

## RURAL/URBAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GRANTS APPLICATION FOR 7TH MARCH 2018 EXECUTIVE :

**Applicant :** London & North Western Railway Society

**Description of scheme:** The overall project is to develop a Community Archive Hub (a collaboration project led by the LNWR Society); a facility to support local history and community groups in digitising archive material as part of their local activities and projects. In essence, the Community Archive Hub is designed to support the role of local groups and archives as keepers of community memory, promoters of social inclusion and as a sense of place. There are three phases to the overall project:

- Phase One; provide disabled access/facilities for the Study Centre, purchase and install security equipment and purchase a large A0 scanner (scanners larger than an A4 scanner are necessary as many archive documents are of British Imperial paper size with 'foolscap folio' and were still being used as late as the 1980's)
- Phase Two; training of members of local history and community groups in all aspects of digitising archives plus the purchase of a specialist book scanner
- Phase Three; engagement of all organisations involved with the Community Archive Hub with local schools and colleges, plus youth groups such as the scout movement. Such engagement is to encourage young people to value their heritage and to engage with Community Archive Hub organisations through various projects and initiatives.

The RUCIS application is for Phase One only.

**Evidence of need:** In the lead up to and during the Society's Special General Meeting (SGM) held on 26th October 2017, which focused on the LNWR Society's Study Centre, a number of members commented about the difficulty the less mobile faced in being able to access the centre. There is a visible need because of the steps at the entrance and the absence of toilet facilities with disabled adaptations, following discussions with Scope, the following equipment is being installed as part of the phase one project: a) hand rails to both sides of the steps leading up to the entrance, b) grab rails to one of the existing toilets, c) a wheelchair ramp from the pathway to the landing step of the porch and two threshold ramps for either side of the door sill. The SGM discussions also focused on the issue of security given the Study Centre's extensive library, archives and the artefacts; following consultations with Warwickshire Police and security consultants, a security system utilising wireless room motion sensors, wireless door and window vibration contacts, a wireless external 'sounder' plus the mains wired master control unit will also be installed as part of the phase one project. Another concern of the membership was whether the centre was being utilised enough and therefore providing 'value for money'. The Society recognised that because it was staffed by volunteers its opening hours for 'drop in' visitors were not comparable with publicly funded archives and study centres. It was therefore decided by the Society's Trustees to ascertain if the Study Centre could benefit local history and community groups located within Warwick District. Subsequent discussions with local groups within Warwick District found they would welcome the opportunity of making use of the scanning facilities; the availability of a large scanner would be a significant bonus to all organisations as the cost of commercially digitising large documents is extremely expensive and beyond the resources of these organisations and consequently rarely undertaken.

The local groups also confirmed their membership included people who had restricted mobility and would only be able to visit provided appropriate facilities were available. This had led to the overall project of developing a Community Archive Hub. Further discussions also highlighted that these groups would also like to attract younger people to become members and agreed that developing a programme of engaging with young people focused on archives might help. It was thought that given the rise in popularity of programmes such as 'find my past' and genealogy in general, combined with access to high tech equipment, the members of the Community Archive Hub could develop projects which would appeal to young people.

The organisations we are partnering with include; Kenilworth History & Archaeology Society (80 members), Leamington History Group (110 members), Rowington Records (10 members), Lapworth History Groups (140 members), Lillington Local History Society (40 members), Signalling Record Society (600 members) and Leamington & Warwick Model Railway Club (90 members). Five letters of support (all dated in January 2018) from local groups have been provided

**3 years accounts received?** London & North Western Railway Society 2015 to 2017 accounts have been received along with bank statements for all accounts held (4) covering the period 3rd October 2017 to 2nd January 2018 (business current account), 30th November 2017 to 29th December 2017 (business premium savings account), 30th November 2017 to 29th December 2017 (business current account) and 18th November 2017 to 19th December 2017 (business current account)

**Financial Performance; minus figure = deficit**

Year ended	Year ended	Year ended
31/12/17	31/12/16	31/12/15
£930	£1,668	-£739

**Available Funds ( cash and reserves )**

Year ended	Year ended	Year ended
31/12/17	31/12/16	31/12/15
£43,821	£38,441	£41,983

**Details of membership, fees etc:**

Members of the Society currently pay a subscription of £30 per annum. Some members also make donations to the Society for specific activities or themes, however, this type of funding is ring fenced and is identified in the society's accounts as Closed or Restricted reserves. There is no charge for visitors to the Centre. The Centre provides occasional accommodation to other Railway orientated Societies at a fee of £50 per day. Similar arrangements can be made for other local groups.

