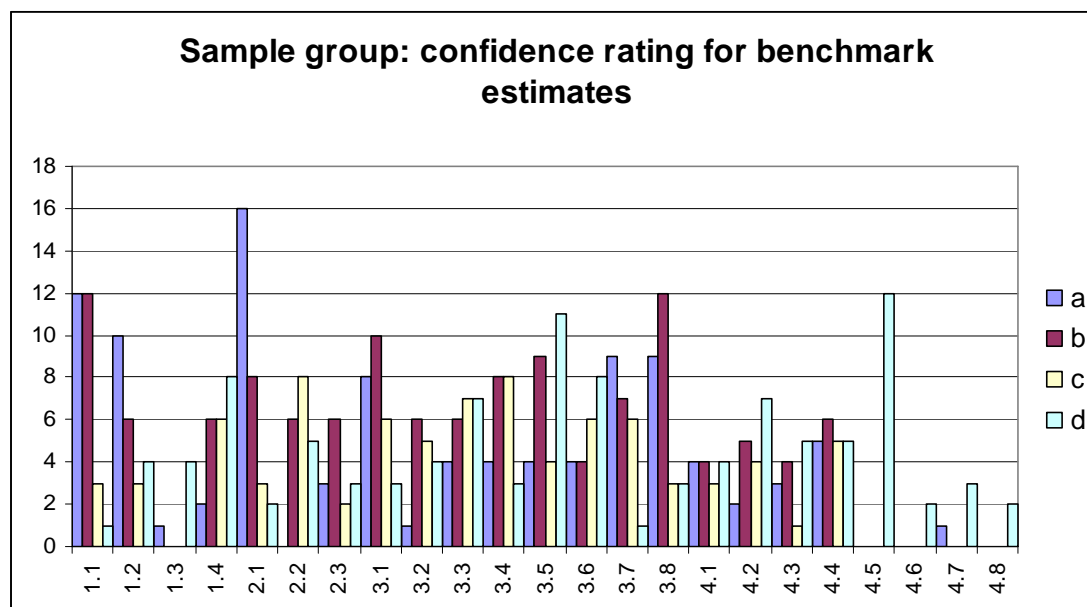
Confidence rating: project results

3.8 The confidence rating for each Record in estimates for achieving the benchmarks is a significant marker for the reliability of the results of the SMR Resources Assessment project overall. A high proportion of (d) estimates indicates a benchmark which a significant number of the sample group found difficult or impossible to cost. An unduly high number of un-costable estimates would raise concern about the validity of the results of this project. The higher the proportion of confident estimates, the more confident it is possible to be in the results of the project overall (**Chapter 4**).

3.9 Where unquantifiable estimates for a benchmark exceeded 20% the reasons were examined. This was the case for benchmarks 1.4, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 4.2 and 4.5. The reasons underlying the high proportions for benchmarks 1.4 and 4.5 were similar: without a full time SMR Officer (4.5) it can be impossible to develop a programme of outreach (1.4). Those without GIS (3.3) who were not already in the process of developing its implementation were not able to estimate this benchmark. The problem with data security (3.5) was in estimating costs for security copying or other aspects of implementing a policy, not with developing the policy itself. In relation to benchmark 3.6, the Records which could not estimate for the completion of an information audit had not completed an EH HER Audit, nor did they know the cost of doing so, given that the available grant frequently does not cover the full cost. Various of reasons were reported by those unable to estimate the costs involved in making formal agreements on geographical coverage and service levels with partners / service providers (4.2). The political aspect of this benchmark makes it more difficult to estimate.

3.10 Looking at the overall average percentages of confidence estimates, 15% were detailed, 18% were ball-park figures, 12% were approximate, and 16% could not be costed. 39% have achieved the benchmarks. Overall there are estimates of compliance or actual compliance itself recorded for 84% of Records in the sample. The un-costable benchmarks do not therefore appear to be a significant proportion.

3.11 However, 12% of the estimates were approximate, and 18% were ball-park figures; this suggests it will be necessary to consider the quantifications (**Chapter 4**) with care, making allowance for a degree of uncertainty in the underlying estimates.

24

4   QUANTIFICATION FOR RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1   This section presents the total resources required for all 88 SMRs and UADs to achieve the 1st stage HER Benchmarks. The results are presented by benchmark, and then by categories of benchmark, by type of record and authority, and by Region. The quantification methodology is described below.

Quantification by benchmark

4.2   The following table presents the total amounts required for all 88 Records to achieve the benchmarks; this total is converted into days to provide a generic requirement for comparison in future years. The totals for Benchmarks 1.3 *Research into user profiles*, 4.6 *Appropriate internal management arrangements*, 4.7 *Availability of technical advice on IT and archive / records management* and 4.8 *Staff development programme and resources* are nil, as costs borne by the Record's host organisation (see **Chapter 2**). The table takes account of the proportion of the sample which was unable to estimate some of the benchmarks, by extrapolating from those Records that could give estimates to include the rest. The figure provided for each benchmark on this basis is the best estimate that can be achieved at this level of enquiry.

4.3   However, it must be emphasised that not all the estimates given in responses were confident and therefore likely to be accurate (see **Chapter 3**), so the extrapolated totals must be taken as approximate figures only. It is noticeable that the estimate for benchmark 2.2 *Information coverage and content* is considerable. This is because it includes substantial estimates from two Records in the sample group. Although these two estimates may more properly be assigned to backlog clearance, it was decided not to exclude them, given the level of uncertainty over the confidence in the estimates upon which the figures are based.

4.4   The resources needed to achieve benchmark 4.5 *Professional post with primary responsibility for Record* are a recurring, annual requirement and are not included with the other costed benchmarks.

Bench-mark	Item	Total £ for 88 SMRs	Total days 88 SMRs
1.1	Information services policy	£57,904	483
1.2	Access to services	£48,502	404
1.3	Research into user profiles	0	0
1.4	Development of outreach programme	£557,744	4648
2.1	Information policy	£54,208	452
2.2	Information coverage and content	£1,990,874	16591
2.3	Management of primary or unique archive material	£62,165	518
3.1	Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice	£104,742	873
3.2	Computerised database to national data standards	£746,005	6217
3.3	GIS linked to Record database and manual	£273,649	2280
3.4	Supporting reference collections	£191,136	1593
3.5	Data security	£321,286	2677
3.6	Information audit on quinquennial basis	£127,709	1064
3.7	Data validation and currency	£49,560	413
3.8	Safeguards against foreseeable risks and disaster	£63,558	530
4.1	Formal adoption as maintained public information resource	£45,056	375
4.2	Formal agreement with partners/service providers	£56,304	469
4.3	Statement of purpose or mission statement	£28,952	241
4.4	Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision	£66,308	553
4.6	Appropriate internal management arrangements	0	0
4.7	Technical advice on IT and archive/records management	0	0
4.8	Staff training and development programme and resources	0	0
Total excluding benchmark 4.5		**£4845663**	**40381**
4.5	Professional post with primary responsibility for Record (**annual** cost / days)	£844,800	7040

Quantification by category of benchmark

4.5   The totals by category in the following table have been calculated from the figures in the table above, so are subject to the same caveats over the levels of confidence. They are also presented as person days to provide a generic measure.

Category	Benchmark	Total £ by category	Total days by category
Serving user needs	1.1-1.2	£106,406	887
Satisfying user needs	1.3		
Reaching new audiences	1.4	£557,744	4648
Information content	2.1-2.3	£2,107,248	17560
System organisation and procedures	3.1-3.4	£1,315,532	10963
Quality and security measures	3.5-3.8	£562,113	4684
Corporate and business arrangements	4.1-4.4	£196,620	1639
Total excluding benchmark 4.5		**£4,845,663**	**40381**
Staffing and support services	4.5	£844,800	7040

Quantification by type of Record and LA

4.6   The following table shows the distribution of the total cost of £4,845,663 between the different types of Local Authority / Record. Dividing it equally amongst all 88 gives a cost per Record of £55,064, which equates to 459 person days. The table gives the totals per Record type when these amounts are multiplied up according to the number of Records in each category. This method of extrapolation is regarded as relatively crude, as it takes no account of the relative strengths of individual Records or Local Authority / Record types. The total was divided equally amongst all records because the numbers in the sample and the total are small, statistically speaking. It was also considered that this would minimise distortion from unusually large or small estimates from individual authorities. Furthermore, including costs for the smaller groups would not allow confidentiality to be preserved.

LA / Record type	No in sample	No / % in population		£ of total for total population	Days per type for total population
County SMR	10	32	36%	£1,762,059	14684
County SMR + UAD	2	2	2%	£110,129	918
District SMR	0	1	1%	£55,064	459
District SMR + UAD	3	3	3%	£165,193	1377
District UAD	4	8	9%	£440,515	3671
Joint Service SMR	4	7	8%	£385,450	3212
Joint Serv SMR + UAD	1	1	1%	£55,064	459
Unitary SMR	6	32	36%	£1,762,059	14684
Unitary SMR + UAD	0	2	2%	£110,129	918

Quantification by Region

4.7   The following table presents quantifications by Region for all 88 Records. The Record unit cost has been multiplied by the number of Records in that Region to arrive at a figure for each Region. This has been converted to days to provide a generic resource measure. At this smaller scale the method of extrapolation from a Record unit cost is a blunt instrument that should be regarded as little more than a preliminary indication.

Region	No of Records in Region	Record unit cost	Unit cost x no. of Records	Days per Region
East of England	12	£55,064	£660,772	5506
East Midlands	9	£55,064	£495,579	4130
London	1	£55,064	£55,064	459
North East	5	£55,064	£275,322	2294
North West	6	£55,064	£330,386	2753
South East	20	£55,064	£1,101,287	9177
South West	16	£55,064	£881,030	7342
West Midlands	12	£55,064	£660,772	5506
Yorkshire and the Humber	7	£55,064	£385,450	3212

Quantification methodology

4.8   The same methodology has been used for all the quantifications discussed in this report. As a check, that the total appears to be in the right order of magnitude, a slightly cruder alternative methodology was used and this is described in **Appendix C**. The grand total of £4,845,663 given here compares with £4,872,366 calculated with the alternative methodology.

4.9   Any apparent slight arithmetical errors in this chapter are due to rounding figures to whole numbers. All calculations were carried out in MS Excel.

4.10   The calculation below uses the costs given by the proportion of the sample group which were less than fully compliant with each benchmark in order to calculate a cost per Record for each benchmark. As already described, this calculation takes account of those in the sample group who were unable to provide estimates.

4.11   The number of Records in the sample which were less-than-compliant, but able to estimate is shown in column B. The cost for the sample to achieve each benchmark is shown in column F. The cost per benchmark for each less-than-compliant record is shown in column G, calculated by dividing column F by column B. To arrive at a cost for all 88, it is assumed that the same proportion will be less-than-compliant as in the sample, shown in column E. The cost per Record is multiplied by x% of 88, using the percentages in column E. Column G converts the column F total to days. The data in columns C and D are provided for information. Benchmark 4.5 *Professional post with primary responsibility for Record* is calculated differently, see below.

HEC / HCA / AAC

Bench-mark	Sample: less-than-compliant but able to estimate	Sample: all less-than-compliant (for info)	Proportion of less-than-compliant able to estimate (for info)	Sample: proportion less-than-compliant	Sample: cost to achieve bench-marks excl historic costs	Cost per less-than-compliant SMR, on basis of those which could estimate	Cost for all 88 assuming same level of less-than-compliance	Days for all 88
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1.1	27	28	96%	90%	£19,740	£731	£57,904	483
1.2	19	23	83%	73%	£14,280	£752	£48,502	404
1.3	1	5	20%	17%	0	0	0	0
1.4	14	22	64%	70%	£126,760	£9,054	£557,744	4648
2.1	27	29	93%	90%	£18,480	£684	£54,208	452
2.2	14	19	74%	63%	£500,100	£35,721	£1,990,874	16591
2.3	11	14	79%	53%	£14,570	£1,325	£62,165	518
3.1	24	27	89%	90%	£31,740	£1,323	£104,742	873
3.2	12	16	75%	53%	£190,740	£15,895	£746,005	6217
3.3	17	24	71%	80%	£66,080	£3,887	£273,649	2280
3.4	20	23	87%	80%	£54,300	£2,715	£191,136	1593
3.5	17	28	61%	93%	£66,500	£3,912	£321,286	2677
3.6	14	22	64%	63%	£32,080	£2,291	£127,709	1064
3.7	22	23	96%	70%	£17,700	£805	£49,560	413
3.8	24	27	89%	90%	£19,260	£803	£63,558	530
4.1	11	15	73%	53%	£10,560	£960	£45,056	375
4.2	11	18	61%	77%	£9,180	£835	£56,304	469
4.3	8	13	62%	47%	£5,640	£705	£28,952	241
4.4	16	21	76%	73%	£16,440	£1,028	£66,308	553
4.5*								
4.6	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
4.7	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
4.8	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0
Total					£1214,150	£83,424	£4,845,663	40381

- see below for calculation of benchmark 4.5

4.12   An estimated annual total for **Benchmark 4.5** *Professional post with primary responsibility for Record* is given in the following table. 10 of 30 sample Records were non-compliant, representing a proportion of 0.33. Using the same annual cost as described above (£24,000), and applying the proportion to the 88 records gives a total **annual** cost of £704,000. To this can be added an additional proportion of Records which stated that to maintain standards at Benchmark level 1 would require greater staff resources than exist at present. This amounted to two of the 30 sample Records. This adds a further £140,800 when multiplied up for the total population. The total **annual** cost for benchmark 4.5 is estimated as £844,800.

Benchmark	Non-compliant	Non-compliant proportion	Cost per annum	Total Records	Total proportion @ 0.33	Total cost for population
4.5	10	0.33	£24000	88	29.33	£704000
4.5	2*	0.066	£24000	88	5.866	£140800
Total						£844800

5   NARRATIVE OF SURVEY RESULTS BY BENCHMARK

This chapter outlines and discusses the survey results by Benchmark. For each one it reproduces the Benchmark (.1), the Actions (.3) and the Estimate requirement (.4) as contained in the Information Pack sent to interviewees.

The Type of benchmark (.2) refers to a matrix with one axis having the four basic topics carried through from Baker 1999 and Chitty 2002, and the other axis having the four aspects of 'policy', 'system operation', 'outreach / use' and 'quality assurance'.

The table of compliance (.5) cross-refers to the presentation of survey results in Chapter 3 and is based upon a detailed analysis and sorting of the returns, lodged in the project archive.

Comments (.6) cover compliance, time requirements and reliability, together with any other relevant material gathered about aspects of SMR / UAD functions: some of these are taken up in the final recommendations.

1.1   Information services policy

1.1.1   Benchmark

A written policy for information services setting out the purposes for which the historic environment record is maintained, the professional and public user groups it aims to serve, and the arrangements for providing information and access for those users according to their particular needs.

1.1.2   Type   User Services and Access – Policy

1.1.3   Actions

Preparation of the policy, including discussion, drafting, consultation, revision, and formal adoption by the service / authority; alternatively, review / revision of existing policy to ensure conformity with benchmarks for good practice. This is essentially a 'headlines' policy, but its implications should have been thought through in some detail during drafting and consultation. It would be used to define what capability was being 'adopted' as laid out in Benchmark 4.1 *Formal adoption as maintained public information resource.*

1.1.4   Estimates   Staff time to develop and adopt new policy or review / revise existing one: £ 57,904 = total cost multiplied up from sample

1.1.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	3	10%	3 County SMRs (1 +UAD)
Part compliant	12	40%	5 Counties (2 + UAD), 3 Unitary, 3 Joint Service and 1 District + UAD.
Non-compliant	15	50%	4 Counties, 4 District UADs, 2 District SMRs + UAD, 3 Unitaries, 2 Joint Services

1.1.6   Comment

(a)   (i)   There is some evidence of a link between *compliance* and a HER Audit or service planning, and the compliant group includes some of the stronger County SMRs.

(ii)   In *partial compliance*, there are the elements of a policy in various other documents, but needing review, drawing together and consultation. In two cases stimulus came from a HER Audit and the recent appointment of a first dedicated SMRO. Some relatively well-developed services with long-term staffing continuity need to articulate formally what has been accepted implicitly for some time.

(iii)   For the *non-compliant*, in some cases the lack of a policy was equated with the lack of a dedicated SMRO. In several cases there seemed to be little idea of what might be involved and how long it might take; the need for a model was stressed. A Joint Service emphasised the difficulty of getting several authorities to agree a common policy.

(b)   The range of time requirements is wide, mostly within **2 – 10 pd**, with a similar range in each of the three non-compliant groups. Some of the larger estimates may reflect either inexperience in preparing this kind of document with its 'policy' element, or expectation of the need for consultation processes internally and externally. The production of a model policy might allow time requirements to be reduced.

(c)   Reliability of the responses is good; only 1 (3%) needing to estimate resources was unable to do so.

1.2   Access to services

1.2.1   Benchmark

Publication of details of public access and search facilities (remote and / or local), including opening hours and charging policy in printed leaflet / poster, web site / page with email address and index entry in HEIRNET Register.

User facilities, according to local policy (1.1), should include a supervised work area for researchers, appropriately equipped and with facilities for copying, etc. Where such facilities are limited, there should be an appropriate alternative provision such as a specified level of response to postal, telephone and email enquiries and / or remote access to the Record via other services (e.g. from terminals in museums, libraries, record offices).

1.2.2   Type

User Services and Access / Outreach and Use

1.2.3   Actions

The preparation and publication of the relevant information in the three media identified. Assessment of adequacy of supervised work area and associated facilities and feasibility of developing or improving. Where circumstances prevent these being provided, the alternative of remote access via other services may be adopted.

1.2.4   Estimates

Estimated staff time for preparation and publication of access arrangements.

