If you use this document in your own work please cite the Inventing Adulthoods study (http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/inventingadulthoods)

Process notes on preparation of case data for MLV2 January - April 2008

In Dec 07 we started using a new set of guidelines which were developed (over an 8 month period) as a result of consultation with Timescapes and Qualidata, developments in xml, and informed by our own experience of anonymising data to that point. A number of changes were made to these guidelines following the Timescapes residential in January 2008. The changes over time, while frustrating, were indicative of a process that was complex and was also very much about anticipating, or preparing for the future – both in terms of user needs/interests and technological changes/advances.

Practically the changes to the guidelines which were made in January 08, (the actual xml tag; the method of inserting the header; page numbering; front page format; speaker identifier) required revisiting the transcripts which had already been enhanced and anonymised using the Dec 07 guide (finally put into action while waiting for feedback from Timescapes) after a 3 month 'silence' from Timescapes). These transcripts were reworked using the new guidelines (possibly not the final guidelines) to ensure that the format of all IA documents, at least, prepared for archive submission (post 10 showcase) would be consistent in their formatting.

Implementing the new (January 08 Xml type) guidelines is proving to be relatively straightforward.

Enhancing the raw document firstly involves a name search for the real name of the interviewee and changing this to their pseudonym and tagged using xml code.
The document is then formatted according to the guidelines and then read through while listening to the digital recording of the interview to pick up any errors and fill in any gaps. The 'transcription notes' are added during this stage to indicate pauses, possible hearings, non verbals such as laughs etc.

Having listened to and enhanced a full set of interviews I then moved onto the anonymisation stage. For this next stage – the anonymisation stage- I saved another copy of the enhanced document to work on. I also found it useful to make a note during the enhancing stage of frequently mentioned names/places within the set of interviews that would require anonymising. I then did a search of the document for these frequently occurring names and replaced them with a pre-prepared xml tag, with the anonymised name. I kept a document with prepared tags to copy and paste from. This speeded up the process a little. Having searched and replaced for all the known frequently occurring names i then added headers and implemented the page format guidelines, and the front page outline. The changes made were noted but not added to tracking table at this stage -page numbers would change as the further anonymisation was carried out on the document.

I also did a search for items such as the site name and replaced with the xml tag.

This meant that quite a lot of the tagging/anonymising was done in a fairly quick way. For Donal's document for example I was able to change all mentions of holiday destination, his partner, the places he worked and socialised at the beginning and then just record them in the tracking table as I came on them on the close read. All other changes were made and recorded in the tracking table at the close read.

Part of TS guidelines for front page includes descriptive and thematic keywords for each participant. We are abstracting these in the same way as we did for the showcase of 10 – the key 'themes'. We are also compiling a short biography of each case – not necessarily to be stored with the transcript document. I find it useful to 'jot down' ideas for both the key themes and biography as i work my way through the enhancing stage. And to write and finalise at the end.

The biographical detail for the front page is largely stored in the Access Big Pic or the Case profiles. I have these documents open while completing the front page. While a lot of the data on the front page can be copied from one transcript to another - a copy and paste manoeuvre isn't necessarily recommended as much of the detail also changes – age, work, relationship status etc.- best to do each time.

I continue to anonymise 'across cases, within sites' so that specific streets, towns, clubs, pubs in any one given site are identified using the same pseudonym (there may be some exceptions). The tracking tables are very useful for this purpose. The real names of pub/club for example can be searched in a previous tracking table and the same pseudonym applied to new cases.

Anonymisation is done in a sensitive way so that name changes are meaningful and are consistent with the original. For example in NI a Gaelic or Celtic Christian name would be changed to an equivalent

If you use this document in your own work please cite the Inventing Adulthoods study (http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/inventingadulthoods)

name; changes made to parents occupation would be made to reflect, as far as possible, the original level and type of job.