

RURAL/URBAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS APPLICATION FOR 9TH DECEMBER 2021 CABINET:

Applicant : London and North Western Railway Society (LNWRS)

Description of scheme:

The purpose of the grant is to help the continuation and expansion of the Community Archive Hub; a facility designed to support local history and community groups in the digitising of their archive material and by placing material online. In essence, the Community Archive Hub is designed to support the role local groups and archives play in being keepers of community memory, promoters of social inclusion and as a sense of place. Grant funding is sought for the following:

- a) Repair the existing 42-inch rotary scanner which requires a new lens/glass; whilst every effort is made to clean drawings prior to being inserted into the scanner, as many drawings are 100 to 150 years old and have often been stored poorly, dust can be taken through the machine causing minute scratches.
- b) Purchase of an A3 Multi-Function Scanner & Colour Printer will provide an invaluable multilevel service to local community groups as its not only designed to accommodate a range of papers of up to 253gsm, but it can scan multiple double sided papers in one rapid operation. This will have a substantial impact on productivity, a major consideration in organisations where so much is done by so few. The specification allows a variety of printed material to be produced at a significantly lower cost than would otherwise be possible. This therefore enables a small community group to produce a range of publications in short production runs that might not otherwise have been economical.
- c) Purchase of a Synology NAS unit housing four internal 4TB hard drives; this equipment stores the digitised data generated during scanning and also acts as the server for the online archive.
- d) Purchase of a Synology Router to connect the Synology NAS unit to the internet so that members and the public can access the digitised data.
- e) Purchase of an A3 CZUR scanner which is sufficiently mobile to be taken to third party premises (local organisations and members of the public) so that the material (often valuable or personal) remains on the donor's premises when scanned.
- f) Purchase of an IT CompuCleaner Xpert - Electric Air Duster to help remove the dust and shards of paper found in very old drawings and documents; its other purpose is to remove particles of dust that have entered the inner area of the scanner's lens and mirrors.

The Synology Router enhances the capabilities of the NAS unit to operate online. The two units together allows the records stored online to be shared to a very wide audience 24/7 as well as facilitating the ability of members to undertake collaborative projects. This ability in allowing access to the archive and other documentation via the internet enables people, who for a variety of reasons are not able to attend the centre, to contribute to the

Evidence of need:

The initial project was derived from LNWRS members wishing to make better use of its facilities. LNWRS contacted over thirty community groups across Warwickshire to identify which groups could benefit by being given access to professional scanning equipment. The following organisations from within Warwick District agreed to partner with LNWRS:

- Kenilworth History & Archaeology Society
- Leamington History Group
- Rowington Records
- Lapworth History Groups
- Lillington Local History Society
- Leamington & Warwick Model Railway Club

Since 2017 our partnership has continued by the above making use of the equipment, although COVID caused severe disruption to this process. The rotary scanner funded in part by the Warwick District Council (previous RUCIS grant) has been employed in scanning large drawings and maps. To date over 4,500 drawings have been scanned. In addition, a member donated funds to purchase an A2+ Bookeye 4 Professional Scanner, this scanner is designed to accommodate a range of material, such as non evasive scanning of delicate material or case-bound documents. The weight and size of this equipment means that it cannot be transported to third party sites. Both scanners are available to local history and community groups. All parties recognised the need for a lightweight book scanner, albeit only able to scan documents up to A3 in size. This is because members of the public and third-party organisations are very cautious in letting their material be digitised and the ability to do this on their premises increases enormously the number of people offering their material.

Subsequent conversations have identified that being able to produce short runs of printed books would help all organisations. Publications would not only raise the profile of each organisation, but it would also help to disseminate the material throughout the community as well as help raise funds which in turn could finance other publications. LNWRS is the lead partner for this grant application as LNWRS will be providing the necessary expertise, accommodation, and other equipment. In addition, LNWRS is meeting the cost of maintaining both scanners in future years. No funding is being asked of the local history groups nor are they applying for a grant as part of this project. The list of partners given above is not an exhaustive list of organisations that would use the facilities of the Community Archive Hub as the facilities would be available to any other local group.

3 years accounts received?

2019 - 2021 accounts have been received along with a recent bank statement for all accounts held (1st October 2021); this evidences sufficient cash reserves to meet the contribution stated on the application form.