Supervised work area should be part of the host authority's accommodation provision. Where none available, the estimated staff time for setting up basic alternative provision for responding (e.g. web page / email link for enquires) may be included, but not the costs of developing full remote electronic access to the SMR.

£ 48,502

1.2.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	8	27%	4 Counties, 1 Joint Service, 1 Unitary, 1 District UAD, and 1 Joint Service SMR / UAD.
Part compliant	18	60%	see 1.2.6 below
Non-compliant	4	13%	2 District UADs, 1 District SMR / UAD, and 1 Unitary SMR.

1.2.6   Comment

(a)   This benchmark allows for up to four indicators, three advertising the existence of the SMR / HER, and one providing physical or remote access. Partial compliance can be interpreted as either some but not all of the four, or as a mix of compliance and active progress towards it, the latter including existing arrangements needing review and updating. The table above shows the broad picture.

(b)   Looked at in more detail:

(i) The 8 *compliant* in all four elements include 4 Counties, 1 Joint Service, 1 Unitary, 1 District UAD, and 1 Joint Service SMR / UAD.

(ii)   4 (13%) are *wholly non-compliant*, 2 District UADs, 1 District SMR / UAD, and 1 Unitary SMR.

(iii)   4 (13%) are *compliant but with elements needing review*, 1 County SMR, 1 Unitary SMR, 1 Joint service SMR and 1 District SMR + UAD.

(iv)   1 (3%), a Unitary SMR, complies with the three types of advertisement but does not provide access.

(v)   6 (20%) provide access but lack one of the three advertisements, 2 County SMRs, 1 Joint Service SMR, 2 County SMRs + UAD and 1 District SMR + UAD.

(vi)   3 (10%) lack provision for access and for one or two types of advertisement, 1 Unitary SMR, 1 District UAD and 1 Joint Service SMR.

(vii)   3 (10%) provide access but lack two of the three types of advertisement, 2 County SMRs and 1 Unitary SMR.

(viii)   1 County SMR provides access but lacks all three types of advertisement.

(ix)   23 (77%) provided **access**, 17 (56.%) provided physical only, and 6 (20%) **both physical and web;** the latter includes 5 County SMRs and a District UAD with a good County linkage. 7 (23%) provided no access, 3 Unitary SMRs, 3 District UADs, and 1 District SMR / UAD.

(x)   *All three advertisement criteria* were fulfilled by the same 14 (47%) wholly compliant Records. Failure rates for producing the *leaflet* are 15 (50%), inserting the *HEIRNET entry* 8 (27%), and getting an entry on the corporate web-page or web-site 6 (20%).

(c)   These figures suggest that the longer established County SMRs are better at providing access, especially where fusion of an SMR and a UAD has really (rather than aspirationally) taken place. Greater weakness appears in new Unitaries and District UADs; they contribute substantially to the alarming total of nearly a quarter of the sample not providing any physical public access. Engagement with an HLF access project is obviously a significant factor; there is scope for guidance to help smaller more hard-pressed Records apply.

(d)   The resource implications of achieving these four benchmarks vary considerably, as between levels of input needed and whether it is a one-off task subject to regular review or requires continuous input of resources. Where time and costs required for compliance were offered,

there was a predictable distinction between small amounts, less than 2 days, for the simpler activities and straightforward revisions, and doing leaflets from scratch, for which several weeks was indicated. 4 (13%) were unable to provide estimates, but mostly because they were so far away from being able to provide advertisement and access; thus the pattern of costs provided by others will be a fairly reliable guide.

(e)   Some other points about access arose from the interviews.

(i)   There may be a technical issue about computer-based access, whether at the SMR or remotely, concerning the ease with which a 'read-only' facility also blocking access to sensitive information can be installed.

(ii)   In several cases, the provision of physical access relies upon unsatisfactory *ad hoc* hot-desking in open-plan work areas.

(iii)   The ability to provide physical access is directly related to whether or not there is a dedicated SMRO or equivalent.

(iv)   The number of responses that indicated a leaflet or web-page entry was in need of revision suggests that the benchmark might incorporate a regular review, unless other benchmarks such as those related to service planning could pick it up automatically.

1.3   Research into user profiles and service satisfaction

1.3.1   Benchmark

A maintained register of users and type of enquiry for both local and remote use (e.g. web hits, telephone enquiries, as well as visits by researchers).

1.3.2   Type

User Services and Access / Outreach and Use

1.3.3   Actions

Creation of a user registration system if none existing.

1.3.4   Estimates

The cost of creating such a register is assumed to be minimal and its maintenance is part of routine service provision.

£ not calculated

1.3.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	25	83%	
Part compliant			
Non-compliant	5	17%	1 County SMR, 4 District UADs,

1.3.6   Comment

(a)   The non-compliant County SMR records visitors to the parent service at a coarser scale.

(b)   7 (23%) have some kind of questionnaire or measure of service satisfaction from feedback in addition to a register: this is a 2nd stage benchmark. They are 5 County SMRs, I Joint Service SMR + UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR.

(c)   Two Records with public web-access make the point that whilst the number and frequency of 'hits' could be recorded, there was no way of finding out whether they were accidental, casual, satisfied, or unsatisfied, or what category of use was involved.

(d)   Responses varied in the level of detail offered, and it was not practicable to inspect and analyse registers; a lengthier scrutiny might have created an intermediate category that recorded the number of consultees but said little about their purposes. If the existence of the register derives only from corporate performance measurement, then it may be of the coarser variety; if it derives from the management and promotion of the service itself, as an input to annual reports, then it is likely to have more detail. This is a benchmark whose satisfaction would benefit from a nationally endorsed model.

(e)   4 (13%) needing to estimate costs were unable to do so; these are the Records unable to provide access. Though this is a significant proportion of the sample, this benchmark is not to be costed, its achievement being considered to be a reasonable demand upon the local service.

1.4   Development of outreach programme

1.4.1   Benchmark

Programme of outreach activities to develop new audiences and promote wider use of resources; or outline proposals for how such a balanced programme will be developed in the future.

1.4.2   Type

User Services and Access / Outreach and Use

1.4.3   Actions

Preparing an outreach programme including consultation as appropriate with users / audiences and colleagues. The alternative, outline development proposals, must be credibly comprehensive in scope and have the positive support of the host authority at least in principle. Obtaining an HLF-funded outreach scheme does meet the benchmark on the assumption that it is required to include a realistic commitment to continuation after the scheme has finished.

1.4.4   Estimates

Estimated costs of staff time / consultancy to develop outreach proposals, based on consultation / user survey if appropriate, but not including costs of full development of the programme. £ 557,744

1.4.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	9	30%	5 County SMRs, 1 County SMR + UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD, 1 Joint Service and 1 Unitary.
Part compliant	9	30%	4 County SMRs, 2 Joint Service SMRs, 2 Unitary SMRs and 1 District SMR + UAD.
Non-compliant	12	40%	1 County SMR, 1 County SMR + UAD, 3 Unitary SMRs, 1 Joint Service SMR, 4 District UADs and 2 District SMR + UAD.

1.4.6   Comment

(a)   6 of the fully compliant involved HLF projects, as did all but one of the partially compliant, defined as having a partial programme of outreach supported by some developed proposals. Some of the non-compliant have ad hoc outreach but no programme. Success in achieving an HLF project equates to achieving this benchmark.

(b)   The weakness of the relatively new Unitary SMRs and of District UADs comes through clearly.

(c)   Estimates of cost for developing a programme are mostly in double-figures of person-days, perhaps indicating a significant but uncertain task, hard to pin down outside the specific framework of an HLF bid. Guidance about the content of several levels / modes of outreach might help the three Records that indicated proposed changes in circumstances, enabling them to improve their outreach but not to develop the planned programme required by the benchmark. 7 (23%) were unable to provide estimates of time / cost to achieve the benchmark. The reasons mostly related to structural under-resourcing, i.e. such activities were not actually envisaged in the managerial framework. There do not appear to be any factors that would prevent generalising from the other returns.

(d)   Running through all these responses is the close relationship between the availability of resources and outreach capabilities. SMROs also fulfilling the planning advisory function have little or no time to do more than the occasional event. One County SMR reported only partial compliance as a direct result of recent cuts. In some instances personal enthusiasm and commitment provides some outreach; in others, either personal circumstances do not permit the required unpaid overtime, or personal pump priming initiatives fail to develop and endure for lack of recognition managerially or politically.

(e)   The dependence of SMRs upon HLF projects for structured outreach programmes is remarkable; it raises the difficult question of 'additionality' if SMRs / UADs become a statutory requirement that is a community resource as well as a planning tool. The acid test is the ability of an SMR / UAD to sustain HLF-funded outreach after the project has formally ended; the impression gained is of good intentions but likely mixed outcomes. Optimistically, three Records with a Museums rather than a Planning base comment that it is difficult to distinguish SMR outreach from their wider parent service outreach.

2.1   Information policy

2.1.1   Benchmark

A written policy setting out the scope, geographical coverage and content of information resources that should be accessible through the service (digital, non-digital and reference collections). The policy should take account of related historic environment information systems, museum, library and record office collections that complement the Record's holdings.

In principle, the Record should be inclusive of subject and period for all archaeology, terrestrial and maritime, either through its own holdings or links with related information resources. In practice, the circumstances of its development and resources may mean that the Record is not all-inclusive. The policy should be explicit about differential coverage in period and topic and selective inclusion or omissions (e.g. cut-off dates, datasets from thematic surveys).

The policy will include a statement of existing arrangements for exchanging or sharing data and networking systems with related local records and other information providers / originators. This will also cover licence agreements (e.g. with NMR) and a statement on IPR issues.

2.1.2   Type
Information Coverage and Content / Policy

2.1.3   Actions

Preparing a policy that accurately describes the scope, area and information content that the SMR includes, or provides access to.

This does not include expanding an existing differential coverage, which should be regarded as enhancement and outside the scope of this assessment. However, the policy should include a programme for enhancement where this is appropriate and where the process of drafting the information policy has highlighted the need.

2.1.4   Estimates

Estimated costs of staff time to develop, draft and adopt an information policy.
£ 54,208

2.1.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	3	10%	1 County SMR, 1 Unitary SMR and 1 District UAD.
Part compliant	18	60%	
Non-compliant	9	30%	2 County SMRs, 2 District UADs, 1 District SMR + UAD, 3 Unitary SMRs, 1 Joint Service SMR.

2.1.6   Comment

(a)   Because such a large group is in the partially compliant category, there is no clear pattern of authority / record types. It may however be the case that the process of doing a HER Audit or preparing a UAD to the stage of database does require several of the elements in this benchmark, and the issue will be the availability of resources to move forward and deal with the remaining elements.

(b)   There is a fairly wide range of estimates for the time needed to achieve full compliance, but mostly in single figures and generally under a working month; more detailed work would be needed to establish how far each Record has got with the various tasks. Time requirements for the non-compliant were not significantly greater than for the partially compliant group, suggesting a range of perceptions about what is needed and how to achieve it. 2 (7%) were unable to provide any information, one reflecting the absence of dedicated staff and one the complexities that can arise in Joint Service arrangements.

(c)   The extent to which a corporate culture has developed in each authority will help determine the ease with which a statement of existing arrangements for exchanging or sharing data and networking systems with related local records and other information providers / originators can be provided. This could also be the subject of a model prepared to guide individual Records.

2.2   Information coverage and content

2.2.1   Benchmark
The coverage of an HER, in accordance with its information policy, should include units of information compiled from the sources outlined in detail in IFP Guidelines D.3 – 5. It should provide comprehensive coverage for statutorily and non-statutorily designated historic places in its area through its own data holdings or linkages to others.

A draft minimum content standard is appended at Annex 1: HER Basic compliance specification DRAFT v0.2.

2.2.2   Type
Information Coverage and Content / System Operation

2.2.3   Actions
Combinations of data-cleaning and selective enhancement as appropriate, applied to individual records. This refers to the standard of coverage within individual records, as measured against the draft minimum content standard. It does not refer to the extent of spatial / temporal / topical coverage of the Record as a whole [though this is expected to provide coverage as per the benchmark statement above].

2.2.4   Estimates
Estimated staff time and any other costs to ensure compliance
£ 1,990,874

2.2.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	11	37%	4 County SMRs, 3 District UADs, 2 District SMR + UAD, 1 Unitary SMR and 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD.
Part compliant	18	60%	
Non-compliant	1	3%	1 District UAD

2.2.6   Comment

(a)   There should be compliance in all maintained UADs, and SMR migration to HBSMR with its E-M-A data model would be a strong incentive towards compliance. However, the responses were not entirely consistent with this model, and a further check might have to be undertaken against HER Audits, at least recent ones.

(b)   There is a wide range of estimates, with as expected some large ones towards the higher end. These include 4 County SMRs - 50 pd, 60 pd, 100 pd, 1800 pd; 3 Joint Service SMRs - 65 pd, c1200 pd, > 500 pd; 1 Unitary SMR - 100 pd; 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD - 80 pd; 1 County SMR + UAD - c300 pd.

(c)   4 (13%) definitely stated they were unable to give any estimates; a further 7 (23%) in the non / partially compliant categories did not offer any clear figures. 10 (33%) were able to provide clear figures. This adds to an impression that this topic will need further definition before hard figures are attached to it. Also, Benchmarks 2.2 and 3.2 *Computerised database to national data standards* need to be correlated.

(d)   Reviewing the sample survey results shows there is an issue about the level of detail at which compliance is assessed. One factor is how thoroughly all units of information are to be provided for each record; another, especially for older records, is how far back retrospectively data-cleaning has to be taken. There may be a need to define a minimum threshold of retrievability, towards which resources should be directed as a priority, with longer-term programmes bringing all holdings up to standard in all respects. Properly staffed SMRs / UADs ought to be able to build such work into their programmes. Immediate perfection could be very expensive, and it is not entirely clear what degrees of perfection informed the various estimates given.

2.3 Management of primary or unique archive material (by an appropriate curatorial service)

2.3.1 Benchmark

Primary or unique archive material should be managed by an appropriate curatorial service.

Primary archive (digital, non-digital and finds) should be deposited with an appropriate repository. A disposals policy for staged transfers may be required and security copying / scanning of non-digital material as appropriate.

2.3.2 Type

Information Coverage and Content / System Operation

2.3.3 Actions

Assess scale and type of primary or unique archive material held in the SMR (finds, documents etc) and devise a policy and programme for disposal as appropriate, with agreement of partner organisations (local RO or museum). Assess need for any copying / scanning of such material and quantify costs.

Archive material that the SMR holds itself – images, written reports of inspections, etc – can be held providing security copying has taken place, to be costed under Benchmark 3.5 *Data security.*

2.3.4 Estimates

Estimation of staff time and other costs to assess archive material for disposal / copying. It is expected that transfer of original material to an appropriate archive holding body will not carry costs and that copies would be available as required on demand. Costs of copying essential reference material for SMR holdings should be included.

£ 62,165

2.3.5 Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	14	47%	
Part compliant	11	37%	(compliant apart from security copying part of benchmark 3.5)
Non-compliant	5	17%	2 District SMR + UADs, 1 District UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD (with a programme to deal with it) and 1 Joint Service SMR.

2.3.6 Comment

(a) This was one of several benchmarks that highlighted the wide diversity amongst SMRs about quantities of non-digital holdings, the larger ones built up over several decades.

(b) Those SMRs / UADs with a museums or non-planning base seemed well able to distinguish between their own and others' archival functions.

(c) This is a low-cost benchmark, with the main item being copying costs for essential reference material. Only 2 (7%) Records were unable to assess, suggesting a good level of confidence in the returns.

3.1   Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice

3.1.1   Benchmark
Written manual or 'recording guidelines' to provide quality assurance, documenting 3.2. – 3.5

3.1.2   Type
Information Management / Quality Assurance

3.1.3   Actions
Preparing or reviewing appropriate documentation is expected to draw upon available national models or nationally accepted examples of best practice. The standard required would enable, for example, a maternity cover post-holder to do the job properly and could also be used as a training manual

3.1.4   Estimates
Estimated staff / consultancy time to prepare / review manual
£ 104,742

3.1.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	3	10%	1 Joint Service SMR + UAD, and 1 Joint Service SMR, 1 District UAD
Part compliant	18	60%	
Non-compliant	9	30%	1 County SMRs, 1 County SMR + UAD, 4 Unitary SMRs, 1 District UADs, 1 District SMR + UAD and 1 Joint Service SMR.

3.1.6   Comment

(a)   The partly compliant are those with manuals needing updating or completing.

(b)   Together, the partly compliant and non-compliant categories contained the full range of authority / record types.

(c)   This can be a substantial piece of work to carry through thoroughly. The wide range of estimates reflects either a whole series of different steps along the road to compliance, or a lack of clarity and appreciation of the nature of the task. Again, an outline model of what is needed might bring help and reduce costs. 4 (13%) could not give any estimates, two of them reflecting the lack of a dedicated post.

(d)   Any system running HBSMR has the benefit of the manuals (User Guide and System Administrators Guide) provided by exeGesIS SDM, but these are not the same as recording guidelines. The User Guide covers areas such as system navigation rather than the content of each field. Each HER should have its own manual detailing recording practice and making reference to the technical documentation and *Informing the Future of the Past* (Fernie and Gillman, 2000). The full manual required under this benchmark must cover all aspects of SMR work, not just the database. Similarly, any UAD ought to have a manual reflecting its achievement of the database stage of development, but again there is the question of maintenance. Dedicated staff are essential.

3.2   Computerised database to national data standards

3.2.1   Benchmark

Compliance with a basic MIDAS data content standard and with Event – Monument – Archive / Source information schemes; conformity with INSCRIPTION wordlists and thesauri.

