



North Kensington Social Justice Archive

Discovery Phase Report

November 2024

Prepared for:

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
Libraries and Archives Services.

Prepared by:

UCL Consultants Ltd
+ Collaborators

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Discovery Phase Report.**
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With thanks to Ishbel Tunnadine for her support on the workshops.

Thank you to all participants that have contributed with their time and knowledge to the Discovery Phase.

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of the Discovery Phase of the North Kensington Social Justice Archive (NKSJA). Following proposals from residents and community groups to document the fascinating 150 years of history of social justice movements and campaigning in North Kensington, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) published a Key Decision Report in March 2023 to create “an accessible and community focused archive”¹ that documents the history of social justice movements in the North Kensington. This Key Decision Report proposed to carry out a Discovery Phase to understand – through community engagement – the scope of the archive, the location, the governance, ownership, involvement of the community in the creation and management of the archives, as well as potential partners.

Through a series of community engagement methods, which have included workshops, co-learning activities, walks, talks, meetings or smaller workshops with community groups and individuals, meetings with other archives, and a survey, this report has produced a series of community-informed recommendations, which are summarised in the yellow table on the following pages.

This executive summary reports on the engagement carried out and on the resulting community-informed recommendation. For clarity, this executive summary structures these recommendations according to the brief. For further details on the engagement activities carried out, the detailed results and the expanded recommendations, see the full report.

¹ RBKC, 2023. Key Decision Report: Archive for North Kensington.

<https://rbkc.moderngov.co.uk/Committees/documents/s2078/Archive%20for%20North%20Kensington.pdf>

2. Summary and scope of engagement

To develop community-informed recommendations for the NKSJA, UCL Consultants designed a diverse community engagement programme. Participants could join discussions, workshops, talks, walks, one-on-one meetings, or fill out surveys. The methodology involved co-learning and co-creation, allowing communities to share local history knowledge and learn about archiving.

Discovery Phase team: local knowledge combined with expertise in community archiving and participation

UCL Consultants was appointed as the team to deliver the Discovery Phase. UCL Consultants, UCL's academic consultancy firm, included experts in community engagement, curatorial practice, heritage, memory, and archiving: Dr Pablo Sendra, Dr Kara Blackmore, Dr. Andrew Flinn, and Joanna Baines. They collaborated with community members and other subcontractors that brought expertise on local history, community governance, arts culture and activism, digital presence of campaigns, and walking as archival practice. These included Eve Wedderburn and Thomas Aquilina, who contributed to the organisation of one of the walks, Jacob Rety, who contributed to the outreach and facilitated the workshop on digital infrastructure, Toby Laurent Belson, who facilitated the workshop on arts, culture and activism, and Tom Vague, who gave a talk on local history and contributed to one of the walks. The team also included the organisation Decolonising the Archive (DTA), a multidisciplinary archive and culture learning space that provides alternative access points and creative opportunities for communities and persons wishing to explore the transformative power of working with archives, who delivered a workshop on how to decolonise the archives. Chapter 3 of the full report explains the results of each of these activities as reported from these collaborators.

Engagement Programme:

- **Full Day Events:**

- **23rd July 2024:** Workshops on community archives, history of activism, materials, oral history, access, space, ownership, governance, and a community history walk.
- **21st September 2024:** Summary of previous engagement, governance models, decolonising archives, digital archiving, art, culture, activism, and a walk.
- **Drop-in Sessions:**
 - **18th July 2024:** North Kensington Library and online.
 - **13th September 2024:** Portobello Market stall.
- **Meetings:** Discussions with organisations and individuals about existing archives, potential materials, partnerships, and contributions.
- **Young People's Workshops:**
 - **8th July 2024:** With RBKC's Youth Council.
 - **8th October 2024:** With Kensington Aldridge Academy.

Scope of Engagement: A dedicated [Linktree](#) site provided project information and invitations. The site had 624 visits and 576 link clicks. Outreach included flyers, banners, posters, community websites, social media, and newsletters.