Financial Performance; minus figure = deficit

Year ended	Year ended	Year ended
31/12/22	31/12/19	31/12/18
£163.32	£182.46	£1,399.60

Available Funds (cash and reserves)

Year ended	Year ended	Year ended
31/12/20	31/12/19	31/12/18
£52,324	£50,706.56	£44,708.13

NOTE: In 2020 (the last set of annual accounts) the annual costs of running the Society are £32,544 whereas their assets less liabilities are approximate £24,274. The Society has 'ring fenced' funds; donations and bequests made by members of the Society which can only be used for the purpose specified by the member when making the donation. Currently, they have £10,000, the balance of the monies from a deceased member; Jeremy Flegg. It is also the policy of the Society to write off the Library, Records and Relic purchases to current expenditure and accordingly they are held on the books at no value. The estimated replacement value for this material is: Library £20,000, Archives £60,000 and Relics £50,000.

Details of membership, fees etc:

Members of the Society currently pay a subscription of £35 per annum. Members receive four newsletters and four journals each year with an occasional additional publication. Some members also make donations to the Society for specific activities or themes such as the scanning of documents too frail or large for LNWRS's equipment or for the purchase of archive material. Such funding is ring fenced and is identified in the Society's accounts as such. There is no charge for visitors to the Society's Open Days nor to the local community groups which use the Society's facilities. Members of the public wishing to access the digitised material can do so free of charge by becoming 'guests' for a given appointment.

Details of usage:

LNWRS was founded in 1973 to collect and disseminate information about the London and North Western Railway (L&NWR) and its successors. To help achieve its objective, the Society has been acquiring an ever-growing archive based at Kenilworth, currently some 25,000 catalogued items with approximately 21,000 photographs. The archive continues to grow apace as the National Railway Museum and other organisations and individuals donate additional material. In addition, whenever they are able, LNWRS purchase items at auctions. In addition to opening the Centre to the general public via Open Days, the Study Centre helps modellers, preservationists, historians and anyone interested in the L&NWR by operating an enquiry service. Since the Society received the support of Warwick District Council (previous RUCIS grant) in 2017, the Study Centre introduced and continues to:

- a) Provide a weekly 'Working Day' when volunteers from all organisations, can undertake work on developing and maintaining their archives
- b) Be used for supporting the research activities of the general public and members of all associated organisations
- c) Provide online facilities to store digitised archive material in order to enable members and guests to access the information
- d) Host meetings for modellers, talks and presentations and working groups focused on thematic subjects
- e) Be available to other groups for events
- f) Support the public and members alike if they wish to book a private appointment at the centre between the hours 10:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday
- g) Provide monthly Open Days for the general public to attend to access the archives
- h) Provide the Signalling Record Society with storage facilities for its archives which also contains material relevant to Warwickshire as well as providing a meeting place
- i) Provide an online resource whereby queries are answered by post or electronically

Due to the purchase of the equipment funded by the RUCIS grant awarded in 2017, the number of visitors has substantially increased as local history and community groups resident make use of the facilities. The above services are available to the members of all groups, amounting to some 600 within the area governed by Warwick District Council.

Details of Organisations equalities policies:

The following are extracts from the LNWRS equality policy:

1. The LNWRS believes all persons have equal rights to participate in, have access to and be included in the Society's activities regardless of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, HIV status, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents, physical attributes, ex-offender status as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, lack of formal qualifications where such qualifications are not formally required, or any other grounds which cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of this policy.
2. The LNWRS is committed to promoting equal opportunities for all to participate in the Society's activities in the way the organisation is managed, and in our interactions and relationships with the wider community. The Society and its members will promote the principles of fairness and equality across all its activities.

3 quotes provided:

Yes - 21 quotes have been provided in total to cover the 3 quote requirement for the 7 different work aspects to the project.

Which of the Council's Corporate Priorities are met?**Evidence****Reduce anti-social behaviour**

The Community Archive Hub:

- Provides a weekly 'Working Day' when volunteers from all organisations can undertake work on developing and maintaining their archives
- Supports the research activities of the general public and members of all associated organisations
- Hosts meetings for modellers, talks and presentations and working groups focused on thematic subjects
- Offers both the general public and members opportunity to book a private appointment at the centre between the hours 10:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday
- Provides monthly Open Days for the general public to attend to access the archives

It's LNWRS' intention to engage with local schools and to develop programmes to engage with young people and, through various projects, introduce them to their community's history and culture whilst assisting them to acquire transferable skills.