3.2.2   Type

Information Management / Quality Assurance

3.2.3   Actions

Assess and quantify needs for recasting 'old-style' records together with directly associated data-cleaning. This excludes data enhancement.

3.2.4   Estimates

Estimated staff time to assess and carry out necessary upgrading of data holdings. £ 746,005

3.2.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	14	47%	3 County SMRs, 1 County SMR + UAD, 3 District UADs, 2 District SMRs + UADs, 2 Joint Service SMRs, and 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD, and 2 Unitary SMRs
Part compliant	13	43%	5 County SMRs, 4 Unitary SMRs, 1 County SMR + UAD, 2 Joint Service SMRs and 1 District SMR + UAD
Non-compliant	3	10%	2 County SMRs and 1 District UAD

3.2.6   Comment

(a)   Strictly, all UADs ought to be compliant since they pioneered the E – M – A data structure, but some do not qualify in respect of other MIDAS criteria. Some were also developed before relational databases were easily available, so although Events and Monuments are separately recorded, they may be present in the same database table, and only linked by a cross-reference. The two non-compliant Counties reflect the difficulty that older records with significant pre-HBSMR holdings have in recasting for full MIDAS compliance, a problem faced also by some of the partially compliant.

(b)   Authority / record types are distributed generally across the two main categories.

(c)   This benchmark attracted some substantial estimates. 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD **40 pd**, 3 County SMRs **45 pd, 60 pd, 120 pd, 800 pd**, 1 Unitary SMR **250 pd**, 1 Joint Service SMR **200 pd**, 1 District SMR + UAD **300 pd.** 4 (13%) were unable to provide any estimate, all related to non-compliant software issues.

(d)   The E – M – A data structure is an issue with substantial resource implications. A few otherwise well-developed SMRs have not adopted it, partly for software reasons, and partly due to cost; they mostly claim to be able to function effectively without it

(e)   Benchmarks 2.2 *Information coverage and content* and 3.2 need to be correlated.

(f)   Two of the SMRs visited queried whether this benchmark required the use of exeGesiS SDM's HBSMR software, and a third is intending to move from HBSMR to an in-house system. In some cases corporate IT policies make it difficult or impossible for Records to adopt non-standard software packages such as HBSMR, or cause difficulties when upgrades are required or annual technical support contracts need renewal. 49% of Records were using HBSMR in 2002, and 7% were using the previous version of HBSMR software (Newman 2002).

3.3   GIS linked to Record database and manual

3.3.1   Benchmark

Compliance with national standards for spatial data and guidance on GIS good practice, e.g. ADS GIS Guide to Good Practice Guide, NGDF metadata standard.

3.3.2   Type

Information Management / Quality Assurance

3.3.3   Actions

Prepare a written manual and / or adopted policy statement which sets out the SMRs GIS policy. This should address the specific issues for GIS data standards in section B.8.2 of IFP. Where this manual / policy relates to a standard for recording the origin and nature of GIS data layers, then this should include at least the mandatory metadata recommended by the GIGateway / NGDF standard.

3.3.4   Estimates

Estimated staff time to prepare manual / policy statement. Estimated staff time and non-staff costs to acquire GIS software linked to Record database (and training), but not costs of mapping, implementation / related data cleaning and enhancement.

£ 273,649

3.3.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	6	20%	2 County SMRs, 2 District UADs, 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD and 1 County SMR + UAD
Part compliant	20	67%	
Non-compliant	4	30%	1 County SMR, 1 District UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR and 1 Unitary SMR

3.3.6   Comment

(a)   The partially compliant are deficient in a variety of matters, including the required manual, polygonisation, and GIS linkages. Compliance with polygonisation was taken as its application to all features whose size / shape / location reasonably fits them for that treatment.

(b)   This is another benchmark that should favour UADs, but most were not fully compliant, especially those compiled early on before GIS had been developed to the extent it has today.

(c)   The GIS functionality offered with HBSMR is not utilised by records in some Local
Authorities using other GIS packages, who in some cases choose not to use HBSMR at all, but
to develop an in-house application which will link to the corporate GIS. An issue for some
Records was the reported inability of HBSMR 'to deal with metadata', noted by several
interviewees, and other perceived limitations (e.g. available only in a MapInfo module). Other
criticisms of HBSMR in relation to GIS included the limitations of the MapInfo GIS module in
relation to recording and analysing historic landscapes. In two cases this was an additional
precipitating factor in decisions to move away from or not adopt HBSMR. The Steering Group
for this project advise that 'HBSMR does not have limited GIS functionality and it is not
limited to MapInfo; also, an ArcView / Info option is available and was upgraded last year. A
module for historic landscapes will be included in Version 3, which will be available shortly'.
The implications of this advice, in relation to some of the comments from the sampled SMRs /
HERs, suggests there may be a communication problem here within the SMR / HER
community which should be addressed as a priority. Also there is an issue about the time it
takes for changes to happen. If a particular function is not available at a given time, an SMR
may look into other options for that functionality. Subsequently exeGesiS may make it
available, but the SMR may have already made a strategic decision to do something different.

(d)   'Polygonisation' is a live issue. The extent to which a record has been polygonised varies
according to local circumstances and priorities. Everyone recognises that not everything can be
expressed as a polygon, and some located record items are better expressed as a point. A few
oppose it on methodological grounds – 'how does one know the limits of a site ?' Yet
protection by designation gives definite boundaries, and polyganisation is a real issue in the
context of SMR involvement in Government initiatives such as the Agri-Environment Entry
Level Scheme. Given that the benchmark does not require polygonisation explicitly, and that
the 2002 survey (Newman 2002) showed some SMRs recording designations as points, the
benchmark may require revision.

(e)   Where given, estimates for actions such as polygonisation and manual preparation were
generally **20 pd or less.** The difficulty of assessing this benchmark is indicated by the 7 (23%)
of Records unable to provide any estimate of time and cost to reach compliance. It was difficult
to distinguish between degrees of nearness of compliance at this rather coarse level of survey.
Probably very few, if any, Records were fully compliant, if only due to the problems with
metadata and HBSMR, but several were close.

(f)   The benchmark was interpreted for the sample as requiring an E – M – A structured database
interactively linked to GIS, so that a 'click' on the point or polygon would bring up information
from the database, and the GIS could be specifically accessed from a database entry.
Arrangements by which material from the database is placed on the relevant layer of a
departmental 'constraints' GIS were counted as non-compliant. It is clear from the sample that
several of those who responded to the HIPS Computing Survey (Newman 2002) were
registering the existence of a separate GIS system with archaeological information transferred
to it, rather than an integrated GIS and database.

(g)   The difficulties faced by Joint Services who have to serve several different types of domestic
GIS is a factor to be taken into account.

(h)   There seems to be an urgent need to ensure a coordinated approach to the two exercises of (a)
developing SMR / UAD technical capabilities regarding GIS and (b) exploring general
possibilities for interoperability through portals and gateways. The risk is that the latter
without the former will leave those SMRs / UADs that are more strongly influenced by local IT
policies and opportunities unable to contribute fully to regional digital consortia without major
development, software migrations or significant data recasting.

3.4   Supporting reference collections (secondary sources, maps, graphic and photographic material)

3.4.1   Benchmark

A written guide and index to supporting reference collections held by the Record. Collections should be housed and maintained to relevant environmental and storage standards.

3.4.2   Type

Information Management / System Operation

3.4.3   Actions

Creation of a collections catalogue, referring to initial creation only, not continuing maintenance

Assess needs for and specify appropriate special storage facilities beyond normal host authority accommodation and basic furniture.

3.4.4   Estimates

Estimated staff time to create or complete catalogue. Estimated special storage requirements

£ 191,136

3.4.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	6	20%	1 County SMR + UAD, 1 Joint Service UAD + SMR, 3 Joint Service SMRs, and 1 Unitary SMR
Part compliant	17	57%	
Non-compliant	7	23%	3 Unitary SMRs and 4 District UADs

3.4.6   Comment

(a)   There are no obvious patterns by authority / record type.

(b)   A fairly wide range of estimates from a few days to several weeks suggests both a wide range of reference collections, depending upon the age and policies of an SMR / UAD, and different levels of envisaged indexing. A relatively small proportion – 3 (10%) – were unable to estimate the costs of creating the catalogue.

(c)   Recent completion of a HER Audit ought to have led to a good level of cataloguing, and some suggested a catalogue could be created from the archive element of a database in software supporting the E – M – A data model. Done by cross-referencing, however, it is a Stage 2 task: it is worth noting the comment of a maturer SMR that "to create one cross-referenced to the computerised database would be a huge task involving 25,000 slides, 2,000 maps, 4,000+ books / journals, photographs etc. Approximate estimate **400 pd (b).** But a cost-benefit issue is the level to which cataloguing should take place". This seems to be another benchmark that would benefit from closer definition supported by a model. Others saw it as easier. "Everything is catalogued in some form." "Much of existing SMR additional material – grey literature reports etc – is filed by parish. Pulling together various elements into a proper catalogue might need five days."

HEC / HCA / AAC

(d)   Several respondents identified photographs as a problem for cataloguing. They also raise issues about storage and security copying (Benchmark 3.5), so there may be value in a special study of needs and requirements for images held in SMRs / UADs.

(e)   Reliable information for projecting overall storage requirements was hard to obtain. For several SMRs / UADs it came with the corporate territory and was therefore not costable; for some it was needed but not available not due to cost so much as to a corporate accommodation problem. Those with a Museums base are in a better environment for dealing with long-term storage.

3.5   Data security

3.5.1   Benchmark

System security policy covering arrangements for

- *storage and handling of digital and other modern media;*

- *multi-layered security procedures;*

- *long-term digital archiving and security copying of non-digital material.*

3.5.2   Type
Information Management / System Operation

3.5.3   Actions

Prepare a system security policy.

3.5.4   Estimates
Estimated costs of preparing the policy and what its initial implementation might cost.
£ 321,286

3.5.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	2	7%	have policy in place, and no security copying issues: 1 Joint Service SMR and 1 District UAD
Part compliant	26	87%	
Non-compliant	2	7%	2 District UADs

No policy	14	47%	can estimate
No policy	14	47%	cannot estimate

3.5.6   Comment

(a)   The policy for system security has three elements.
(a)   29 (97%) already have some form of storage and digital back-up, as part of normal routines. The exception is 1 District UAD in Superfile and inaccessible.

(b) 22 (73%) already have 'multi-layered security procedures', or control over digital access. Those not compliant are almost all UADs or relatively new Unitary SMRs without developed arrangements for public access.
(c) Only 5 (17%) are compliant on long-term digital archiving and security copying, 3 County SMRs, 1 District UAD and 1 Joint SMR.

(b) Costs of preparing the policy seem likely to be less than 20 pd, and 10 pd or less in most cases. Costs of initial implementation could be provided by 7 (23%), 4 County SMRs and 3 Unitary SMRs. They are not applicable for the additional 2 (7%) that are already compliant. Costs might be reduced if the policy was prepared as part of preparing the HER manual.

(c) County, Unitary and Joint Service SMRs are clearly the strongest authority / record types in (a) and (b); they also dominate the few who are compliant in (c).

(d) Routine back-up of digital data is now virtually automatic. Security over access is laregely related to the provision of access.

(e) The 14 (47%) unable to estimate the costs of compliance with the benchmark largely reflect the problems of security copying non-digital material, especially photographs, which needs a more detailed investigation into cost-effective strategies and methods. Those which had not completed a HER Audit found it especially difficult to estimate, as they did not know what was in their collections. Typically, one well-established County SMR reported implementation as "too big a task and too unclear to be able to estimate at the moment. Security copies a considerable task: 3664 paper files; 18,000 paper records; lots of photographs." It is another problem that could be handled over a period by a properly staffed service but just continues to accumulate if no dedicated staff exist.

3.6   Information audit on quinquennial basis

3.6.1   Benchmark

Report of information audit to assess the quality of data and identify the need for validation and enhancement.

3.6.2   Type
Information Management / Quality Assurance

3.6.3   Actions

Undertake a quinquennial information audit, for the first time, or as a selective repeat. It should include an assessment of backlog, so is a pre-requisite for Benchmark 3.7 *Data validation and currency.*

3.6.4   Estimates
Estimated cost to the host authority of undertaking an audit, assuming a continuing level of partnership funding from NMR.
£ 127,709

3.6.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	11	37%	have done a HER Audit within 5 years – the recommended frequency. 5 County SMRs, 3 Unitary SMRs, 1 District UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR and 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD. 4 of these provided costings.
Part compliant	1	3%	1 County SMR regularly updates Action Plan, but full HER Audit due.
Non-compliant	18	60%	have not done a HER Audit at all, or did one more than 5 years ago.

Able to provide costs	7	23%	had either not done a HER Audit, or had done one more than 5 years ago, and was able to estimate costs for the benchmark.
Not able to provide costs	11	37	had either not done a HER Audit, or had done one more than 5 years ago, and could not estimate costs for the benchmark

3.6.6   Comment

(a)   Differences by authority / record type mainly involve UADs. For them, achieving the database stage of development requires, in effect, the information audit processes that would form part of an HER Audit. If the UAD has been maintained subsequently then it ought to be up to date in these respects without further audit. However, the returns do not seem to show this particularly clearly. Further investigation at a more detailed level would be needed to show whether this indicates a general problem with UADs, namely that maintenance and updating is not as well integrated with their management as it is with SMRs.

(b)   Relatively few figures were obtained for this benchmark, though several are about 20 pd. At 8 (27%), this benchmark had one of the three highest levels of non-estimation, over a quarter of the sample, but these largely came from recently completed or current exercises and some UADs.

(c)   Two variables are important: one is whether it is a first or a repeat HER Audit, the latter perhaps able to be more targeted and selective as well as benefiting from the experience of the original Audit; the other is the extent to which partnership funding with NMR is involved.

(d)   An information audit, carried out as part of a HER Audit, is connected with outreach policy insofar as the latter is a requirement for an HLF grant. Several SMRs / UADs questioned the usefulness of the HER Audit in its present form, once migration to HBSMR and / or E – M – A data structures have been completed. Certainly, the repeat Audit at 5-yearly intervals could usefully focus on the problems identified at the previous Audit together with any new issues rather than go through the whole process again. There is probably a good case for restructuring the process around the Benchmarks scheme in order to help implement it, and, then, when it is properly in place, around its dynamic elements rather than its static ones.

3.7   Data validation and currency

3.7.1   Benchmark

An assessment of backlog, update and enhancement requirements. A prioritised programme, based on the results of an information audit (3.6.), for data validation, recasting of earlier records, essential core data indexing, routine updating and enhancement projects should form part of the Record's Forward Plan.

3.7.2   Type

Information Management / System Operation

3.7.3   Actions

Assess the work required to deal with backlog, here defined with the agreement of the Steering Group as material deposited digitally or physically with the SMR or as a direct result of the processes the SMR serves, but not yet assessed / verified / analysed and accessed.

For the purposes of SMRRA it was a greed wit hthe Steering Group that this benchmark covers ***backlog***, and does not cover

- *enhancement* or the potential output from data collection programmes outside the written collection policy defined in 2.1 above

- *verification* of data already accessed on to the SMR, which is routine maintenance

- *data cleaning / reworking*, completing the mandatory fields referred to in 3.2 above

see Benchmark 3.6 *Information audit on quinquennial basis* above

3.7.4   Estimates

Estimated costs of assessing the resources needed, __not the costs of doing the actual work.__
£ 49,560

3.7.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	9	30%	either have no backlog or already have a plan in place for dealing with it. 2 County SMRs, 2 County SMR + UAD, 2 District UADs, 1 District SMR + UAD, 1 Joint Service SMR and 1 Joint Service SMR + UAD.
Non-compliant	20	67%	are non-compliant but able to assess the time needed to assess the backlog and prepare a plan for dealing with it
Non-compliant	1	3%	a District UAD, unable to estimate due to its non-operational condition.

3.7.6   Comment

(a)   There is no obvious pattern of authority / record type, though one might have expected some of the older County SMRs to have problems, and for recently compiled UADs to be problem-free.

(b)   There is a need to explain the wide variation in reported backlogs. Though the extent of backlog itself was not the subject of a question, the survey showed that 4 (13%) do not have one. 2 (7%) County SMRs, one with a UAD, report it as minimal and deal with material as it is

presented to the Record. 5 (17%), including 3 County SMRs, 1 District UAD and 1 Unitary SMR, report large backlogs. What do these variations reflect – efficiency in data handling, good resourcing, good record management, a straightforward evolution of the system, type of indexing policy, or other factors ?

(c)   The range of estimates for strict compliance to the benchmark is generally under 10 pd. Where actual clearance of backlog could be estimated, a few large figures were produced, notably 250, 600, 700 pd. The high number of specific return shows a good level of confidence about achieving the benchmark itself, but probably conceals different sets of assumptions about what should actually be costed in the backlog elimination plan itself.

(d)   This is one of the most difficult aspects of SMR development. Further study, perhaps through HER Audits (retrospectively or partial new ones) will be needed to establish the scope of the problem and variations in the approach taken to levels of indexing. A considered view should be taken on whether to handle the different issues of data enhancement and data verification (of the original record and / or what survives in the field) at the same time as dealing with backlog or separately from it. In some areas conflation might bring some economies of scale, but the tasks would have to be tightly defined and well controlled. Enhancement is a very difficult area to estimate on the basis of a sample group because its scope will vary widely from one Record to another, depending on local archaeological and research, and on the level of experience and local knowledge of the SMRO.

3.8   Safeguards against foreseeable risks and disaster

3.8.1   Benchmark

Risk assessment and emergency preparedness plan

3.8.2   Type

Information Management / System Operation

3.8.3   Actions

Assess risks, prepare an emergency preparedness plan, and put it into effect.