Participation Figures:

- 69 people at public workshops
- 26 at young people's workshops
- 21 at drop-in sessions
- 66 at smaller meetings
- 17 survey responses
- 10 individual meetings with one of our subcontractors

This is a total of **209 people contributing to shaping the archives**². While 209 is not a high number in comparison to the population of North Kensington, many participants had an in-depth engagement in the project. Many participants came to the workshops and spent from the morning to the afternoon in the workshop. The meetings with participants (a total of 66 people) were done in small groups (1 or 2 people on most occasions) and each of them lasted between 1 and 2 hours. In summary, although the total number is lower than the expected KPI, they have had an in-depth engagement. In order to ensure that a diversity of voices are included in the archive, the team has approached community groups that represent the diversity of the area, including support/cultural groups (or people that have been involved in these) of the Eritrean communities, the Moroccan and Arab-speaking communities, the Spanish communities, the Caribbean communities, Grenfell support groups, faith groups, volunteer organisations, people that manage or have managed cultural spaces, as well as other local and cultural groups.

However, it is important to acknowledge that this report is, to some extent, incomplete and not a comprehensive survey of social justice movements in North Kensington. The Discovery Phase has carried out the beginning of a community engagement process. This engagement needs to continue over the next phases to create and operationalise the archives. This report provides recommendations on that too.

3. Key recommendations

The executive summary has structured the recommendations according to the brief of the Discovery Phase:

- The scope of the collection being created.
- The preferred location for accessing the collection.
- Recommended options around ownership of the collection.

² Note that some people have engaged in more than one way (attendance to workshops, meetings, and filling in survey) and they might be counted more than once.

- Proposed structure of governance and long-term delivery for the service and care of the collection.
- Identified potential suitable partners to approach for its development and delivery, or details if a recommended partner has been identified as a preferred option.
- Summary of concerns and considerations raised which should be addressed throughout the project development process and source of those concerns (e.g. community or professionally raised).
- Lessons learned from process to help inform the collecting stages and how to work best with the community on this subject.
- Summary of community feedback which captures pertinent suggestions and ideas to take forward

What should be the scope of the collection created?

The NKSJA should serve as an engagement space for activating materials, acting as an umbrella for other community archives. It should provide both physical and digital infrastructure for preserving paper-based and digital materials.

NKSJA should reach out to groups with significant documentation on social justice, even if they lack formal archives. This includes groups supporting migrant communities, some of which are no longer active, with materials held by former members.

RBKC should review their Local Studies Archive for existing materials on social justice in North Kensington, including those deposited or donated by communities and individuals.

NKSJA can pilot this report's recommendations using materials already in the RBKC Local Studies Archive, including the HISTORYTalks North Kensington Community Archive and individual donations related to social justice. These collections should be transferred to NKSJA with the owners' permission when necessary.

What is the preferred location for accessing the collection?

The NKSJA should feature a curated space with rotating themed exhibitions, hosting public and educational activities, including school engagement. It should store a representative selection of materials, subject to feasibility of adapting a physical space for storage of materials that secure preservation. The space should also have dedicated computers and software to access the digital archive, as well as a space to go through paper-based materials.

Location: this report has presented options for the location of the NKSJA: either at the North Kensington Library or at a newly created community space, which could be associated with other ongoing projects. While it is for the community to decide the location of the NKSJA, this report recommends establishing a medium-term access point to the NKSJA at the North Kensington Library. Additionally, it recommends conducting a feasibility study to determine what can be delivered within the budget at this space. This access point will aim to have the characteristics explained above.

The report recommends evaluating and adopting medium- and long-term locations:

- Medium-term location: begin with a medium-term location that fits within the current budget: a space at the North Kensington Library that includes exhibition space, digital collection access, and small storage facility (subject to feasibility and cost).
- Long-term aspiration: Once the NKSJA is consolidated, secure further funding for expansion or having a larger dedicated space to celebrate social justice in North Kensington, featuring activation spaces, digital collections access, and storage for the NKSJA.

Carry out feasibility studies for physical infrastructure considering both medium- and long-term scenarios to assess what fits within the existing budget, and the cost of future aspirations. These feasibility studies will inform location and scope of the NKSJA. Before carrying out the feasibility study, RBKC should evaluate the space needed for existing and potential new social justice collections.

