

LOCAL PAST: Notes for Contributors

Local Past is published in June and December each year. Authors whose work is accepted for publication will receive one complimentary copy of the edition in which the article appears.

These guidance notes are intended for authors of full articles, but informal short notes and letters are always welcome (though these do not qualify for a complimentary copy of the journal). The editor is happy to discuss all aspects of possible contributions in advance or during preparation.

The editor reserves the right to amend submissions as required. The author will be sent a proof copy for comment and correction before it is sent to the printer. If significant changes are proposed, these are discussed with the author at an early stage; if s/he does not agree with the proposed changes the article can be withdrawn. Most editorial changes are only minor amendments to the text, punctuation, paragraph layout, etc. that are unlikely to be controversial.

Subject matter

We look for contributions on all aspects of the history of our area, from personal reminiscences and memories to fully-referenced research, and aim to achieve a balance between the various types of article.

Length of Article

The average length of a full article in *Local Past* is about 1,000-1,500 words. The preferred normal maximum is about 2,500 words. Unless there were exceptional factors, anything of c.3,000 words or longer is likely to be split into two parts in successive issues, or abridged.

Illustrations add interest even if not strictly necessary, although overall page length has to be considered as well as word count and it may not be possible to include all that may be desired.

As an example, the June 2011 issue had one article of about 2,500 words, one of c.1,900 words, three of c.1,000 and two of c.500, most with illustrations and some with references/footnotes, plus a few shorter items and a couple of letters.

Illustrations

Photographs, drawings and other graphics are welcomed as illustrations for articles and for publication in their own right, in colour as well as monochrome, but please bear in mind that reproduction will be in monochrome unless used on the front cover. Photos should ideally be clear and sharply focussed, although poorer-quality images will be used if of sufficient interest.

When preparing graphics, please bear in mind that they may be reduced in size for publication, and choose appropriate line and lettering sizes. All printed photographs will be returned to the senders.

It is helpful if authors indicate where they think illustrations should appear and supply them separately, rather than embed them in the text. However, the final layout will depend on the space available. (See also 'Submitting' below.)

If photos / drawings etc are not the author's own work a statement giving their creator, source and, if relevant, permission to use from the owner and/or copyright holder will be required (see 'Copyright' below).

Deadlines

Contributions should reach the editor not later than 31st March for the June edition, and 30th September for the December edition, but the editor reserves the right to decide in which edition, if any, the work will appear. Late submissions for specific editions may be acceptable at the editor's discretion, depending on the schedule at the time – please give as much notice as possible of proposed late submission.

Style

The only 'house style' or format authors must follow in their texts is that where specific references and/or additional notes are provided, they should be indicated at the relevant point in the text with a superscript number (^{1,2,3} etc.), with details given in numerical order in a single list at the end of the article. The style of wording for these, and for general bibliographies, can be your own as long as all relevant details are given.

The editor will apply a few minor stylistic conventions during the editing process, such as enclosing short quotations by single inverted commas in the body of the text with long quotations formatted as a separate indented paragraph in a different font, and italicising names / titles of publications e.g. references to *Local Past*. If the intention or meaning is not clear the author will be consulted.

Otherwise it is down to normal rules of grammar and punctuation. In general, we prefer articles to reflect the personality of the writer and don't try to impose a literary style, with two exceptions which will always be edited as necessary. These are the so-called 'present historic' tense, and out-of-context Americanisms.

- The 'present historic' is a literary device whereby past events are described in the present tense. It is used to add immediacy to a narrative, and can be appropriate and effective in fictional or dramatised history but not in a publication of historical research or record. An example would be: 'In 1812 Napoleon invades Russia and reaches Moscow in September.' This would be corrected to: 'In 1812 Napoleon invaded Russia and reached Moscow in September.'
- Language evolves, and the use of Americanisms in UK English is nothing new but seems to be increasing rapidly. (The editor blames the internet...) Those that simply replace a UK word or phrase with an American one will be changed unless they are a direct quote and/or taken from an American source, or are necessary to illustrate a specific point. Others will be considered individually. Here are a few examples:

Not acceptable

meld
 envision
 normalcy
 expiration date
 snuck
 etc., etc...

Will be changed to

merge / combine / mix / join (as appropriate)
 envisage
 normality
 expiry date
 sneaked

Copyright

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Submitting contributions

Text may be sent on paper in manuscript or typescript, or digitally in Microsoft Word compatible format.

Photos and other images can be supplied as hard copy, which we will digitise by scanning or photographing, or digitally as .jpg or .tiff files at sufficiently high resolution not to appear pixellated at the size published.

Digital material can be sent by email or by post on a CD / USB stick. If image files to be emailed are very large, please send small/low-resolution versions first, or if embedding images in text use a smaller version. Arrangements for sending the full-sized file(s) can then be discussed as necessary.

Address for submissions:

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Email: editor@alcesterhistory.org.uk

It would be appreciated if any contributors who wish their hard copy original work to be returned would enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope with it.