3.8.4   Estimates

Estimated one-off costs of assessing risks, preparing the plan and implementing it initially.
£ 63, 558

3.8.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	3	10%	1 County SMR, 1 County SMR + UAD and 1 Joint Service SMR
Part compliant	13	43%	10 (33%) through coverage from a wider Departmental plan, and 3 (10%) through possession of some of the elements themselves
Non-compliant	14	47%	had no plan and / or no particular awareness of any corporate provision

3.8.6 Comment

(a) There is probably some overlap amongst the non-compliant categories.

(b) No particular pattern was observed amongst authority / record types.

(c) With two exceptions (20, 40 pd) the estimates were under 10 pd, perhaps reflecting the existence of a model in *IFP*. 4 (13%) were unable to provide any estimates, but for reasons which reflect the nature of the sample.

(d) The significant reliance upon generalised Departmental plans is a two-edged indicator. It is an encouraging sign of integration with the parent Department. It is discouraging that that Department has not seen fit to demand that SMR prepare its own detailed plan; indeed, the existence of Departmental arrangements may also have acted as a disincentive to think through such matters in the specific context of the SMR / UAD.

4.1 Formal adoption as a maintained public information resource

4.1.1 Benchmark

Resolution of governing body to adopt the Record formally, in accordance with the 'benchmark' Scheme. Where the governing body is not the local planning authority (lpa), or acts on behalf of one or more local authorities, formal recognition of the Record is desirable from the relevant lpas. This might, for example, be incorporated in service level agreements.

4.1.2 Type

Organisation Management / Policy

4.1.3 Actions

Adoption by itself will not require significant resources, but there may be more complex arrangements when several authorities are involved. What is adopted should refer to the Information Services Policy that constitutes Benchmark 1.1 *Information services policy*. Where a county serves Districts, Districts should signal adoption through an SLA rather than adopt something they do not own themselves.

4.1.4 Estimates

Estimated one-off staffing or service costs required to carry through process of adoption.
£ 45,056

4.1.5 Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	14	47%	
Part compliant	4	13%	
Non-compliant	12	40%	

4.1.6   Comment

(a)   There is a good spread of all authority / record types in both main categories.

(b)   Estimated costs are modest, only a few days, but several interviewees commented that political structures and circumstances would determine whether the process was quick or long drawn-out. In some cases, changes in local authority political structures (eg the introduction of Cabinet systems) mean that formal adoption and similar decisions now take much longer than they used to. 4 (13%) were unable to give any estimates, but this is not considered to affect reliability.

(c)   This benchmark has its origins in the General Development Order definition of an important archaeological site that is a material consideration for planning purposes as one entered on to an SMR *adopted* by a Local Authority. It had more urgency and leverage when it first appeared about twenty years ago, and the struggle for basic SMR coverage was a recent memory. By 2004, many local authorities have been reorganised, virtually all have been internally restructured, and the culture of Service Planning is spreading rapidly. Though these developments have not dealt with the complex issue of statutory status for SMRs / UADs, it has made them much more widely recognised features in the administrative landscape. In several cases where the lack of multiple customers obviated the need for agreements, SMROs did not know whether their Record had been adopted at some time and obviously did not regard it as a crucial issue.

(d)   This benchmark requires different actions according to circumstances; in the more complicated cases involving Joint Services or County provision for several District Councils it is closely allied with benchmark 4.2 *Formal agreement with partners / service providers*. Greater London reported that, while it was not feasible to secure adoption by its large number of clients, its role in a firm statutory process had that effect. For the other Joint Services, the nature and extent of adoption seemed to be closely related to the stability of the joint arrangements.

(e)   It should be noted that the achievement of this benchmark is vulnerable to becoming ensnared in complex and time-consuming bureaucratic or political processes. The more clearly it is understood that SMR provision is a requirement nationally, and the fewer the number of effective model arrangements to suit local circumstances, the less it is likely to cost, and the quicker the process ought to be. If SMR provision was a clearly stated requirement (statutory or not), then achievement of the benchmark might reasonably be a local corporate charge, though there will always be some reluctance to adopt something which might have resource implications.

4.2   Formal agreement with partners / service providers (on geographical coverage and service levels)

4.2.1   Benchmark

Resolution of governing body; service level agreements and contracts.

4.2.2   Type

Organisation Management / Policy

4.2.3   Actions

Adoption by itself will not require significant resources, but there may be more complex arrangements when several authorities are involved.

4.2.4 Estimates

Estimated one-off staffing or service costs required to secure necessary agreements.
£ 56,304

4.2.5 Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	7	23%	
Non-compliant	17	57%	6 (20%) of them identify it as a politically sensitive issue, 5 Unitary SMRs and 1 Joint Service SMR.
Not relevant	6	20%	

4.2.6 Comment

(a) This benchmark, which is also related to benchmark 4.1 *Formal adoption as maintained public information resource*, is not relevant to 6 (20%), 5 Unitary SMRs and 1 Joint Service SMR.

(b) There is no obvious correlation of categories with authority / record type.

(c) Estimates of time are in single figure person days, although the total may seem high. This reflects the potential number of agreements which may be required, eg with all Districts in a County. The level of resource requirement is likely to be reliable, but regard will always have to be had to local circumstances.

(d) The same observations about political sensitivity for benchmark 4.1 apply to this benchmark, but primarily for inter-authority relationships. See 4.1.6 (e) above.

4.3   Statement of purpose or mission statement

4.3.1 Benchmark

Formally adopted policies and strategic plan for the service.

4.3.2 Type

Organisation Management / Policy

4.3.3 Actions

Devising and adopting policies and a strategic plan, including necessary consultation procedures. This refers to an overall service plan within which the SMR / UAD is one element

4.3.4 Estimates

Estimated staff time requirements for initial round. This should not include the costs of update or revision of statements already in place.   **£ 28,952**

4.3.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	16	53%	Some expressed with a degree of uncertainty.
Part compliant	6	20%	current progress towards compliance.
Non-compliant	8	27%	includes those who do not know whether they are compliant.

4.3.6   Comment

(a)   There do not seem to be any significant patterns of authority / record type.

(b)   Estimates given by the non-compliant were mostly under 10 pd. The information base for this benchmark is thin, but the task is not large and might even be regarded as a corporate responsibility, so the available figures are probably fairly reliable.

(c)   If this benchmark is defined as referring to the overall service plan within which the SMR / UAD is an element, distinguishing it from the Forward Plan of the SMR / UAD itself (the subject of benchmark 4.4 *Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision*) then most of the costs are likely to be borne corporately, and the only cost attributable to this exercise would be that arising from the SMR / UAD's participation in that exercise.

4.4   Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision

4.4.1   Benchmark

Forward plan for the service to achieve implementation of programmes and projects identified in Section 1-3, indicating the resources secured and required for the plan period (3 - 5 year recommended).

4.4.2   Type   Organisation Management / Policy

4.4.3   Actions

Devising and adopting a forward plan for the service, including necessary consultation procedures. This refers to the SMR / UAD's own more specific service plan

4.4.4   Estimates

Estimated staff time requirements for initial round. This should not include the costs of update or revision of statements already in place. £ 66,308

4.4.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	8	27%	3 County SMRs, 2 County SMR + UAD and 2 Joint Service SMRs
Part compliant	9	30%	either needed to revise an existing plan or were in progress of devising a first plan
Non-compliant	13	43%	4 County SMRs, 2 Unitary SMRs, 3 District UADs, 3 District SMR + UAD and 1 Joint Service SMR.

4.4.6   Comment

(a)   The compliant group includes some of the strongest Records in the sample.

(b)   Estimates of time required are mostly in single-figure person-days. A factor in this calculation will be whether the plan is written by a single officer for a single officer, or requires wider discussion and consultation amongst other staff where they exist. Another factor will be the extent to which corporate or regional consultation is built in to the process. 6 (20%) were unable to provide estimates of costs, 1 because none is needed, 2 because there is no post to do the work. This should not affect reliability seriously.

(c)   A comprehensive model plan would be helpful, taking in all potential aspects of SMR / UAD activity, and covering all potential administrative and corporate procedures. Selections could be made from it as appropriate to local circumstances, and it could also be used to demonstrate the need for service development.

4.5   Professional post with primary responsibility for the Record

4.5.1   Benchmark

Staffing provision and structure commensurate with the level of services provided. This will include at least one full-time member of staff with appropriate qualifications, experience, and with membership of relevant professional body.

4.5.2   Type

Organisation Management / System Operation

4.5.3   Actions

The benchmark is one FTE dedicated professional for routine record management. In practice, for smaller Records 'one' may mean a defined and dedicated proportion of one FTE, and for larger ones more than one FTE.

4.5.4   Estimates

Report existing staff complement as FTEs, giving job title, grade, salary and % for on-costs.

Where no dedicated post exists, SMRRA will estimate in relation to the 2003 Profiling the Profession survey.

£ costed separately

4.5.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	18	60%	
Part compliant			
Non-compliant	12	40%	3 (4) Unitary SMRs, 3 District UADs, 3 Unitary SMRs and 1 (2) District SMR + UAD. (Bracketed sub-totals include two incompletely compliant)

4.5.6   Comment

(a)   The non-compliant represent situations ranging from a total absence of staff through temporary arrangements of uncertain duration to another officer trying to maintain the Record in parallel with primary responsibilities for planning advice, but finding such work often pushed out by day-to-day reactive pressures. The scope for outreach in these cases ranges from the limited to the non-existent.

(b)   There is a wide range of staffing provision, probably not always well related to the quality and quantity of historic assets, the pressures upon them, and the scope for explaining them to the people in the Record's area. At one end of the scale is an un-staffed frozen UAD for a World Heritage Site; at the other is the articulated structure for one of the oldest County SMRs south of Watford, albeit under pressure from organisational and financial changes.

(c)   The costings used for SMR / UAD staff are discussed elsewhere in this report. With a third of the sample non-compliant, generalising to the total population from a base of two-thirds of about 35% may seem unreliable, but standard costings are being used. When applied to specific regions or Records these costings will, of course, need to be modified up or down, but should provide a norm against which the need to use senior staff on junior tasks or the lack of sufficiently senior staff can be more readily identified.

(d)   Interviews showed a third variant on the models listed in 'Actions', that of an established Record beyond the initial stages of development and migration whose management and use figure in the Job Descriptions of several staff. The risk here is always that 'other duties' will crowd out those for the maintenance and use of the Record, but it could work well by extending ownership for the Record amongst several professional colleagues who combine the necessary skills and have sufficient technical support. In the case of one Unitary SMR, the Record was felt to be sufficiently developed and the predicted demands upon it sufficiently light for a part-time post to be sufficient, perhaps growing into a full-time one with increased outreach programmes.

4.6   <u>Appropriate internal management arrangements</u>

4.6.1   Benchmark
Organisation 'management tree' of arrangements for clerical and administrative support for the service.

4.6.2   Type
Organisation Management / System Operation

4.6.3   Actions
Creating the arrangements as distinct from running them is assumed to be part of normal host authority management procedures.

4.6.4   Estimates
£ not costed

4.6.5 Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	27	90%	compliant insofar as a management tree could be said to exist
Part / non compliant	3	10%	2 District UADs and 1 District SMR + UAD

4.6.6 Comment

(a) The compliant represent a range of actual arrangements in place, and there is an issue about whether what nominally exists actually provide the intended support.

(b) Situations include:
(a) good technical, clerical and administrative support
(b) the absence of anything other than basic clerical support for liaison with the parent department. This requires professional staff to spend significant periods of time doing clerical work, and in extreme cases of lengthy managerial neglect prevent those staff from being able to conceptualise how they would work if clerical support were actually available.
(c) the problems of developing productive relationships with often changing externalised support staff.

4.7 Technical advice on IT and archive / records management

4.7.1 Benchmark

Provision for identified IT support and arrangements for obtaining advice on management of archive and primary records from a professional archivist / museum record officer.

4.7.2 Type

Organisation Management / System Management

4.7.3 Actions

This should be part of normal corporate services and inter-departmental collaboration.

4.7.4 Estimates

Do not estimate - assumed as part of host authority's basic expenditure **£ not costed**

4.7.5 Compliance of sample

STATUS	No	%	Authority / record types where significant
Compliant	27	90%	
Part compliant			
Non-compliant	3	10%	District UADs: 1 used and not maintained; 1 not capable of use due to outdated software

4.7.6   Comment

(a)   Support from exeGesiS SDM is an important basic element binding together the HBSMR-user 'community'. The experience of others on other software varies according to corporate arrangements, with examples of both 'sworn-by' individuals who can solve most problems and 'sworn-at' services that create more problems than they solve. Developments towards interoperability will need to bear these local variations in mind.

4.8   Staff training and development programme and resources

4.8.1   Benchmark

Organisation training plan showing commitment to CPD and formal review process for training and development of staff. There should be budgetary provision for relevant specialist and software training courses. Training plans should also be in place for student and volunteer placements

4.8.2   Type

Organisation Management / System Operation

4.8.3   Actions

It is assumed that an organisational training plan already exists as a corporate / departmental document together with some budgetary provision.

4.8.4   Estimates

Do not estimate - assumed as part of host authority's basic expenditure.
£ not costed

4.8.5   Compliance of sample

STATUS	*No*	*%*	*Authority / record types where significant*
Compliant	27	90%	
Part compliant	1	3%	Cuts to budget of County SMR making it only partly compliant
Non-compliant	2	7%	District UADs: no staff, so no scope for training

4.8.6   Comment

(a)   Most training programmes are departmental and linked with staff appraisals. SMR management requires Continuing Professional Development and the IFA CPD log scheme could be used.

(b)   A 97% response is reliable.

HEC / HCA / AAC

6   URBAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATABASES AND SMRs

6.1   Urban Archaeological Databases, as permanently maintained HERs, raise significant problems that are outside the scope of this project, but treating them as such for the purpose of this analysis requires some comment so that the significance of the results may be better understood.

6.2   The Project Outline stated that "UADs have restricted criteria in terms of geographical coverage and data range which mean that they are generally not suitable for development into stand-alone HERs without substantial additional resources" but nevertheless identified that they "need to be assessed against the first stage HER benchmark standards".

6.3   The Project Design drew attention to the difficulty of assessing UADs given their exclusion from some of the earlier major SMR surveys and the benchmark project itself. Having taken advice from the Heritage Information Partnerships Team and Roger Thomas, both of English Heritage, the consultants advanced the view that UADs should be seen as a stage in the development of HERs generally, a response to the difficulties of information management in historic urban centres. UADs were able to take early advantage of the functionality of GIS-linked databases; these are now a basic component in the 1st stage SMR benchmark standard. Part of movement towards the 2nd stage HER benchmark will presumably involve full integration of linked SMRs and UADs.

6.4   In discussion, the Steering Group pointed out that, certainly with regard to the development of full HERs attaining the 2nd stage benchmarks, there are unresolved problems about the relationships between UADs and SMRs. They were originally created for areas of great significance and complexity already covered by SMRs, but inadequately. They developed independently due to a strong and necessary operational emphasis on ownership by the parent local authority but without any clear policy for development and enhancement that might lead towards integration with SMR records. Their areas were originally defined not by local authority boundaries or the historic limits of a city or town, but by kilometre squares (which did not always fit well), and with strongly deposit-orientated collecting policies restricted in period and topic. These limitations make it difficult to clarify arrangements between a UAD held at District level and the SMR which covers the area surrounding it, and often the UAD area itself at a lower level of detail. Not only is there some duplication in coverage between UADs and SMRs, but they also raise the spectre of two definitive HERs for the same political area, each claiming conformity to the 1st stage benchmark on Information Policy (2.1).

6.5   Reviewing the situation in the light of interviewing ten authorities hosting UADs as part of the sample, the consultants recognise the difficulties, but can see some pointers for a way forward. At a political level those difficulties are akin to the tensions that were created between 'County' and 'District' SMRs as a consequence of the local government reorganisations of the 80s and 90s. A significantly larger number of SMRs was created by the fragmentation that resulted, and many of these are among those that this study has found to be farthest from compliance with the benchmarks. (see 3.5)

6.6   Yet some of the problems noted in the course of the 1998 assessment of English SMRs (Baker 1999) seem to have ameliorated. Several 'paper copy' arrangements for SMRs

have obviously stabilised; new Unitary Authorities have established their own SMRs, albeit some under-resourced; some Joint Services have stabilised though others are also still under-resourced; better integrated relationships have developed between several SMRs and the UADs within their areas. There seems to be a greater will abroad, in the face of current political and financial pressures on the sector as a whole, to eschew the kind of internal unjoined-upness that undermines the case for asking the wider world to join itself up properly in the heritage interest.

6.7   This is reflected in the decision that for the SMRRA survey, the total population of SMRs / UADs (and therefore the sample) should include only those UADs that have reached the database stage of compilation. It disregards the ambitions of those still struggling to arrange the resources needed to get through the pilot stage. It also usefully raises the question as to whether those resources would be better spent in the public interest through developing an independent UAD or enhancing an SMR that may well now be technically capable of hosting it more effectively due to GIS and software enhancements.

6.8   The interviews with UAD officers have shown that the issues of their relationship with SMRs and their ability to respond to the benchmark criteria are in some cases simpler than expected, though in others they are seriously problematical. In the former category are those that have been effectively integrated with their local SMR, such as Newcastle with the Tyne & Wear Joint Service and Winchester with its District; in the latter are the under- or un- funded, effectively gaps in the coverage of maintained local Records, such as Colchester and Durham City. Generally, though, UADs are weak on public outreach (benchmark 1.4), as might be expected for a device conceived primarily as a planning tool; this is reflected is the levels of compliance for the relevant benchmarks, and demonstrated in the following chart. The following table and accompanying charts illustrate UAD progress towards the benchmark categories. Progress towards individual benchmarks and towards categories of benchmarks is shown for the three groups of Records: UADs, SMRs with no UAD, and SMRs which include a UAD.