Create an accessible, easy-to-navigate website linked to the digital archive collections. Ensure continuous investment to prevent digital obsolescence.
Create a digital infrastructure that community archives and community groups can benefit from, ensuring long-term preservation. This allows them to create their own archives while contributing to the umbrella NKSJA digital archive. The digital infrastructure should reflect the governance structure adopted by the NKSJA, exploring innovative digital solutions.
The access point to the NKSJA and the website can point towards the location of other community archives that are not deposited at NKSJA and are held by other organisations or groups.
Conduct a feasibility study to assess the technical feasibility and cost of the digital archive recommendations.
Consider very carefully how resources are spent on physical and digital infrastructure or feasibility studies, as these can typically drain resources quickly. Ensure significant community involvement in design, consultation, and procurement, with decision-making powers for the community steering group. Following the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, NKSJA needs to consider how the procurement process can “improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area”.
History trail: Create a public history trail with plaques and QR codes linking to digital resources. Train local community members to lead walking tours, offering historical exploration and contemporary reflection on the archive.

What are the recommended options around ownership of the collection?

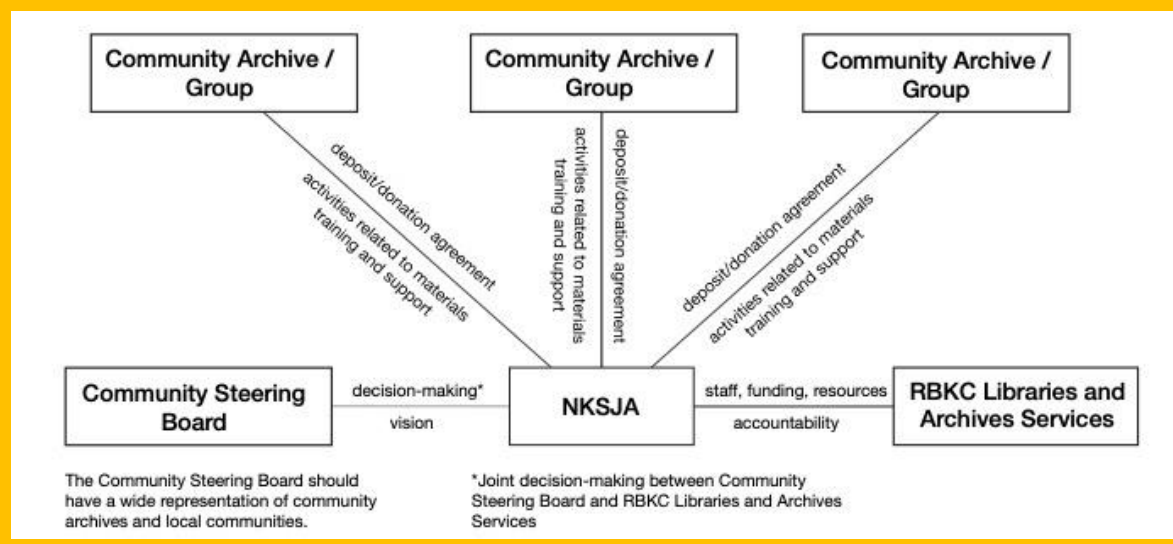
Allow for a granular approach in which each community archive can have tailored terms of agreement with NKSJA and RBKC. The community steering board and RBKC can prepare adaptable template agreements for each situation.

Begin creating terms of agreement with some groups to pilot the NKSJA, motivating others to join. Consider timeframes and termination terms for these agreements, similar to materials on deposit.

What should the governance structure and long-term delivery be for the service and care of the collection?

Create a community steering board with decision-making power over the NKSJA. It should have a constitution, transparent recruitment for broad community representation, and defined roles. The board will collaborate closely with RBKC on NKSJA delivery and management. This community steering board does not need to be an incorporated organisation initially. The community can later decide whether it should adopt any legal form.

The recommended governance follows this diagram:



The NKSJA needs immediate, visible examples of community control and collaboration to build trust with local people, both past and present. The [Community Archives and Heritage Group](#) has a map with examples all over the UK that can inspire the NKSJA.

Consider how the NKSJA will sit alongside RBKC's existing archives and whether existing governance models and resources have capacity to support its unique needs. RBKC should research institutions holding distinct archives alongside other holdings and look for best practice models.

Clearly communicate to community archives and individuals the benefits of depositing materials with the NKSJA:

- Long-term preservation of physical and digital materials, with secure public access in line with community wishes and GDPR.
- Access to digital infrastructure.
- Long-term financial sustainability of the initiative.
- Professional capability to maintain, manage and catalogue the archives.
- Degrees of community control.
- Training opportunities.

