

Decision Maker	Leadership Team	 THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA
Date of Decision	22 March 2023	
Forward Plan ref:	KD06410	
Report title	ARCHIVE FOR NORTH KENSINGTON	
Reporting officer	Sarah Newman (Bi Borough Executive Director of Children’s Services), and Erin Caseley (Chief Officer, Libraries & Archives)	
Key decision	Yes	
Access to information classification	Public	
Wards	Notting Dale, Colville, Dalgarno, St Helen’s & Golborne	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This paper sets out a proposal to create an accessible and community focused archive that documents the Grenfell Tower fire and the fascinating and historically important history of social justice in the North Kensington area from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.
- 1.2. The proposal was first brought forward by members of the community as we approached the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower Fire. It fits well with the Council's commitment to ensure that the legacy of the tragedy drives learning and improvement locally.
- 1.3. The community have suggested it is best located in North Kensington Library, as it would allow material to be easily accessed by the community and allow all local people to explore, engage and contribute to their own history. It will focus on running events to promote local history, social justice, and educate young residents in North Kensington about their local identity.
- 1.4. To establish an archive as proposed will require a financial commitment to develop the space for the archive; for its operating costs; to form a partnership board to oversee its development; and a decision on ownership.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Leadership Team is asked to:

- 2.1. Commit to the proposal to develop the archive.

- 2.2. Approve the financial envelope as outlined in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 of this paper, to support the development and ongoing provision of the archive.
- 2.3. To agree the Discovery Phase that will define the scope of the project, the space required, the ownership of the archive and the requirements for the partnership board.

3. REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1. The proposal will support the Grenfell legacy and demonstrate an investment that shows a commitment to learning from the tragedy.
- 3.2. It is recommended to support an initiative proposed by and co-created with the community.
- 3.3. The proposal will support local opportunities for engaging and educating residents with local identity, heritage and social justice.
- 3.4. The archive will preserve important documents and other records within the local area in a highly accessible way, reducing potential barriers to access.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1. Prior to the fifth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire in 2022, North Kensington residents put forward a proposal for a local archive to be created.
- 4.2. This project proposal has been initiated in response to that request and it has been developed with input from the community, the Grenfell Partnerships team, Lead Members and The National Archives.
- 4.3. The purpose of a local archive is to provide a safe home to primary sources of information such as documents and records within a defined remit including personal accounts of local people, places and events. It aims to make them as accessible as possible to the local community and beyond.
- 4.4. This project will aim to employ the highest standards in collections development, and it will be the responsibility of the archive to ensure that it will hold as many perspectives as possible and to provide an unbiased source of trustworthy information. Archival practice in the UK is underpinned by core principles such as reliability, authenticity, integrity, and usability and these will be central to this work.
- 4.5. In order to meet the aim of accessibility, the physical collection will be openly used in a dedicated study space and digital technology will be put at the heart of enabling access to digital collections through interactive and immersive technologies.
- 4.6. On the recommendations of The National Archives and in line with good practice, a Discovery Phase would be used to determine the scope, options for partnership arrangements and ownership of the archive.
- 4.7. The Discovery Phase would ensure that the community is at the heart of the decision-making process for the development of the archive. It would involve the use of an independent consultant Archivist / Collections Manager who would work

with the community to understand their preference around who should lead on the project phase.

4.8. The Discovery Phase would:

- Clarify the scope of the project with the community and confirm the proposed use of the space in North Kensington Library.
- Explore options to involve external partners or specialist organisations in the development of the archive collection, to give confidence that the principles in section 4.5 are being met. Any external parties would be expected to meet our core principles as set out in section 4.5.
- Work with The National Archives to establish relationships and connections with potential partners from across the archives and wider heritage sector.
- Explore potential alternative options to who would own the collection being created. This would be required to avoid the default position, in line with the archival sector standards and the established collections practices in the RBKC Archives, that all donations of material to the collection would be owned by the Council. The National Archives have advised that this Discovery Phase is an effective method for identifying solutions for any potential conflict of interest.

4.9. This proposal supports the newly adopted 2023-2027 Council Plan in making Kensington & Chelsea a fairer place for residents. The archive will be housed within the North Kensington community to promote and develop the area's long history with social justice. The community centred approach will ensure that there are opportunities to build skills, knowledge, expertise and confidence in our residents.

- The Grenfell collections within the archive will become an important local asset to support the continuing work with the Grenfell bereaved and survivors as part of the Grenfell Recovery Programme.
- The archive will support the Council's commitment to celebrating the diverse culture of the borough, highlighting the importance of the role the North Kensington area has played in forging the borough's identity.
- Through developing links with local schools and colleges, the archive will work to support the national curriculum and provide formal and informal learning opportunities for the borough's younger residents.
- There is opportunity to create apprentice roles which would be filled by local residents and provide paid employment while developing skills and improving their employability. There could also be a range of volunteering opportunities available for more flexible development opportunities.

5. OPTIONS, ANALYSIS AND PROPOSALS

5.1. The team have carefully considered the cost of developing and managing an archive. The Discovery Phase will complete a detailed costing, however, the financial envelope for the project phase is estimated to be £1,003,531 comprised of £502,821 revenue costs and £500,710 capital costs. The financial envelope for the ongoing costs to run the archive are £154,452 per annum.

- 5.2. The financial envelope has been based on the development costs of the Discovery Phase, space development, the systems and technology and professional support required to lead and work with the community throughout the development of the archive; and the revenue costs to continually develop the collection, maintain engagement and enable learning opportunities after the project phase is complete.
- 5.3. Given the subject matter and the level of interest in it, the Discovery Phase may identify other partners who may be interested in contributing to funding the archive.

6. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1. The North Kensington archive is an opportunity to engage and work with the whole North Kensington community to create a collection developed by and for them. Located within the community, it will continue to build on the already strong relationship residents have with their local library and is symbolic of the strong local identity in the area.
- 6.2. To date the project idea has been informed by individual members of Grenfell United and the Friends of North Kensington Library and has been taken to the North Kensington Community Forum for information and feedback. The ideas and feedback from the community so far have helped shape this proposal. Ideas for community engagement were presented to the Friends of North Kensington Library and were well received.
- 6.3. Further engagement with the local community will be required to develop the archive. This engagement will look to reach as wide a range of residents and stakeholders ensuring that everyone feels encouraged, supported and able to get involved in its creation.
- 6.4. The purpose of the engagement is:
- To ensure that the North Kensington community have shaped the home for their shared memory within the heart of their community.
- 6.5. The outputs from the engagement will include:
- To establish what residents and stakeholders want to see in the archive.
 - To establish who residents want to lead the development of the archive.
 - To establish how residents and stakeholders want to share their stories.
- 6.6. The RBKC Charter for Public Participation will be used as a foundation for engagement in this project. All engagement for this project will be facilitated by Libraries & Archives, with support and guidance from the Grenfell Partnerships Team and Putting Communities First.
- 6.7. **Key Stakeholders**

Our key stakeholders are groups we have identified to inform and engage with throughout the project. We recognise their voices are key to the shaping and development of the project. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Grenfell United
- Grenfell Next of Kin
- Grenfell Tower Trust
- Grenfell Walk RA
- Grenfell Foundation
- Grenfell Memorial Commission
- Our Power Hub
- Friends of North Kensington Library
- North Kensington Community Forum
- RBKC Grenfell team
- RBKC Libraries & Archives
- Westway Trust

- 6.8. The Discovery Phase will identify the best methods for oversight of the project which is likely to be through a combination of a Steering Group with representation from the community, a Working Group and those hired to lead on delivery.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. Adherence to guidance and advice provided by The National Archives and the Archives and Records Association UK and Ireland (ARA) is considered good practice when looking to establishing an archive. Further, the archiving of public records (where they may not include local authority records) is governed by the Public Records Act 1958.
- 7.2. The processing (to include storing) of any personal data capable of identifying a living individual requires compliance with the UK Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Whilst the legislation provides that personal data can be processed in various ways, when archiving is in the public interest, it is subject to legal requirements as well as adherence to guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- 7.3. Consideration should always be given to the copyright status of documents, plans or photographs, as well as printed matter including books, manuals, publicity material and magazines, and audio-visual recordings will be necessary. The relevant legislation is the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

8. FINANCIAL, PROPERTY, IT AND ANY OTHER RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. The project and post-project delivery of the archive requires corporate commitment and financial investment. We are exploring the use of S106 funding for educational purposes to finance this.
- 8.2. The costs are split into a financial envelope for project set-up costs which would be spread over two years and post-project revenue costs. These are an estimate of costs and are a guide to the financial envelope rather than actual costs. The actual figures will depend on the partner relationships identified during the Discovery Phase.

- 8.3. The project costs are estimated at £1,003,531 comprised of £502,821 revenue costs and £500,710 capital costs. This would cover resource to lead on the project delivery, public consultation, refurbishment of a space at North Kensington Library, the systems and technology needed to professionally manage and provide engaging access to digital archives, resource for physical collections (e.g. boxes, books, shelving), outreach activities and establishing a web presence.
- 8.4. Refurbishment of parts of North Kensington Library would be required to facilitate the creation of the archive. Three options have been identified within the existing public spaces. As a Grade 2 listed building the options considered would not require any major change to the structure or existing walls. Refurbishment would cover redecoration, new flooring, furniture and potential partitioning.
- 8.5. The costs for the ongoing maintenance and development of the archive after the project has finished is estimated at £154,452 per annum (commencing FY 25/26). These costs would cover resource to continue developing the collections and providing engagement and outreach activities with the community and maintaining our systems and web presence.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. In order to estimate costs, we have considered what would be required for the creation and long-term delivery of this collection and space. As partners will be identified in the Discovery Phase, options will be established for who the employing body will be.
- 9.2. The required staffing would be established in the Discovery Phase, however, the roles will need to include professional archive skills and there is also opportunity to create apprentice roles for residents from the local community which would provide training and support for those interested in a related career path. Irrespective of the employing body, all roles would all be advertised in the local community to encourage local applicants with the sought after skills and expertise for all employment opportunities created in this project.
- 9.3. Volunteers will also be recruited from the local community. Most archives services are supported by the use of volunteers and provide great opportunities for skills development.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 A completed EqIA Initial Screening document has been completed and accompanies this Key Decision Report as **Appendix 1**. We will continue to monitor equalities considerations throughout the Discovery Phase and revisit the EqIA as needed at a later stage.
- 10.2 The agreement is likely to have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics in creating opportunity for them to engage in the creation and future use of a collection which will represent their local area, views and personal experiences in a way which they are highly unlikely to have had opportunity to do so before.

Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Background papers used in the preparation of this report

[Note: Please list only those that are not already in the public domain, i.e. you do not need to include Government publications, previous public reports etc.]

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Mandatory clearance requirements for all Key and Executive Decision reports

Cleared by Corporate Finance (officer's initials)

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NT