UADs: progress towards benchmarks

SMRs with no UADs: progress towards benchmarks

SMRs with UADs: progress towards benchmarks
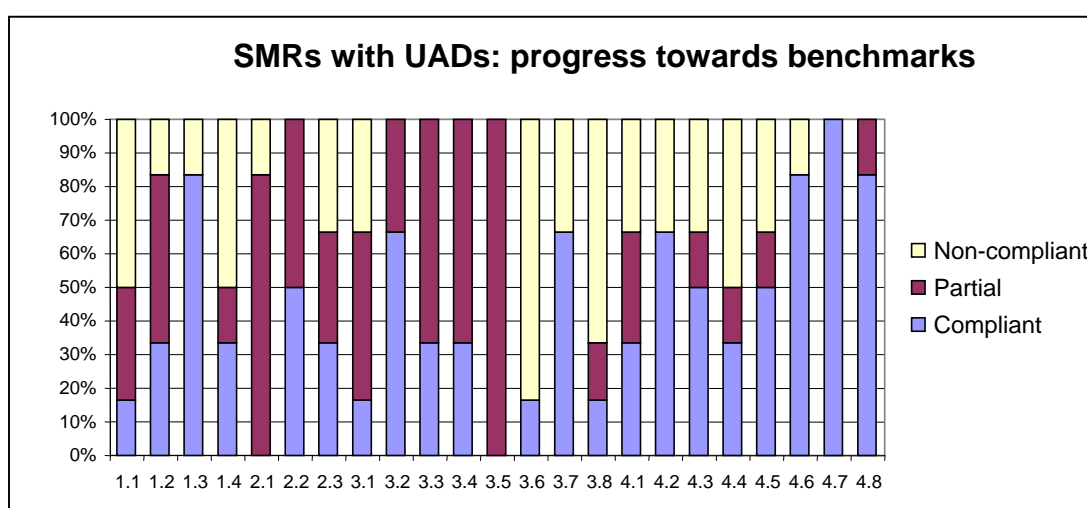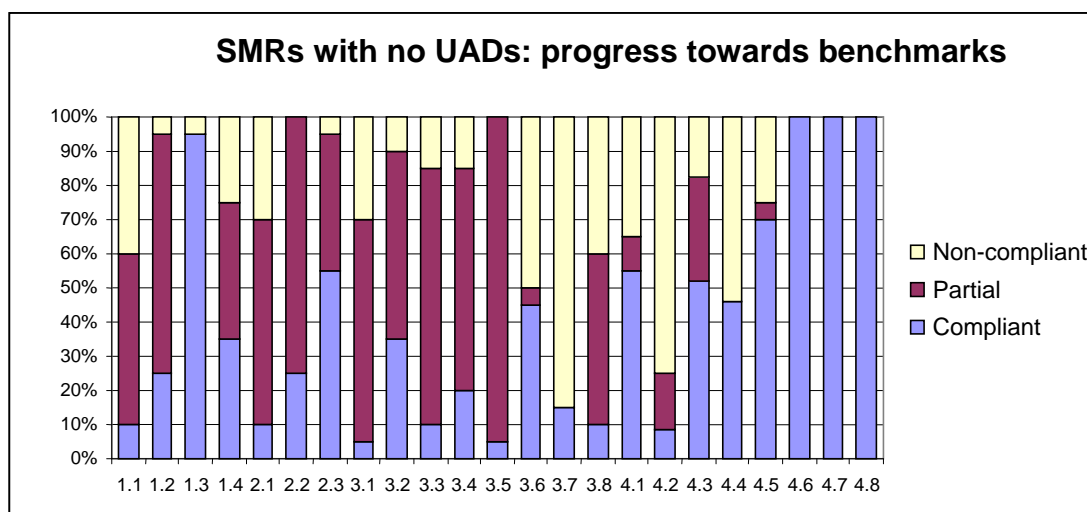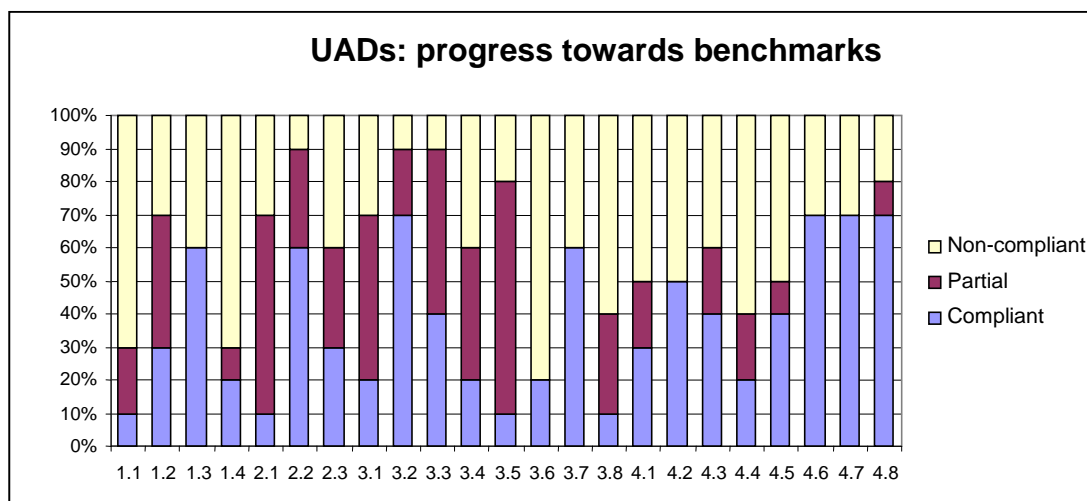
Category		UADs			SMRs with no UADs		
	Benchmark	Compliant	Partial	Non-compliant	Compliant	Partial	Non-compliant
Serving user needs	1.1-1.2	4	6	10	7	24	9
Satisfying user needs	1.3	6	0	4	19	0	1
Reaching new audiences	1.4	2	1	7	7	8	5
Information content	2.1-2.3	10	13	8	18	35	7
System organisation & procedures	3.1-3.4	15	16	9	14	52	14
Quality and security measures	3.5-3.8	10	10	20	15	30	35
Corporate & business arrangements	4.1-4.4	14	6	20	31	13	36
Staffing and support services	4.5-4.8	25	2	13	74	1	5

UADs: benchmarks grouped by categories

SMRs with no UADs: benchmarks grouped by categories
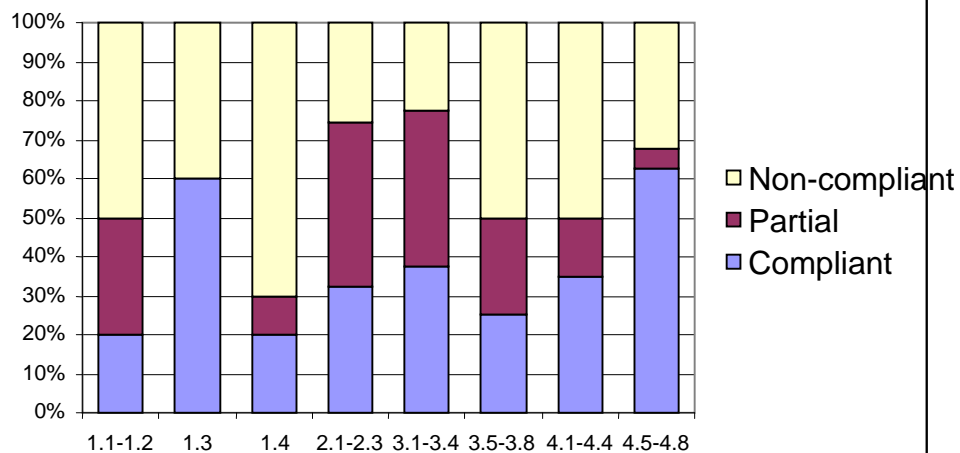
SMRs with UADs: benchmarks grouped by categories
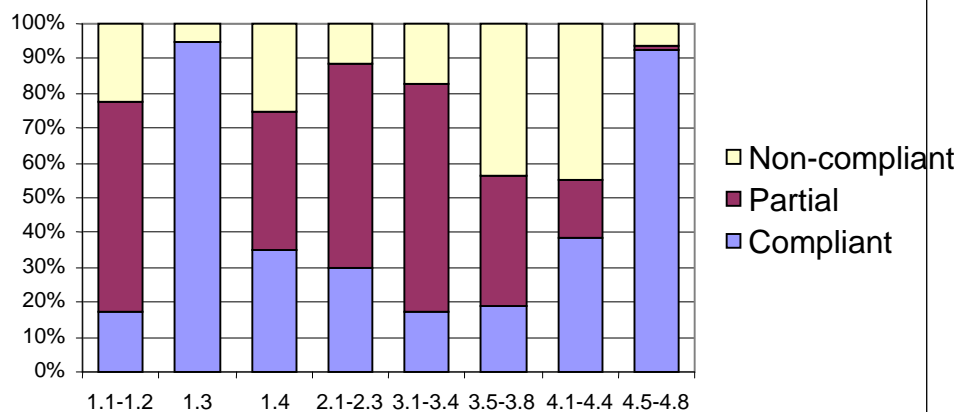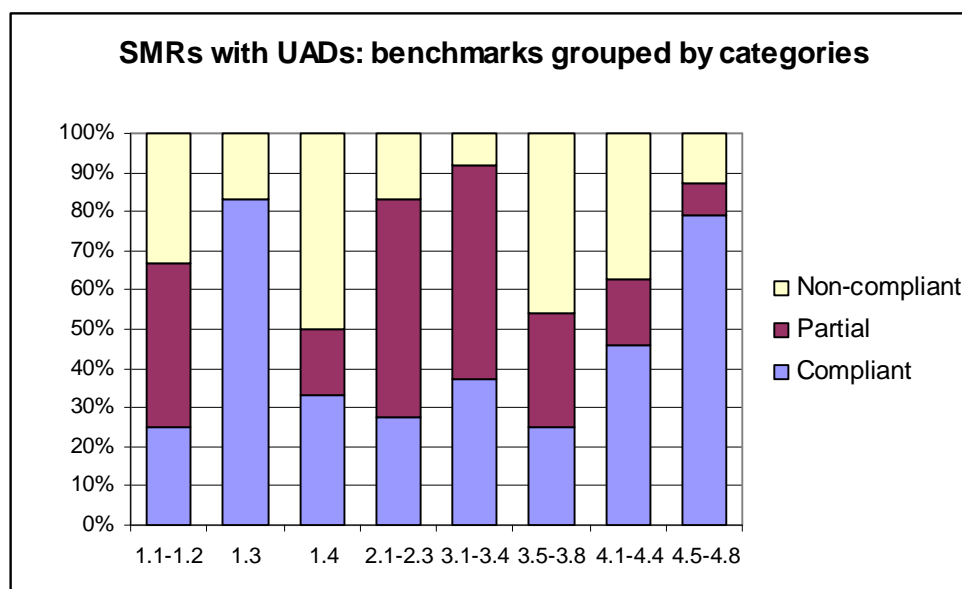
6.9 If the future development of UADs and their relationships with adjacent SMRs are based on the premise explicit in the set of 1st stage benchmarks, then the role of both types of Record includes outreach to a range of public and private users as well as environmental planning and conservation. The present situation is unsatisfactory in many places and must be improved in order to reach the 1st stage benchmark standard. An SMR will be unable to serve properly an area which includes an historic town having a UAD unless users have access to both sets of data, whether directly or in mediated form according to need. A UAD will be unable to serve the concentrated population of its area properly unless it can put the historic core into the wider geographic context which will also interest them.

6.10 It is not part of this project to resolve the issues surrounding UADs, but some suggestions can be advanced for further discussion. The fundamentals are that arrangements for local Records should be driven as much by the satisfaction of user needs as by the definition of territory, that critical mass and viability for serving the full range of users should be a determining factor, and that every opportunity should be taken to utilise technical developments in interoperability, together with the growing emphasis on corporate planning in local authorities, cutting across separate environmental and cultural functions.

6.11 In the long run this may lead to the combination of all UADs with their local SMRs; in the short term, trying to enforce shot-gun marriages might have adverse effects politically and on the availability of resources. Plainly there are unsatisfactory arrangements currently and unacceptable situations where the benchmarks cannot be achieved. Such situations should be improved by the development of one of two options, according to local needs and preferences, the size of the area and the complexity of the information derived from it.

(a) In option 1, the SMR and UAD are combined so that the more intensively compiled data of an historic urban core is integrated with and nests within the relevant parent Record. If there are separate archaeological planning advisers at County and District level they should both have access to the combined Record, as should Museums and other cultural services. This arrangement should apply to circumstances where a UAD is run by a single officer unable to maintain the

system properly due to the reactive pressures of other main duties, notably development control. It would enable proper provision to be made for the Record and for the potential of its material to be brought more clearly to both planning and cultural services users.

(b)   In option 2, the SMR and UAD remain separate but are made compatible, with the latter expanding to cover the whole of the District area rather than just the kilometre squares that closest match the historic core. There must be full data-exchange agreements between the two systems, so that the SMR does not have a hole in it that is administratively correct but historically unacceptable, and the UAD is able to provide context for the urban core. This arrangement should apply to circumstances where the historic core served by the UAD is of such significance and complexity, and the arrangements for outreach as well as planning advice are so well developed, that a post dedicated to those tasks can be sustained by the UAD in addition to its normal planning work.

6.12   As far as the current project is concerned, it is impossible to predict with any certainty how the relationship of SMRs and UADs will develop over the next few years. Too many key policy issues are uncertain, including statutory status for SMRs, what difference that status might actually make in practice, emerging regional arrangements, and the extent to which local technical IT diversity and interoperability can be reconciled. For these reasons, a separately identifiable figure has been included in order to represent the resources needed to bring those UADs not yet operational up to the database stage. It is another matter, again beyond the scope of this project, whether such resources are used to follow the integrated or separate road as outlined above, and one might be significantly more cost-effective than the other according to local circumstances.

6.13   The UADs in question are: Canterbury (database completed but not yet adopted), Carlisle, Chester, Chichester, Dorchester (Dorset), Hereford, Hull, Ipswich, Lancaster, Leicester, London Southwark and London Westminster. Reference must also be made to Cirencester, outside the sample, which is non-digital. It is effectively represented in the sample by Durham City which is even more inaccessible because it is locked into obsolete software.

6.14   A rule-of-thumb cost for achieving database stage is £ 50,000 – £ 100,000 (Roger Thomas *pers comm.*), though one mentioned in the paragraph above did estimate £125k in 2002. Where each potential UAD should be placed on that spectrum is uncertain without further investigation, but (excluding Canterbury) a mean cost for each of £ 75,000 would give a total of £ 825,000.

7   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   This concluding chapter assembles the constituent elements of the global requirement for resources, emphasises the qualifications that must always accompany them, and makes some observations on how the task of benchmark achievement might be taken forward.

The global resource requirement and its constituent elements

7.2   The global cost of achieving the 1st stage benchmarks can be crudely summarised as a total of **£ 8,280,063 (£ 8.28m)**, covering three elements as outlined below. It represents a basic first step towards quantification. It should never be quoted in isolation or without the qualifications in the following paragraphs, nor should it be described as a 'headline' cost with the implication that it is a requirement for 'new' money. However, that figure and the *caveats* below, taken together, indicate the magnitude of the task to achieve the objective of consistent and comprehensive compliance with the benchmark, and the complexity of calculating globally what has to be done.

7.3   *Achieving the listed benchmarks, excluding 4.5*   *£ 4,845,663*

The cost obtained by extrapolating the results of the sample survey to a defined total population of SMRs / UADs, is **£ 4,845,663**. This figure represents the one-off costs of 'catch-up' tasks, and one-off costs associated with putting permanent capabilities in place. It does not include the recurring costs of maintaining those capabilities thereafter.

7.4   *4.5: three-year tapering funding for new staff*   *£ 2,534,400*

Benchmark 4.5 is the existence of a full-time professional officer in charge of maintaining, developing and facilitating use of the SMR / UAD. 10 of the 30 Records in the sample (33%) were non-compliant and a further two indicated that they could not deal with the other benchmark tasks without additional permanent staffing. As an annually recurring cost, benchmark 4.5 amounts to a total further requirement of £ 844,800. Expressed as the cost to all parties of a three-year tapering funding agreement, as suggested in the Project Design, it gives a total of **£ 2,534,400.**

7.5   *Bringing all programmed UADs to database stage*   *£ 900,000*

Chapter 6 above provides a crude figure of £ 825,000 for developing those UADs which are not regarded as part of the total population because they have not yet attained the database stage. It becomes **£ 900,000** if the costs of revitalising the three largely unusable UADs are added at £ 25k each.

Factors giving rise to uncertainty

7.6   The global figure of **£ 8.28m** has been obtained by aggregating up from a 34% sample on to a national scale. With a relatively small total population there is a risk that the

sample contains levels of needs for resources or of self-sufficiency not typical of the other 66%.

7.7 The analysis of confidence estimates in Chapter 3 showed that 12% were approximate, and 18% were ball-park figures. Not only is this inability to provide firmer figures evidence of under-development in some SMRs / UADs, but it also suggests a degree of uncertainty that may have led to either under- or over- estimation.

7.8 Estimates were sought on a non-attributable basis, to be regarded as neither bid nor offer. A 20% on-cost was added to basic salary figures, but no account could be taken of any other elements that might be added to a grant application, by the SMR / UAD itself, or by its parent service.