By promoting an inclusive Community Archive Hub with multiple local interest groups and drawing Society members from 'out of area' it provides opportunities for anyone from the community to 'connect' with a diverse range of groups and individuals from the immediate community and wider. Also, this potentially contributes to developing a positive feeling of 'belonging' and 'ownership' towards the local environment and communities. This project will not only enable the continuation of the provision of facilities and resources to local history and other types of community groups, but it will also extend their capabilities. This all helps to reduce anti-social behaviour.

Increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy and participate in sports, arts and cultural activities

The establishment of the Community Archive Hub has, both directly and indirectly, helped to increase the numbers who participate in community conservation and other culturally related activities. Directly by using the Community Archive Hub facilities and indirectly through being able to access the digitised material either online or as electronic files stored on computers in educational establishments and libraries. The equipment purchased and repaired by the project will help to maintain and increase opportunity for everyone to enjoy and participate in cultural activities as follows:

- a) Maintain and increase the current level of access to professional digital scanning facilities for local history and community groups
- b) Increase the footfall of the centre by providing a new range of services derived from the provision of the A3 Multi-Functional Scanner / Printer
- c) Substantially increase the volume of digitised local archive material and place it online for access; the pandemic has seen this become of an even greater importance
- d) Safeguard the digital records of local history and other types of community groups
- e) Increase the potential for more local publications through the use of the A3 Multi-Function Scanner / Printer

Engaging and strengthening communities

As stated by National Archives (the official archive of the UK Government), archives help to build stable and prosperous communities with a strong sense of identity, they encourage well-being, and they provide opportunities for people to learn, explore and interact. Archives can help by keeping accessible records which support the democratic process through which they can help promote a better understanding of the social, political, and economic impact of past events and policies on their community. Through making information on relevant issues more readily available, by digitising it, people may become inspired to find out more which can lead to their becoming more active in their communities. The Society and its local partners are run by a wide range of volunteers from across the community and the Community Archive Hub will also bring together people from the memberships of various local groups whose interactions will help to cross fertilise and engage and strengthen the community.

Environmentally sensitive - "clean, green and safe", for example, project includes energy efficiency and renewable energy technology

The principal benefit is reducing the need for the public and members to travel to the Study Centre to gain access to the archive material. The Synology NAS Unit and Wireless Router enable volunteers to undertake a number of tasks from home. This includes working on collaborative projects and sharing information. These facilities, together with making use of conference calls via the internet, will reduce the need by volunteers to travel to the Centre. It's anticipated that this will also facilitate the engagement of volunteers whose personal circumstances prevents them from physically attending the centre and participating in supporting their local community. The project will also enable the purchase of an A3 Multi-Function Scanner/Printer; OKI, the manufacturer of the scanner, develops products in line with the International ENERGY STAR Program in order to conserve global resources and help prevent global warming. OKI's LED technology saves energy and supports environmental protection. Its micro-capsule toner limits the energy consumed in printing. The deep sleep mode and eco mode reduces energy consumption when the printers are not in operation. OKI works to conserve resources in both its hardware and software development by making its products more compact, improving technologies for consumables, and continually improving printer drivers. The proprietary digital LED technology reduces the amount of plastic used in printers and makes them more compact. In addition, the duplex printing function of its printers reduces paper usage and the toner saving function reduces toner consumption and so lessens the impact on the environment. The page printers are designed to be able to separate the toner from the drum, which have different replacement schedules. This ensures full use of the lifespan of each drum and reduces possible waste.

Total cost of scheme (including VAT where appropriate)

£5,546 This is the gross cost as LNWRS will not be reclaiming VAT from HMRC.

Funded by:

Status

Organisations Own Funds

£1,009 Approved

Kenilworth Town Council

£100

Applied for; if the application is unsuccessful the project shortfall will be covered by LNWRS from their cash reserves. These funds have been evidenced through their annual accounts and the provision of a recent bank statement.

Total RUCIS

£4,437

equates to

80.0%