Ensure these benefits are the stated purpose and deliverables of the archive, and that both RBKC and NKSJA are committed to achieving them.

Make clear the ways in which the governance of the NKSJA is meeting the aims as set out in the Key Decision Report and meeting the recommendations of this Discovery Phase.

Which potential suitable partners should the NKSJA approach for its development and delivery?

The NKSJA should collaborate with existing community archives and documentation initiatives to bring them together under an umbrella NKSJA. It should clearly communicate the benefits of joining NKSJA, such as physical and digital preservation, professional expertise, infrastructure, outreach, public

engagement, retention of community ownership and control, and training for material preparation to be deposited into the NKSJA.

Which concerns and considerations should be addressed throughout the project development process, and which is source of those concerns (e.g. community or professionally raised)?

Put in place digital preservation systems and tools. The Sector Development Manager for London at The National Archives suggests that “rather than a digital preservation system being procured specifically for the NKSJA so that born-digital and digitised material can be actively preserved, RBKC should incorporate the digital preservation of any community collections into its wider planning for its digital preservation needs.” They “strongly suggest that the budget for this digital preservation system does not come out of the budget for the NKSJA. Should budget be taken out of this project for the digital preservation system and capacity the archive service needs anyway, this could undermine communities’ trust in the project.” They “see no practical reason for a digital preservation system being acquired solely for the NKSJA project as well as a separate one for the archive service’s wider needs. This would be a duplication of systems and mean twice the ongoing costs.”

To ensure preservation, professional expertise, and ongoing public/community engagement, secure long-term funding beyond a one-off allocation for sustained operation.

Carefully allocate NKSJA resources to support and enhance existing local archives and collections. The archive should prioritise the value of the local community in its mission and purpose.

Which lessons can be learned from process to help inform the collecting stages and how to work best with the community on this subject?

Support groups and individuals with extensive materials in cataloguing and preparing them for depositing and digitising them for inclusion in the digital archive.

Support community groups and artists in completing their ongoing documentation projects.

Upskilling communities to create their own archives.

Begin building awareness of the NKSJA before launching the physical and digital archives through public-facing and educational activities. Involve local artists, cultural sector workers, and community groups to build trust and increase local awareness.

Ensure equality and fair pay for community artists, cultural sector workers, and community groups supporting the archives, both during delivery and after, according to national and regional standards³.

Commission and resource new projects which use innovative methods to curate and access the archive.

Following the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, consider how procurement processes can “improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area”.

Is there any other community feedback which captures pertinent suggestions and ideas to take forward?

Integrating spatial justice practice through walking:

- Develop walking as an archive to explore and understand different places, especially those that are often overlooked or forgotten.

³ See [Art Council England's document on Equality and Fair Pay](#), as well as guidelines on rates of pay of relevant trade unions such as [Artists' Union England](#).

- Have local social justice leaders or storytellers guide the walks.
- Commission a series of spatial prompts (interventions in the public realm) based on items in the archive to inspire thought and discussion during the walks.

Building community cohesion through walks:

- Use walking in North Kensington to bring together community action and history, making it a key part of the social justice archive.
- Work with partners to create educational walks, particularly for young people.
- Use the everyday language of the local community in the archive.

Making the NKSJA durable through walking activities:

- Keeping the archive alive: The archive should be dynamic, not just a repository.
- Walking workshops: Regular (quarterly or half-yearly) walking workshops should engage with the archival material, shaping and defining the archive itself. These workshops serve as a fundamental review and evaluation tool, introducing new material and voices.
- Visible on the streets: The archive should be experienced on the streets of North Kensington through processions, memorials, and community gatherings.
- Guided and unguided walks: Create walks that provide direct access to the archive and memory, accompanied by images, videos, sound, and artwork.
- Archive keepers: Resource a group of 'archive keepers' who are social justice guides embedded in their own movements. This encourages chance encounters and perpetuates the living component of archives for social justice.

What should the next steps be?