7.9 The almost endemic restructuring of local government services, with or without cuts, adds another layer of uncertainty. Resource needs and resource availability may be affected by changes in the departmental location of an SMR / UAD. Outreach is very much the Cinderella activity, as evidenced by reliance on HLF projects to achieve structured programmes. Where a Record is brigaded with other major outreach services, such as Museums and Archives, resources will be more easily found from core funding and appear as less of a demand. A Record in a Planning department without that tradition of outreach will, when the HLF scheme ends, face the much more difficult task of finding 'new' money to continue that service.

7.10 Some types of resources are easier to obtain than others, and some Record staff are more entrepreneurial than others. Belonging to a large organisation like a local authority gives opportunities for obtaining one-off resources to deal with specific tasks – one County SMR part-funded migration to HBSMR and associated processes through another division's short-term under-spend. Setting up partnerships with classes of information users, thereby linking Record enhancement with service provision, can often achieve what single sources of finance cannot support. Equally, though, the complexity of making such arrangements can sometimes be a fatal deterrent for under-staffed Records focused almost entirely on curatorial development control.

Factors tending to increase the global total

7.11 The global figure of **£ 8.28m** excludes certain potentially major tasks for which the benchmark-related cost is that of estimating rather than implementation. 'Backlog' is covered in this way by benchmark 3.7 *Data validation and currency* (Ch 5 above). Some of the estimates produced by the survey for longer-term clearance of backlog hint at the magnitude of this task, for which a total cost covering the whole population of 88 Records might be as much as or more than the cost of achieving the other benchmarks. It is equally clear that realistic costs cannot be identified without work on priorities and methods for eliminating backlogs, with special reference to the level of indexing detail.

7.12 Benchmark 4.5 represents a minimum requirement for staff dedicated to the maintenance, development and use of the Record. In some cases, if the implications of all the other benchmarks are taken into account, the size of the Record's area, the scope of its historic assets, the pressures on them and the opportunities they present for

management and interpretation may together add up to a requirement for more than one member of staff. This is already the case for some of the larger and more developed Records; there are also other Records compliant with Benchmark 4.5 where too much time has to be spent servicing development control requirements (as distinct from carrying out the planning advisory function) and not enough on maintenance, system management and outreach.

Factors tending to reduce the global total

7.13   The global figure of **£ 8.28m** does not necessarily represent new money. 20 of the 30 Records sampled (67%) are compliant with the staffing benchmark; it must be assumed that some of the tasks ought to be taken in their stride, as one-off costs covered by recurring funding. Indeed, considered as an issue of capacity from the viewpoint of a staffed Record, one might identify three broad cases. Some will already be able to pick off these tasks in a planned programme, and, indeed, are doing so. Others could do the same with improved management and a prioritised work programme. Still others would plainly need a structural improvement in resourcing over a sustained period before the outstanding tasks could reasonably be tackled.

7.14   The development of UADs to database stage was estimated as stand-alone projects, as is their continued maintenance and use by a dedicated member of staff. If either or both were done as part of the work of an existing staffed SMR, the costs might be different and less.

7.15   There may be cases where the size of the Record's area, the scope of its historic assets, the pressures on them and the opportunities they present for management and interpretation do **not** add up to a requirement for more than one member of staff. In such cases there may be scope for savings and economies of scale through well-managed and stable cooperative arrangements with a neighbour. The most recent survey of SMRs (Newman 2002) confirmed the significant increase in numbers of Records since the Baker report, following the UAD programme and local government reorganisation. Smaller HERs, with correspondingly fewer resources, are less likely to be able to provide the full range of services as set out in the benchmarks, and the study has produced indications of this. In relevant cases opportunities for reconfiguration to consolidate and create more effective administrative units could be considered as part of any further rounds of local government reorganisation with the introduction of regional government.

Taking matters forward

7.16   Discussing recommendations on the way forward is beyond the scope of this project, but it is desirable to bring together the main headings and observations that have arisen in the course of interviews and analysing the data from them.

7.17   In the light of the practical experience provided by this project, some activities need further assessment so that the benchmarks can be developed to become more consistent in use and interpretation. There is a clear need for further iteration in the process of their development using the lessons learnt from this exercise. It might be achieved effectively through a small working group selected from the sample group of Records with experience of this project. Particular areas for attention include:

(a)   Cataloguing and security copying of images – needs and requirements

(b)   Levels of data indexing and minimum thresholds of retrievability, especially as applied to 'backlog'.

(c)   Backlog generally – what is reflected in the wide range of quantities reported, efficiency in data handling, good resourcing, good record management, a straightforward evolution of the system, type of indexing policy, or other factors ?

(d)   Correlating Benchmarks 2.2 *Information coverage and content* and 3.2 *Computerised database to national data standards.*

7.18   Some benchmarks were not costed for this exercise because they are felt to be part of basic public service provision. The others should be reviewed in order to identify those where the relevant tasks could reasonably be said to be part of the work of an adequately staffed service. That might include the programmed liquidation of backlog and data-cleaning tasks, run in parallel with day-to-day maintenance of the Record and serving its users.

7.19   The achievement of several benchmarks could be facilitated by the national development of closer guidance and model policies or templates in a revised version of *Informing Our Past*. These include:

1.1   Information services policy

1.3   A 'Heritage Counts' – compliant model for data collection of usage

2.1   Information policy

3.1   Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice

3.4   Catalogue of supporting reference collections

4.4   Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision

7.20   The EH HER Audit already covers many of the benchmark items, so will need to be reviewed, especially for repeat Audits, as the initial one covers all Records. Some can be dropped once achieved, though others, such as 1.2 (Access to Services) ought perhaps to be kept and reviewed regularly to take account of changing circumstances. There is a good case for restructuring the repeat HER Audit around a scheme for validating the Benchmarks (see 7.25-26 below).

7.21   As noted in Chapter 5, there appears to be more work to do with GIS technically to support interoperability. The apparent inability of exeGesiS SDM's HBSMR to deal with metadata, reported by several interviewees, suggests a structural problem whose solution ought to be a priority. The reliance of a significant number of Records on local corporate GIS incompatible with HBSMR is an issue, and is a reason that some Records opt not to use HBSMR. Given the information that HBSMR does not have limited GIS functionality, is not limited to MapInfo, and that an ArcView / Info option

is also available, some comments received in the survey hint at a communication problem on this topic.

7.22   Regarding software generally, it is worth noting that in a commercial environment, customers will seek out the provider of the product which fulfils their needs and represents good value for money. If there is a desire for all HERs to use a particular software package, the developers must be in a position to produce a product which is, and remains, at the cutting edge of performance. However, it must also be recognised that SMRs within Local Authorities are frequently subject to corporate decisions on software. This makes it unlikely that 100% of HERs will ever use the same software, unless this were made a requirement. In that context we have encountered the view that the Oxford Toad HMS software, now used by the National Trust SMR in preference to HBSMR, may become increasingly popular because it is server-based rather than PC-based.

7.23   There is scope for exploring the extent to which HBSMR can use automated procedures for assessing data quality and other routine tasks, or can develop clever software add-ons for those purposes.

Statutory recognition and Benchmarks

7.24   At the end of each interview, participating Records were asked for their views on making SMRs a statutory responsibility of local authorities. Though virtually all were in favour of the proposal, several forcefully made the point that the achievement of statutory status will be of little benefit if it can be interpreted as being satisfied by minimal conformity, and by statements that 'we have a Record' without details of resources and functions. One service highlighted the risk that a minimum standard written too low could result in the reduction of resources for well-developed services. Most services agreed that a requirement for conformity with the benchmarks, with or without a statutory imperative, would be an effective means of securing the resources needed for Records to play their full part in the provision of local services.

7.25   A related question, whether Records would like to have a system of formal, external, validation for the benchmarks, was generally answered positively. The advantages of keeping the performance and funding of the Record on the corporate radar was felt to outweigh the time required to conduct a regular validation procedure. It would help to be able to identify when changes in local service provision would mean that a benchmark could no longer be met. Comments from a number of Records suggest that a procedure for 'registration' of Records, subject to regular checks and renewal, would be received favourably but that further consultation should take place on the best means for achieving this.

7.26   Views on who could act as the external validation authority were less well focused, though the need for the credibility that comes with independence was stressed. ALGAO and English Heritage were mentioned frequently, and the IFA occasionally, as possible candidates. If ALGAO were to take this role, respondents recognised that it would require additional resources either to work through independent consultants or to develop capacity within its small central administration. English Heritage, as the manager of the national counterpart of local HERs, was viewed by some as having limited understanding about some issues of concern to local Records. Comment seems to indicate that English Heritage's current support for SMRs / HERs as potentially

much more than planning tools and for a future national network of local Records is not yet universally appreciated. The IFA was mentioned only by a few, once in the context of the existing scheme for Registered Archaeological Organisations. Perhaps surprisingly, no-one suggested the option of creating a joint partnership between all these bodies, with other relevant parties, to act as an independent assessor body.

7.27   Not unexpectedly, the thread of adequate resourcing ran through the interviews and the analyses based upon them. One Record observed that benchmarks and indicators never made a poor service into a good one. More generally there was recognition that these are a useful means of improving service provision and outreach because they are framed in terms that managers and politicians can readily understand.

7.28   There are opportunities for the future development of SMRs / HERs within a local government framework that itself continues to evolve (see 7.15). Following further development using the lessons learned in this exercise (see 7.17), an initial implementation of the benchmarks as a tool for ensuring compatibility could be trialled within a region. A pilot scheme for regional interoperability would be a next step, and could include a model for creating a regional cross-searching facility through HEIRPORT or similar prototype Portal for historic environment records.

8   REFERENCES

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Appendix A

List of SMRs and UADs in the sample group

Birmingham SMR – SMR for the Unitary Authority of Birmingham.

Buckinghamshire SMR – County SMR with dedicated SMR Officer.

Cambridgeshire SMR and Cambridge UAD – County SMR also managing UAD, with dedicated SMR Officer.

Cheshire SMR – County SMR with dedicated SMR Officer.

Colchester UAD – UAD for Colchester, covering the core area within Colchester Borough.

Cornwall HER – HER for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Unitary Authority), with dedicated members of staff.

Coventry SMR – SMR for Unitary Authority of Coventry, with dedicated SMR Officer.

Derbyshire SMR – County SMR, excludes Derby City UA, with dedicated SMR Officer.

Durham City UAD – One of the early UADs, dating from the 1980s.

County Durham SMR – County SMR with dedicated staff time.

Essex HCR – County SMR/HER with dedicated members of staff.

Gloucester City SMR and UAD – SMR and UAD for District of Gloucester City.

Gloucestershire SMR – County SMR with dedicated members of staff.

Greater London SMR – SMR covering all London authorities, with dedicated members of staff.

Hertfordshire SMR – County SMR with dedicated members of staff.

Lincoln UAD – UAD for City of Lincoln, with dedicated Heritage Information Officer.

Merseyside SMR – Joint SMR covering five Unitary Authorities.

North Lincolnshire SMR – SMR for the Unitary Authority of North Lincolnshire, with dedicated staff time.

Northamptonshire SMR and Northampton UAD – County SMR and UAD for Northampton, with dedicated SMR Officer.

Norwich UAD – UAD for Norwich, managed by Norfolk County Council.

Portsmouth SMR – SMR for the Unitary Authority of Portsmouth.

South Yorkshire SMR – Joint SMR covering four Unitary Authorities, with dedicated SMR Officer.

Surrey SMR – County SMR with dedicated SMR Officer.

Tyne and Wear SMR and Newcastle UAD – Joint SMR covering six Unitary Authorities, incorporating Newcastle UAD, with dedicated staff time.

West Berkshire SMR – SMR for Unitary Authority with dedicated SMR Officer.

West Yorkshire Archaeology Service SMR – Joint SMR with dedicated members of staff.

Winchester SMR and UAD – District SMR and UAD for Winchester City.

Worcester City HER and UAD – District SMR and UAD for Worcester City with dedicated staff time.

Worcestershire HER – County SMR, excludes Worcester City, with dedicated members of staff.

Yorkshire Dales National Park SMR – SMR for National Park area.

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Appendix B

PROJECT DESIGN: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RESOURCES NEEDED BY ENGLISH SMRs / UADs TO ACHIEVE THE 1ST STAGE HER BENCHMARK

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This project design has been prepared in response to the revised Project Brief issued on 7 July 2003 on behalf of English Heritage, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It includes amendments requested in Tim Cromack's letter of 9 September 2003.

1.2   The Brief outlines a proposed research project to quantify and cost the resources necessary to ensure that all current Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) and Urban Archaeological Databases (UADs) held by local authorities are raised to at least the first stage HER performance measures as outlined in *Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice* (2002) – see Appendix 1.

1.3   The project is to be resourced by English Heritage and DCMS. English Heritage and ALGAO will provide technical support. The intention is to ensure the availability of key information following the current DCMS consultation on the future development of HERs.

2   AIM

The aims stated in the Project Outline are:

2.1   to quantify the work necessary for SMRs and UADs to achieve the first stage benchmark for HERs.

2.2   to estimate the resources needed to carry out the work and achieve the first stage benchmark standard.

3   OBJECTIVES

The objectives stated in the Project Outline are:

3.1   To undertake a survey of a representative sample of SMRs and UADs in England in order to establish the quantification and cost of work necessary for each current Record to achieve the first stage HER benchmark in all four categories of achievement, namely:
- User Services and Access
- Information Coverage and Content
- Information Management
- Organisation Management.

3.2   To use the survey results to produce an assessment of the scale of resources which will be required to move each SMR / UAD in England to the first stage HER benchmark.

3.3   To produce two final reports for the EH / ALGAO / DCMS HER Working Party, one on SMRs and one on UADs, which will enable the Working Party to develop an implementation plan for the HER Benchmark Scheme which incorporates sound financial planning.

4 PERSONNEL

4.1 The project will be undertaken jointly by **David Baker** (Historic Environment Conservation) and **Dr Gill Chitty** (Hawkshead Archaeology and Conservation), assisted by **Rachel Edwards**, working in consultation with the English Heritage Project Officer and the Steering Group / HER Working Party. Professional profiles are attached as Appendix 2. David Baker will be the lead consultant. The principal consultants will allocate the work between them as they consider appropriate but David Baker will undertake more than half of it. It is not envisaged that taking up this project will impinge adversely upon any existing commitments of the consultants to EH-funded projects. The LAPIS project (GC/DB) is drawing to a conclusion. David Baker has no other EH-funded commitments; Gill Chitty is likely to be allocating about 6 days work to the project.

4.2 The consultants have extensive experience of work on the development, use and assessment of SMRs, at first hand in Bedfordshire (DB), Lancashire (GC) and Hereford & Worcester (RE), and in various consultancy projects including the 1998 *Assessment of English SMRs* (DB), the 2002 *Benchmarks* project (GC) and the 2000 HEIRNET project (DB, GC, Dr Julian Richards). Other project work that has familiarised them generally with the current state of historical conservation services in local government includes the 2001 *Heritage under Pressure* project for English Heritage (DB, GC), a review of Shropshire's services in 2002 (DB), and currently *Local Authority Historic Environment Services Performance Indicators* (GC, DB). Rachel Edwards has made substantial contributions to extensive rural and urban survey projects with major SMR components, covering three counties. She has experience of database structures and the migration of SMR data between structures, as well as of the database aspects of project

5 PROJECT GOVERNANCE

5.1 Lead responsibility for the technical aspects of the study will lie jointly with the membership of the HER Working Party. The consultants will report as required to a Steering Group appointed from the Working Party, who will act as project advisors.

5.2 Project management and monitoring for the Steering Group of the HER Working Party and the funding agencies will be through the Project Officer appointed by English Heritage.

6 BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

6.1 The Project Outline records how complete coverage of England by about 100 SMRs, including 23 UADs, has been achieved over the last thirty years, mostly based in local authorities. It emphasises their fundamental role in the management, investigation and explanation of the historic environment. It characterises their uses, content and structure.

6.2 The starting point for this project is the variation between Records in respect of development generally, computerised databases, use of GIS, coverage of area by topic, period and location, and accession and / or digitisation of presented material. Progress since the base-date of the first assessment in April 1998 (Baker 1999), recently reviewed by English Heritage's Data Standards Unit (DSU) (Newman 2002), has shown both improvements and a continuation of significant variations. A recently drafted Data Services Unit report is also relevant – *Progress in the Implementation of Baker's Recommendations for Sites and Monuments* (Newman 2003).

6.3 These variations and the need for further improvements have been thrown into sharp relief by recent commitments to ensure local authorities and others have access to adequate information systems for the understanding, management and explanation of the historic environment. Notably, these occur in the sector-wide statement *Power of Place* (English Heritage 2001) and the government's response to it, *A Force for our Future* (DCMS / DTLR 2002). These

recognise the need for comprehensive Historic Environment Records with a remit going beyond the traditional archaeological and land-use planning aspects to which many SMRs / UADs are still confined. They are also a response to repeated calls for SMRs / UADs to be made a statutory responsibility of local authorities in order to ensure the stable and secure resources necessary for carrying out their remit. On 17 July 2003, DCMS published the 'HER Consultation Paper' which provides the context for this project, and asks 19 questions for response by 31 October 2003.

6.4   ALGAO, English Heritage and DCMS are working to develop a national standard for HERs. A commissioned report - *Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice* (Chitty 2002) – produced two sets of HER performance measures, a baseline standard for existing SMRs and a second more developed standard for HERs.

6.5   This project is concerned with the first measure, the baseline standard for existing SMRs / UADs. That sets out a defined level of essential good practice in four areas of performance. These cover

- User Services and Access
- Information Coverage and Content
- Information Management
- Organisation Management.