<b>Details of usage:</b>	<p>The LNWR Society was founded in 1973 to collect and disseminate information about the London and North Western Railway (L&amp;NWR) and its successors; the L&amp;NWR had a major presence in the County of Warwickshire operating the Trent Valley Railway, the Birmingham to London Railway, the branch lines between Nuneaton and Leamington, Rugby to Leamington and Leamington to Weeden and as such was important to the development of the County. To help achieve its objective, the Society has been acquiring an ever growing archive based at Kenilworth, currently some 23,000 catalogued items with approximately 20,000 photographs. The archive continues to grow apace as the National Railway Museum and other organisations and individuals donate additional material. In addition, whenever the society are able, they 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&amp;NWR by operating an enquiry service. The Study Centre also provides the Signalling Record Society with storage facilities for its archives which also contains material relevant to Warwickshire as well as providing a meeting place.</p> <p>The Study Centre is used for many railway activities including; research open days for the general public and society members, member and modelling meetings, talks and presentations, various working groups focused on different thematic subjects, as well as being available to hire for external events. The centre is staffed by volunteers; the public and members alike may book a private appointment to visit the centre Monday to Friday between 10am and 5pm. Every fourth Saturday in the month the Society has an advertised Open Day for the general public to attend. Approximately twice a month the Society holds a 'Working Day' when volunteers undertake work on developing and maintaining the archive; this includes scanning archive material. In the period up to December 2017, the Society recorded that in excess of 450 people had attended the Study Centre.</p> <p>The 'Community Archive Hub' project is intended to substantially increase the number of visitors through the engagement with local history and community groups which reside within the District of Warwick. It is anticipated that the number of local residents attending the Study Centre will grow as the Community Archive Hub is a long term project. Whilst the Society has initially identified a number of local history groups within the Warwick District area, the facilities are available to any community group wishing to digitise their archive material or requiring space for working groups etc. Initially attendance by local volunteers will be incorporated within the existing calendar offered by the Society but as members of other organisations engage and are trained then a separate calendar of dates will be provided. The benefit of the Community Archive Hub to the local community will be more than just footfall as it is anticipated digitised local archive material will be used for local publications as well as being cascaded across other local groups as well as the advantages of preserving material for the benefit to future generations.</p>
<b>Details of Organisations equalities policies:</b>	<p>The following are extracts from the LNWRs equality policy (a copy has been provided):</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>3 quotes provided:</b>	Yes, for all aspects of the project work (16 quotes in total)
<b>Which of the Council's Corporate Priorities are met?</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Increase opportunities for everyone to enjoy and participate in sports, arts and cultural activities</b>	<p>The project will deliver handrails to the entrance, grab rails to one of the toilets plus a wheelchair ramp all of which will enable people with disabilities to gain access to the building; this is particularly important as many members and volunteers of the Society and of the local history and community groups are retired people including some in their seventies and older and the availability of the ramp will also help parents with small children to access the centre. The establishment of the Community Archive Hub will, both directly and indirectly, help 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.</p>
<b>Engaging and strengthening communities</b>	<p>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. 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 is also 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 further engage and strengthen the community.</p>
<b>Total cost of scheme (including VAT)</b>	9,856
<b>Funded by:</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Organisations Own Funds</b>	£480
<b>Kenilworth Town Council</b>	£1,491 Requested; waiting for a decision
<b>Total RUCIS</b>	<b>£7,885</b>
<b>equates to</b>	<b>80.0%</b>