- Create a community steering board to represent the wider community.
- Develop a strategy for further engagement, with a programme of activities that widens participation.
- Conduct feasibility studies on digital infrastructure and physical space adaptation for exhibitions, public events, and storage.
- Draft templates for terms of agreements with community archives or groups to establish a relationship with the NKSJA.
- Organize public activities to engage with the archive materials before the physical and digital archives are ready.
- Pilot the NKSJA with the collections already at the Local Studies: cataloguing and building the digital archive.
- Develop agreements with community archive groups to expand the catalogue and the digital archive.
- Deliver the NKSJA medium-term space within the budget, including a curated space, small storage facility (subject to feasibility/cost), and dedicated computer and software access to the digital archive.
- Launch the space with a programme of activities that involves and is driven by community groups, community archives, community artists, local curators, and schools.
- Once established, seek funding for a more ambitious project that can provide the NKSJA its own building or space.

Full Report

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of the Discovery Phase for the North Kensington Social Justice Archive (NSJA), which has taken place between April and October 2024.

On the 22nd of March 2023, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) published a Key Decision Report to create “an accessible and community focused archive”⁴ that documents the history of social justice movements in the North Kensington since the 19th century until recent events such as the Grenfell Tower fire. The proposal to create a Social Justice Archive for North Kensington came from residents and community groups in the area and the Key Decision Report was written with input from the community.

The Key Decision Report also outlined that the first phase of the project would be a Discovery Phase for “defining the scope of the project, the space required, the ownership of the archive and the requirements for the partnership board”⁵. The brief of this Discovery Phase envisions this archive as “a highly accessible community led research facility and collection based within the community, created by the community, and for use by the community”⁶. The brief of work for this project included developing a community engagement programme to “produce a report

⁴ RBKC, 2023. Key Decision Report: Archive for North Kensington.

<https://rbkc.moderngov.co.uk/Committees/documents/s2078/Archive%20for%20North%20Kensington.pdf>

⁵ RBKC, 2023. Key Decision Report: Archive for North Kensington.

<https://rbkc.moderngov.co.uk/Committees/documents/s2078/Archive%20for%20North%20Kensington.pdf>

⁶ North Kensington Social Justice Archive: Discovery Phase Brief or Work. Tender published in 2023.

outlining community informed recommendations (for) the development and delivery of the North Kensington archive, to include:

- The scope of the collection being created.
- The preferred location for accessing the collection.
- Recommended options around ownership of the collection.
- Proposed structure of governance and long-term delivery for the service and care of the collection.
- Identified potential suitable partners to approach for its development and delivery, or details if a recommended partner has been identified as a preferred option.
- Summary of concerns and considerations raised which should be addressed throughout the project development process and source of those concerns (e.g. community or professionally raised).
- Lessons learned from process to help inform the collecting stages and how to work best with the community on this subject.
- Summary of community feedback which captures pertinent suggestions and ideas to take forward.”⁷

UCL Consultants was appointed as the team to deliver the Discovery Phase. UCL Consultants, UCL’s academic consultancy firm, included experts in community engagement, curatorial practice, heritage, memory, and archiving: Dr Pablo Sendra, Dr Kara Blackmore, Dr. Andrew Flinn, and Joanna Baines. They collaborated with community members and other subcontractors that brought expertise on local history, community governance, arts culture and activism, digital presence of campaigns, and walking as archival practice. These included Eve Wedderburn and Thomas Aquilina, who contributed to the organisation of one of the walks, Jacob Rety, who contributed to the outreach and facilitated the workshop on digital infrastructure, Toby Laurent Belson, who facilitated the workshop on arts, culture and activism, and Tom Vague, who gave a talk on local history and contributed to one of

⁷ North Kensington Social Justice Archive: Discovery Phase Brief or Work. Tender published in 2023.

the walks. The team also included the organisation Decolonising the Archive (DTA), a multidisciplinary archive and culture learning space that provides alternative access points and creative opportunities for communities and persons wishing to explore the transformative power of working with archives, who delivered a workshop on how to decolonise the archives. Chapter 3 of the full report explains the results of each of these activities as reported from these collaborators.

To achieve the goals and outputs outlined in the brief of work for the Discovery Phase, UCL Consultants and its collaborators designed a community engagement programme that ensures that area residents, activists and creatives have a strong voice in shaping the archives. This report explains the results from the Discovery Phase. First, it explains the methodology used and how local communities have participated in the project. Second, it explains the results emerging from each of the community engagement methods. Third, it produces a list of community-informed findings and recommendations for the development, delivery, and on-going operation of the NKSJA.