6.6   These four areas of performance are based on those used in the 1998 Assessment to score individual SMRs, so it is possible to track change across a five-year period in the standards attained by the 75 then covered. The recent survey by the DSU records some of the progress that has been made (Newman 2003), but many SMRs / UADs still have to achieve all the criteria identified in the proposed baseline standard. The purpose of this current project is to quantify and cost the resources necessary to ensure that all current SMRs / UADs held by local authorities can achieve what are considered in 2003 to be the essential elements of that standard.

6.7   The required approach to the project involves using a sample of SMRs / UADs, chosen to represent the complete range of types and provide statistically valid results that can be safely extrapolated to the whole population. Willingness and ability to cooperate will be an essential criterion for selection. The 1st stage HER Performance Measures are already familiar to the SMR / UAD community. An information pack based upon them will be devised, drawing upon the experience of the consultants in previous SMR-related projects, in order to help the chosen SMRs / UADs establish in advance the range and detail of the information required. This will be followed by individual interviews comprising detailed discussion and physical assessment of material and systems where necessary.

6.8   The required approach also involves collection of survey data either in a Microsoft Access database or in a spreadsheet to permit easy analysis of the results and to provide synthesis for later presentations. The results will be compiled in order to demonstrate resource requirements for each benchmark as well as overall costings. Two final reports detailing the Records surveyed and the results of the surveys will be prepared.

6.9   The revised Project Outline requires separate analysis and reporting for SMRs and UADs. The 1998 *Assessment* excluded most UADs. *Benchmarks for Good Practice in Historic Environment Records*, based upon the *Assessment*, makes no specific reference to them. Because SMRs are nearly all 20-35 years old, there is readily available background analysis for relating them to those standards and quantifying the work needed to reach them, whereas the same does not hold good for the group of 23 UADs, mostly less than 10 years old, and varying considerably in content and context.

7   PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGY

7.0   Stage 0: Announcement of Project

As soon as the selected consultants are appointed, the project sponsors should announce the project, its objectives, intended methodology and timetable to the SMR / UAD community at large. The extreme importance of cooperation from SMRs / UADs in obtaining a representative sample should be underlined. The sponsors should consider inviting volunteers on a without-prejudice basis so that the categories to be defined can include the most willing.

7.1   Stage I: Initial scoping, clarifying issues and designing methodology

Several issues need to be clarified and agreed at a first meeting with the Steering Group of the HER Working Party (henceforth 'Steering Group').

(a)   The **exact population** of 'around 100' English SMRs / UADs must be clarified. The consultants will propose a categorised list in consultation with the Data Standards Unit of NMR. The extent to which the internet SMR Forum can be used as a medium of communication will be established.

(b)   The **aims of the project** – quantifying the work and resources required for SMRs / UADs to achieve the first stage benchmark for HERs – need to be clarified. In terms of resource requirements, they can be interpreted as referring to

(i)   one-off costs of 'catch-up' tasks
(ii)   one-off costs associated with putting permanent capabilities in place
(iii)   recurring costs of maintaining those capabilities thereafter.

The one-off costs [(i) (ii)] are plainly central to the project. However, defining recurring costs raises further issues, and it is not part of the project to assess the costs of maintaining SMRs / UADs generally. This would involve what *Heritage under Pressure* (Baker and Chitty 2001) identified as both 'direct' resource requirements (cash and people) and 'indirect' ones (organisational and policy factors), and also raise the issue of what should be funded by the Record host and what by special external grant. Also, the first benchmark is envisaged as a transitional stage towards HERs; there are uncertainties arising from current proposals for regional government and references in the DCMS HER consultation paper to 'pooling of resources'.

(c)   The Project Outline states that "UADs have restricted criteria in terms of geographical coverage and data range which mean that they are generally not suitable for development into standalone HERs without substantial additional resources." It then asserts that they "therefore also need to be assessed against the first stage HER benchmark standards". The consultants will apply the first stage HER benchmark standards to UADs.

(d)   Using these categories of SMR / UAD, the consultants will devise a **sampling strategy**. The Project Outline proposes that nearly one third of the total is sampled. The consultants consider that a careful analysis of the types of SMR / UAD in relation to the four categories of achievement, based upon their extensive knowledge and experience of SMRs / UADs generally, and with a thoroughly reviewed pilot scheme, will support a sample closer to 20%.

(e)   The consultants will agree a definition for unaccessed material with the Steering Group, distinguishing between material acquired but not yet processed, and sources not yet searched for material worth acquiring.

(f)   The consultants will undertake **preliminary work on the design of the information pack and questionnaire** for presentation to the Steering Group.

(g)   The consultants will present preliminary proposals for the project **database**, and seek agreement from the Steering Group that it will be useful beyond the end of the project.

7.2   Stage II: Confirming and testing the methodology

(a)   Preliminary work on devising the information pack and the suite of questions for producing the survey data will be completed in the light of comments from the Steering Group.

(b)   The methodology will be tested on up to six SMRs, including a strong and a weak 'traditional' SMR, an SMR already operating at least partly as an HER, a UAD linked with an SMR, and a stand-alone UAD. These Records will also be used as part of the full sample.

(c)   The methodology will be reviewed in the light of the test results and finalised with the Steering Group. The test results will also inform the final decision on the size and composition of the sample. There will be a list of back-up substitutes in the various categories to replace any that find themselves unable to participate.

7.3   Stage III: Sample survey and Interviews; processing results, compiling database

(a)   The information pack will be sent to the selected SMRs / UADs with a request to confirm receipt within a stated period of time by raising any questions arising from a first perusal or confirming that there are 'no problems'. At the same time a date for interview and return of completed information will be agreed.

(b)   All those sent packs will be interviewed in person. The interviews will be carried out by David Baker and Rachel Edwards. The Project Outline indicates that the individual interviews will comprise detailed discussion and physical assessment where necessary. The latter will comprise no more than broad categories and quantities. If the SMR / UAD is unable to provide information at that level, it is not an appropriate task for the consultants to do that work for them.

(c)   Resource requirements for various tasks whose completion will achieve the benchmarks will be collected on an individual 'real' basis from each interviewed SMR / UAD. They will then be generalised to provide figures for the whole population, broken down into any relevant categories that have already been defined as part of the sampling process. Wherever possible, standard measures will be used, drawing, for example, upon the reports *Profiling the profession* (Aitchison 1999; Aitchison and Edwards 2003) for salary levels and the costs of a dedicated SMR Officer / Assistant.

(d)   The processing of survey results, compiling reports and data-entry to the database will take place in parallel with the survey work. This work will be mainly done by Rachel Edwards.

(e)   The Steering Group will be kept informed about progress, but there is not expected to be the need for any formal meetings during this stage.

7.4   Stage IV: Preparation of Draft and Final Reports

(a)   The Steering Group will be consulted by e-mail on the proposed format for the draft reports and for the report Archive.

(b)   The draft reports will be presented to the Steering Group / HER Working Party for comments.

(c)   There will be a review meeting to consider comments on the draft documents, and amendments to content and format. That meeting should also consider whether any presentations to the SMR / UAD community should be added to the project.

(d)   The draft documents will be amended and the final versions submitted.

7.5   STAGE V: Archive plan

The project Archive will be deposited in the format and at the destination(s) agreed with the Steering Group. Working papers and other documents will be ordered so that there is an audit trail of decisions made, information gathered, and analysis for incorporation in the final report and its associated database.

8   RESOURCE PLAN:

STAGE 0: Announcement of Project [by sponsors]	Total
STAGE I: Initial scoping, clarifying issues, designing methodology	*11*
familiarisation; scoping and planning this stage;	3.5
devising options for clarifying the UAD issue; devising survey methodology and information pack	5.5
meeting with Steering Group	2
STAGE II: Confirming and testing the methodology	*9*
finalising information pack and interview format / arrangements	1.5
interviews, processing and reporting results	6.5
meeting with Steering Group	1
STAGE III: Sample survey interviews; processing results, compiling database	*27*
contact SMRs; despatch packs	1
interview 20-25 SMRs / UADs	25
compile reports and enter material on database	6
STAGE IV: Preparation of draft and final reports	*9*
preparation of draft report	5
review meeting with Steering Group	2
preparation and despatch of final report	2
STAGE V: Archive plan	*1*
archive preparation and deposit	1
total days	**62**
£	18070
travel etc	1500
GRAND TOTAL	19570

9   TIMETABLE

The timetable presented below assumes a start date of Monday 6 October 2003. Steering Group meetings are proposed at the end of Stages I, II and IV.

Stage	Completion	Meeting
I	Friday 24 Oct	30 or 31 Oct ?
II	Friday 21 Nov	21 Nov ?
III	Friday 9 Jan 04	
IV	Friday 13 Feb 04	13 Feb ?
V	Friday 27 Feb 04	

10   DEPENDENCIES

10.1   Timetable

The programme timetable outlined above is dependent on:

(a)   All stages: availability of the Steering Group for meetings at the key stages of the project (as outlined in the provisional programme) to approve detailed matters and advise on all aspects

(b)   Stage 0: the procurement process and signing of project agreement being concluded by Monday 6 October 2003

(c)   Stage 1: resolution of the issues raised above regarding the approach to UADs, and clarification of how much useful information about them already exists.

(d)   Stage 1: in the light of the other Stage 1 dependencies, agreement of the timetable

(e)   Stages 2, 3: the ability of the pilot and main sample groups of SMRs / UADs to respond within agreed timescales

10.2   Programme Resources

The project programme is dependent on resources from the client organisations for:

(a)   All stages: advice and input of Steering Group and Project Officer

(b)   All stages: information and documentation from English Heritage's DSU.

(c)   Stage 0: project implementation (contractual arrangements, announcement, Steering Group and communications set up)

(d)   Stage 1: resolution of the issues surrounding UADs and agreement of a sampling strategy may have resource implications additional to those identified in the Resource Plan and estimates of cost

The consultants reserve the right to reallocate resources between tasks and consultants in the light of experience as the project develops, within the overall total, and subject to agreement of any consequent changes in programme with the Project Officer.

11   DELIVERABLES

11.1   Draft documents for review meetings will be circulated electronically by email, wherever possible 2 days in advance of meeting dates.

11.2   The final submissions will be presented as reports in hard and soft copies in Word, with a project archive in hard copy and a database software format to be agreed with the client.

11.3   The structures of the reports will be agreed by the beginning of Stage IV.

Not reproduced here are:

Appendix 1, listing the 1st Stage HER performance measures from 'Historic Environment Records: Benchmarks for Good Practice', including Annex 1;

Appendix 2 giving the consultants' professional profiles.

Appendix C

DATABASE METHODOLOGY

The project database in MS Access (**SMRRAFinal.mdb**) consisted of two main linked tables, with a further table containing salary information, and additional lookup tables for converting codes into full benchmark names or progress descriptions. The first of the two main tables (**All SMRs**) listed 101 SMRs/UADs from which the agreed population of 88 was derived. The second (**Sample SMRs**) was linked to the first by ID number, and listed progress towards compliance by each of the 30 in the sample group towards each of the 23 benchmarks (= 690 records). This structure allowed the benchmark data in the table **Sample SMRs** to be interrogated in relation to any of the fields in the table **All SMRs** or **Sample SMRs**. For example, costs could be calculated by region, by record type, by benchmark etc. The data were analysed and displayed in Access and Excel as appropriate.

There is a significant difference between a database such as an SMR, where the fields and structure change rarely, and a project-specific analytical database such as that used for SMRRA. A flexible approach to database structure and contents allows data analysis to be carried out most effectively for an individual project. Initial proposals for the project database were presented to the project Steering Group on 30 October 2003, with the proviso that additional fields might be added to the data tables. As work progressed, a number of new data fields were added, but it was also discovered that data were not available for some of the fields originally proposed, or that some fields did not work as anticipated, and these were deleted. Information on salary levels was obtained for some, not all, of the sample group, and the most effective way of using this information was to create a third table, again using the common ID number field. The three tables are described below.

All SMRs

This table contained a single record for each SMR or UAD in the original list from which the agreed population was derived (see Report 2.2). Fields shown in italics are those for which reliable data were not available for all SMRs, and these fields were removed from the table.

Columns/Fields	Explanation	Key	Source
ID	Unique ID number for SMRRA		Arbitrarily assigned
EH_UID	EH ID number		Organisations database extract provided by EH (NB this could not be used as primary ID, as there was duplication and omission – some organisations manage >1 SMR, and others were not included)
Name	Name of SMR/UAD	-	EH online list http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/default.asp?WCI=WebItem&WCE=1770, accessed 15/10/2003
Included	Whether included in SMRRA or not	Y / N	
Sample	Whether included in SMRRA sample or not	Y if included	
Region	Government Office Region	EE= East of England EM=East Midlands L=London NE=North East NW=North West SE=South East SW=South West WM=West Midlands YH=Yorkshire and The Humber	2003 Map: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/downloads/uk_gor_cty.pdf, accessed 16/10/2003
Type	Type of Record	SMR=SMR JSMR=Joint SMR for multiple LAs CSMR=Copy of SMR maintained by other authority SMR/UAD=SMR also managing a UAD UAD=UAD only	EH list (as above)
Auth_type	Type of Local Authority (LA)	C= Shire County D=Shire District U=Unitary Authority NP=National Park O=Other	EH list (as above) and 2003 map (as above)
Type&Auth	Combination of Record and LA type	County SMR County SMR + UAD District SMR District SMR + UAD District UAD Joint Service SMR Joint Service SMR + UAD Unitary SMR Unitary SMR + UAD	Previous two fields. National Parks were counted as Unitary Authorities for the purposes of the project

Columns/Fields	Explanation	Key	Source
Host	SMR/UAD host authority	C= Shire County D=Shire District U=Unitary Authority NP=National Park O=Other	Address as in EH list
Urb_Rur	Urban/rural mix	U=Urban conurbation UR=Mainly urban, some rural RU=Mainly rural, some urban R=All rural, eg NP	
Coastal	Does the authority have a sea/estuary coastline	Y / N	2003 map (as above)
UAD	Whether Record is or includes a UAD	Y / N	
UAD_City	Name of UAD	-	EH list (as above)
UAD_prog	*Progress of UAD*	*P=Pilot study only, no progress* *S=Started* *D=Database complete* *NA=Not applicable*	*Data obtained late in project; not entered onto database*
UAD_cov	*Coverage of UAD in relation to LA area*	*C=Coterminous* *I=Island within LA* *NA=Not applicable*	*Not available for all*
UAD_SMR_rel	*Relationship between UAD and SMR*	*F=Fully integrated* *P=Partly integrated* *S=Separate* *NA=Not applicable*	*Not available for all*
UAD_usable	Whether UAD is in a condition to be useful or not (eg fossilised in obsolete software)	N = Not usable	
Shared resp	Single post-holder with other responsibilities, eg Development Control	Y / N	Data known for sample group only; 'N' entered as default for remainder of records
Staff	*Number of staff*	*0=None* *P=Part time/shared responsibility* *1=1* *2=2 etc*	*None available*
SMRO	*Dedicated SMR professional*	*Number FTE* *P=Part time shared responsibility*	*None available*
SMRA_P	*Permanent SMR Assistant*	*Number FTE*	*None available*
SMRA_T	*Temporary SMR Assistant*	*Number FTE*	*None available*
Clerical	*Clerical support*	*Number FTE*	*None available*
Online	Presence of online searchable database	Y / N	ADS/Internet search; info from David Petts
Software	Type of software in use		EH Content and Computing questionnaire forms
GIS	Type of GIS in use		EH Content and Computing questionnaire forms
GIS_Linked	*GIS linked to database*	*Y / N*	*None available for GIS linked to database*

Columns/Fields	Explanation	Key	Source
98_Std	Standard achieved in 1998 Baker survey	GH=74–65% IJ=64–55% KL=54–45% MN=44–35% OP=34–25% QR=24–15% - = Not included in 1998 survey (See Baker 1999, Table 1)	Baker 1999
Strength	*Strength of SMR on scale of 1-3 in relation to Level 1 benchmarks*	*1=Weak* *2=Medium* *3=Strong*	*No up-to-date objective measure available*
Volunteer	Volunteered for SMRRA sample	Contact name	SMRs who have volunteered
Notes			

Sample SMRs

A single entry was made in the **Sample SMRs** table for each benchmark and for each Record in the sample group. The ID field was used for a one-to-many relationship between the two tables **All SMRs** and **Sample SMRs**, ie a single record in **All SMRs** linked to multiple records in **Sample SMRs**. Fields shown in italics are those which were found not to be useful, and these were removed from the table.

Columns/Fields	Explanation	Key
ID	SMRRA ID number	Linked to ID in **All SMRs**
Benchmark	Benchmark no	
Progress	How much progress has been made	0 = none 1 = partial 2 = compliant
Cost	Estimated cost	
Days	Estimated no of days	
Hist days	No of days already taken towards compliance	
Hist cost	£ already spent towards compliance	
HLF etc	HLF costs	
Confidence	Level of confidence in estimate	a = detailed, accurate b = ball-park c = approximate only d = not possible to estimate for the reason(s) stated n = not applicable as compliant x = not applicable for other reason
Past/future	*Task already completed or to be undertaken in the future*	*p = past* *f = future* *Not used. Replaced by Hist days and Hist cost*
Backlog d	No of days estimated to clear backlog not included in benchmark estimates	
Backlog £	£ estimated to clear backlog not included in benchmark estimates	
Details	Notes providing further detail	
Task desc	*Task description*	*Optional. Will allow clearer definition of*

Columns/Fields	Explanation	Key
		benchmarks which are comprised of several tasks. Not used. The idea of several entries for each benchmark did not prove useful.
Staff	*Level of experience required for task*	*1 = Experienced SMR professional* *2 = SMR Assistant* *3 = Clerical Assistant* *Not used. Information not provided by most sample SMRs.*

Salaries

A separate table was used to record salary information, which was provided by 14 of the sample group. Data were provided in a variety of different forms, hence the need for four fields to describe each of three post levels. This allowed an average salary to be calculated for each post level.

Columns/Fields	Explanation
ID	SMRRA ID number
SMR_MgrMin	Minimum salary for SMR Manager
SMR_Mgr	Average salary for SMR Manager
SMR_MgrMax	Maximum salary for SMR Manager
SMR_Mgr_Sc	LA salary scale for SMR Manager
SMROMin	Minimum salary for SMR Officer
SMRO	Average salary for SMR Officer
SMROMax	Maximum salary for SMR Officer
SMRO_Sc	LA salary scale for SMR Officer
SMRAMin	Minimum salary for SMR Assistant
SMRA	Average salary for SMR Assistant
SMRAMax	Maximum salary for SMR Assistant
SMRA_Sc	LA salary scale for SMR Assistant
Placet	Salary for SMR Placement
Placet_Sc	LA salary scale for SMR Placement

Appendix D – the Survey Information Pack

SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORDS RESOURCE ASSESSMENT (SMRRA)
Resource needs for achieving the 1st stage HER benchmark: briefing information

1. The report on the benchmarks project was published in 2002, and the project design for SMRRA has already been circulated to SMRs / UADs. SMRRA aims to quantify the internal and external resources needed to bring them up to the '1st stage benchmark' and thereby improve delivery of the services identified in the recent DCMS consultation.

2. The attached table lists the 1st stage benchmark standards together with the actions needed to identify the costs being investigated by this project. Unless otherwise stated, these are the costs of scoping an activity or issue and of estimating the resources needed to carry it out, rather than the full estimate itself. Also, the survey is identifying costs rather than who should provide what resources, though some benchmarks that represent basic good practice within host authorities are noted as not-for-costing.

3. The survey is being carried out in two stages. The first, up to late November, tested the methodology with seven SMRs / UADs. The main survey ending in early January, will bring the number assessed up to the designed sample of 25-30, or 25%-30% of the total population.

4. SMRRA is also a systematic opportunity to test the 1st stage benchmarks on a substantial portion of SMRs / UADs. We wish to identify issues that arise over the application of the benchmarks to practical situations, and comments are welcomed from any SMR / UAD.

5. The project will ultimately estimate the resources needed by all English SMRs / UADs to achieve each of the first stage benchmarks. This will be compiled in a database to be held by English Heritage, with a capability for adjusting costs in line with future inflation.

6. Staff time for benchmark tasks should be estimated in person days and will then multiplied by suitable 2003/04 daily rates incorporating standard on-costs, drawing upon the report *Profiling the Profession*.

7. The population of SMRs / UADs from which the sample is taken is based on the list in Appendix 4 of the 2002 Content and Computing Survey by English Heritage's Data Standards Unit. It excludes those maintained by the Ministry of Defence and the National Trust. Where a Record is essentially a paper copy of part of a larger Record maintained by another Authority, only the parent is included for the purposes of global resource needs assessment. The survey includes UADs that have completed or are within striking distance of completing the database stage of development, a point at which it is realistic to apply most of the benchmark standards.

8. The survey will be carried out by personal interview following pre-circulation of this information. The sample SMRs / UADs are asked to prepare responses and matters for discussion so that the process can be completed in half a day or less.

9. In cases where a benchmark standard has clearly already been achieved, the survey will collect historic costs where these can be calculated.

10. The project team is also interested in readily available information from SMRs / UADs outside the chosen sample about firm estimates or recorded costs of achieving any benchmarks. A separate request will be made through the ALGAO list, covering matters such as 'backlog', HLF grant scheme budgets, identifiable SMR / UAD budgets, and the dynamic linkage of GIS and database.

11. All estimates should have an assessed level of confidence as either:
    (a) detailed and likely to be accurate / recorded historic cost

     (b) ball-park figure based upon broad knowledge of work required

     (c) approximate estimate, dependent upon quantification of future tasks or past work

     (d) no quantification is possible for the reasons stated.

12   Figures obtained through the project must be based on realistic estimates, but will be treated individually as confidential and treated as neither a bid nor a commitment. The final report of the project will generalise about the various benchmarks and aspects of SMRs / UADs. It will not contain any identifiable material about individual authorities without explicit prior agreement.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
1 User Services and Access			
SERVING USER NEEDS			
1.1	*Information services policy* A written policy for information services setting out: • The purposes for which the historic environment record is maintained • The professional and public user groups that it aims to serve • The arrangements for providing information and access for those users according to their particular needs. *Baker Rec 20, 41; IFP Guidelines E.1-3*	Preparation of the policy, including discussion, drafting, consultation, revision, and formal adoption by the service / authority; or review / revision of existing policy to ensure conformity with benchmarks for good practice. This is essentially a 'headlines' policy, but its implications should have been thought through in some detail during drafting and consultation. It would be used to define what capability was being 'adopted' as laid out in Benchmark 4.1	Estimated staff time to develop and adopt new policy or review / revise existing one

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
1.2	*Access to services* Publication of details of public access and search facilities (remote and / or local), including opening hours and charging policy in • printed leaflet / poster, • Web site / page with email address • Index entry in HEIRNET Register. User facilities, according to local policy, should include a dedicated, supervised work area for researchers, appropriately equipped and with facilities for copying, etc. Where such facilities are limited, there should be an appropriate alternative provision such as a specified level of response to postal, telephone and email enquiries and / or remote access to the Record via other services (e.g. from terminals in museums, libraries, record offices). *Baker Rec 41; IFP Guidelines E.3-4*	The preparation and publication of the relevant information in the three media identified. Assessment of adequacy of supervised work area and associated facilities and feasibility of developing or improving. Where circumstances prevent these being provided, the alternative of remote access via other services may be adopted.	Estimated staff time for preparation and publication of access arrangements. Supervised work area should be part of the host authority's accommodation provision. Where none available, the estimated staff time for setting up basic alternative provision for responding (e.g. web page / email link for enquires) may be included, but not the costs of developing full remote electronic access to the SMR.

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No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
SATISFYING USER NEEDS			
1.3	*Research into user profiles and service satisfaction* A maintained register of users and type of enquiry for both local and remote use (e.g. web hits, telephone enquiries, as well as visits by researchers). *Baker Rec 38,39; IFP Guidelines E.2, Panel 7*	Creation of a user registration system if none existing.	The cost of creating such a register is assumed to be minimal and its maintenance is part of routine service provision.
REACHING NEW AUDIENCES			
1.4	*Development of outreach* Programme of outreach activities to develop new audiences and promote wider use of resources; or outline proposals for how a balanced programme will be developed in the future. *IFP Guidelines E.6*	Preparing an outreach programme including consultation as appropriate with users / audiences and colleagues. The alternative, outline development proposals, must be credibly comprehensive in scope and have the positive support of the host authority at least in principle. Obtaining an HLF-funded outreach scheme does meet the benchmark on the assumption that it is required to include a realistic commitment to continuation after the scheme has finished.	Estimated costs of staff time / consultancy to develop outreach proposals, based on consultation / user survey if appropriate, but not including costs of full development of the programme.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
2 Information Coverage and Content			
INFORMATION CONTENT			
2.1	*Information policy* A written policy setting out the scope, geographical coverage and content of information resources that should be accessible through the service (digital, non-digital and reference collections). The policy should take account of related historic environment information systems, museum, library and record office collections that complement the Record's holdings. In principle, the Record should be inclusive of subject and period for all archaeology, terrestrial and maritime, either through its own holdings or links with related information resources. In practice, the circumstances of its development and resources may mean that the Record is not all-inclusive. The policy should be explicit about differential coverage in period and topic and selective inclusion or omissions (e.g. cut-off dates, datasets from thematic surveys). The policy will include a statement of existing arrangements for exchanging or sharing data and networking systems with related local records and other information providers / originators. This will also cover licence agreements (e.g. with NMR) and a statement on IPR issues. *Baker Rec 19, 23, 28, 29; IFP Guidelines B4, C, E4.4*	Preparing a policy that accurately describes the scope, area and information content that the SMR includes, or provides access to. This does not include expanding an existing differential coverage, which should be regarded as enhancement and outside the scope of this assessment. However, the policy should include a programme for enhancement where this is appropriate and where the process of drafting the information policy has highlighted the need.	Estimated costs of staff time to develop, draft and adopt an information policy.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
2.2	*Information coverage and content* The coverage of an HER, in accordance with its information policy, should include units of information compiled from the sources outlined in detail in *IFP Guidelines D.3 – 5* A draft minimum content standard is appended at Annex 1: HER Basic compliance specification DRAFT v0.2. Baker Rec 28; *IFP Guidelines B5-7*	Combinations of data-cleaning and selective enhancement as appropriate, applied to individual records. This refers to the standard of coverage within individual records, as measured against the draft minimum content standard. It does not refer to the extent of spatial / temporal / topical coverage of the Record as a whole.	Estimated staff time and any other costs to ensure compliance

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
2.3	*Primary or unique archive material should be managed by an appropriate curatorial service.* Primary archive (digital, non-digital and finds) should be deposited with an appropriate repository. A disposals policy for staged transfers may be required and security copying / scanning of non-digital material as appropriate. *Baker Rec 33; IFP Guidelines B.4.3*	Assess scale and type of primary or unique archive material held in the SMR (finds, documents etc) and devise a policy and programme for disposal as appropriate, with agreement of partner organisations (local RO or museum). Assess need for any copying / scanning of such material and quantify costs. Archive material that the SMR holds itself – images, written reports of inspections, etc – can be held providing security copying has taken place, to be costed under Benchmark 3.5	Estimation of staff time and other costs to assess archive material for disposal / copying. It is expected that transfer of original material to an appropriate archive holding body will not carry costs and that copies would be available as required on demand. Costs of copying essential reference material for SMR holdings should be included.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
3 Information Management			
SYSTEM ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURES			
3.1	*Formally adopted procedures for documentation practice* Written manual or 'recording guidelines' to provide quality assurance and documenting 3.2. – 3.5. *Baker Rec 44; IFP Guidelines B.5 – B.7, C.*	Preparing or reviewing appropriate documentation is expected to draw upon available national models or nationally accepted examples of best practice. The standard required would enable, for example, a maternity cover post-holder to do the job properly and could also be used as a training manual	Estimated staff / consultancy time to prepare / review manual
3.2	*Computerised database(s) and relevant information schemes compiled in accordance with national data standards.* Compliance with a basic MIDAS data content standard and with Event – Monument- Archive/Source information schemes; conformity with INSCRIPTION wordlists and thesauri. *Baker Rec 3, 31;* MIDAS	Assess and quantify needs for recasting 'old-style' records together with directly associated data-cleaning. This excludes data enhancement.	Estimated staff time to assess and carry out necessary upgrading of data holdings.
3.3	*GIS for current and historical mapping, linked to the Record databases* Compliance with national standards for spatial data and guidance on GIS good practice, e.g. ADS *GIS Guide to Good Practice Guide*, NGDF metadata standard. *Baker Rec 31, 15 ; IFP Guidelines B8*	Prepare a written manual and / or adopted policy statement which sets out the SMRs GIS policy. This should address the specific issues for GIS data standards in section B.8.2 of IFP. Where this manual / policy relates to a standard for recording the origin and nature of GIS data layers, then this should include at least the mandatory metadata recommended by the GIGateway / NGDF standard.	Estimated staff time to prepare manual / policy statement. Estimated staff time and non-staff costs to acquire GIS software linked to Record database (and training), but not costs of mapping, implementation / related data cleaning and enhancement.

96

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
3.4	*Supporting reference collections (secondary sources, maps, graphic and photographic material)* A written guide and index to supporting reference collections held by the Record. Collections should be housed and maintained to relevant environmental and storage standards. *Baker Rec 32; IFP Guidelines B.11-12.*	Creation of a collections catalogue, referring to initial creation only, not continuing maintenance Assess needs for and specify appropriate special storage facilities beyond normal host authority accommodation and basic furniture.	Estimated staff time to create or complete catalogue Estimated special storage requirements

QUALITY AND SECURITY MEASURES			
3.5	*Data security* System security policy covering arrangements for • storage and handling of digital and other modern media; • multi-layered security procedures; • long-term digital archiving and security copying of non-digital material. *Baker Rec 43, 44; IFP Guidelines B.9.2*	Prepare a system security policy.	Estimated costs of preparing the policy and what its initial implementation might cost.
3.6	*Information audit on quinquennial basis* Report of information audit to assess the quality of data and identify the need for validation and enhancement. *Baker Rec 14; NMR SMR data audit specification: section 6*	Undertake a quinquennial information audit, either as the first one done, or as a less demanding repeat exercise. Since this should include an assessment of backlog, it is a pre-requisite for Benchmark 3.7	Estimated cost to the host authority of undertaking an audit, assuming a continuing level of partnership funding from NMR.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
3.7	*Data validation and currency* An assessment of backlog, update and enhancement requirements. A prioritised programme, based on the results of an information audit (3.6.), for data validation, recasting of earlier records, essential core data indexing, routine updating and enhancement projects should form part of the Record's Forward Plan. *Baker Rec 42; IFP Guidelines D3-5*	Assess the work required to deal with backlog, here defined as material deposited digitally or physically with the SMR or as a direct result of the processes the SMR serves, but not yet assessed / verified / analysed and accessed. For the purposes of SMRRA this benchmark covers **backlog**, and does not cover • **enhancement** or the potential output from data collection programmes outside the written collection policy defined in 2.1 above • **verification** of data already accessed on to the SMR, which is routine maintenance • **data cleaning / reworking**, completing the mandatory fields referred to in 3.2 above see Benchmark 3.6 above	Estimated costs of assessing the resources needed, <u>not</u> the costs of doing the actual work.
3.8	*Safeguards against foreseeable risks and disaster* Risk assessment and emergency preparedness plan *Baker Rec 44; IFP Guidelines B.12*	Assess risks, prepare an emergency preparedness plan, and put it into effect.	Estimated one-off costs of assessing risks, preparing the plan and implementing it initially.

98   HEC / HCA / AAC

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
4 Organisational Management			
CORPORATE AND BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS			
4.1	*Formal adoption as a maintained public information resource for understanding and enjoyment of the local historic environment.* Resolution of governing body to adopt the Record formally, in accordance with the 'benchmark' Scheme. Where the governing body is not the local planning authority, or acts on behalf of one or more local authorities, formal recognition of the Record is also desirable from the relevant LPAs. This might, for example, be incorporated in service level agreements. *Baker Rec 18*	Adoption by itself will not require significant resources, but there may be more complex arrangements when several authorities are involved. What is adopted should refer to the Information Services Policy that constitutes Benchmark 1.1 Where a county serves Districts, Districts should signal adoption through an SLA rather than adopt something they do not own themselves.	Estimated one-off staffing or service costs required to carry through process of adoption.
4.2	*Formal agreement on geographical coverage and service levels with partners / service providers.* Resolution of governing body; service level agreements and contracts. *Baker Rec 7, 22, 28*	Adoption by itself will not require significant resources, but there may be more complex arrangements when several authorities are involved.	Estimated one-off staffing or service costs required to secure necessary agreements.
4.3	*Statement of purpose or mission statement, policies and key aims of the service* Formally adopted policies and strategic plan for the service. *Baker Rec 30; IFP Guidelines B.2*	Devising and adopting policies and a strategic plan, including necessary consultation procedures. This refers to an overall service plan within which the SMR / UAD is one element	Estimated staff time requirements for initial round. This should not include the costs of update or revision of statements already in place.

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
4.4	*Forward Plan supported by appropriate budgetary provision* Forward plan for the service to achieve implementation of programmes and projects identified in Section 1-3, indicating the resources secured and required for the plan period (3 – 5 year recommended). *Baker Rec 26, 30; IFP Guidelines B.2*	Devising and adopting a forward plan for the service, including necessary consultation procedures. This refers to the SMR / UAD's own more specific service plan	Estimated staff time requirements for initial round. This should not include the costs of update or revision of statements already in place.

	STAFFING AND SUPPORT SERVICES		
4.5	Staffing provision and structure commensurate with the level of services provided. This will include at least one full-time member of staff with appropriate qualifications, experience, and preferably with membership of relevant professional body. *Baker Rec 24(a); IFP Guidelines B.3, E.3.1*	The benchmark is one FTE dedicated professional for routine record management. In practice, for smaller Records 'one' may mean a defined and dedicated proportion of one FTE, and for larger ones more than one FTE.	Report existing staff complement as FTEs, giving job title, grade, salary and % for on-costs. Where no dedicated post exists, SMRRA will estimate in relation to the 2003 *Profiling the Profession* survey.
4.6	*Appropriate internal management arrangements, in relation to the organisation's overall structure, including administrative and clerical support.* Organisation 'management tree' of arrangements for clerical and administrative support for the service. *Baker Rec 24 (a)*	Creating the arrangements as distinct from running them is assumed to be part of normal host authority management procedures.	Do not estimate – assumed as part of host authority's basic expenditure

No	First stage benchmark	SMRRA Actions	Estimates
4.7	*Technical advice: system support for IT and access to other relevant professional advice on archive and records management* Provision for identified IT support and arrangements for obtaining advice on management of archive and primary records from a professional archivist / museum record officer. *Baker Rec 24(a) ; IFP Guidelines B.9*	This should normally be part of normal corporate services and inter-departmental collaboration.	Do not estimate - assumed as part of host authority's basic expenditure
4.8	*Staff training and development programme and resources* Organisation training plan showing commitment to CPD and formal review process for training and development of staff. There should be budgetary provision for relevant specialist and software training courses. Training plans should also be in place for student and volunteer placements *Baker Rec 27; IFP Guidelines B.3*	It is assumed that an organisational training plan already exists as a corporate / departmental document together with some budgetary provision.	Do not estimate - assumed as part of host authority's basic expenditure.

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