However, it is important to acknowledge that this report is, to some extent, incomplete and not a comprehensive survey of social justice movements in North Kensington. The Discovery Phase has carried out the beginning of a community engagement process. This engagement needs to continue over the next phases to create and operationalise the archives. This report provides recommendations on that too.

2. Methodology and indicators of participation

To produce community-informed recommendations for the development, delivery and operation of the NKSJA, UCL Consultants and their collaborators designed a community engagement programme with a wide diversity of opportunities to participate in shaping the NKSJA. Depending on people's preferences and availability, they could engage in collective discussions or workshops, attend a talk or a walk, have a one-to-one meeting, or fill in a survey. The methodology used involved co-learning and co-creation. It was structured around community engagement workshops where local communities participating both learnt about different aspects about archiving and contributed to co-creating how the archive should be. This builds on previous experiences of the Discovery Phase team on integrating learning experiences withing participatory process⁸. The engagement programme included:

- **Full Day Events:**
 - **23rd July 2024:** Workshops on community archives, history of activism, materials, oral history, access, space, ownership, governance, and a community history walk.
 - **21st September 2024:** Summary of previous engagement, governance models, decolonising archives, digital archiving, art, culture, activism, and a walk.
- **Drop-in Sessions:**
 - **18th July 2024:** North Kensington Library and online.
 - **13th September 2024:** Portobello Market stall.
- **Meetings:** Discussions with organisations and individuals about existing archives, potential materials, partnerships, and contributions.

⁸ Sendra, Pablo (2023). The ethics of co-design. *Journal of Urban Design*. DOI: [10.1080/13574809.2023.2171856](https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2023.2171856).

- **Young People's Workshops:**
 - **8th July 2024:** With RBKC's Youth Council.
 - **8th October 2024:** With Kensington Aldridge Academy.

This section explains in detail the engagement methods used in each of these engagement events:

2.1 Community engagement workshops

These were facilitated by UCL Consultants in collaboration with the subcontractors. They covered a range of topics related to social justice and archiving and had the double objective of co-learning with communities about archiving and collaboratively shaping the archives. Co-learning in this context means being able to understand the perspective of activists involved in contemporary and historical social justice movements as well as sharing skills from UCL Consultants and their collaborators to empower communities and archive keepers to consider particular aspects of preservation, ownership, digitisation, etc. The workshops included presentations and facilitated discussions on different topics. These discussions used canvases to aid to support and document the collective discussion by using sticky notes to populating the canvases. See the figures below for examples on these canvases. To maximise participation, the workshops were organised in two full-day events that run from the morning to the evening. One on the 23rd of July 2024 (Tuesday) and a second one on the 21st of September 2024 (Saturday). The workshops included food and refreshments sourced from a local provider.

The workshops covered the following topics/activities:

What is a community archive for you? This was an ice-breaker discussion, facilitated by Pablo Sendra, to understand what the terms 'social justice' and 'community' mean to people (figure 2.1), what they think a social justice or community archive should be, what is the value of archiving, and what is important to

keep. The workshop used the canvas in figure 2.2 to introduce prompts and facilitate the discussion.

What do we mean by...?	social justice movements campaigns activists protest	community groups community communities
social justice movements campaigns activists protest	In the context of North Kensington, what comes to your mind when you hear these terms?	community groups community communities
Places		Events

Figure 2.1: First canvas for 'What is a community archive for you?'

What histories/stories should be archived?

**Who are the storytellers?
What voices should be archived?**

What is the value of archiving these stories, histories and voices?

Open/closed access late date of publication anonymity/contact intellectual property other conditions

Figure 2.2: Second canvas for ‘What is a community archive for you?’

Talk about the history of social justice in North Kensington from the 19th century until present: This was a talk by the local historian Tom Vague, which included a discussion with participants on these historical events.

Materials to be stored, access, space, ownership and governance: The workshop, facilitated by Joanna Baines, Andrew Flinn and Pablo Sendra, used an adapted version of the Collective Intelligence Canvas⁹ (figure 3) to discuss which materials should the archive store and which formats these materials should be, whether this materials are archived digitally or in hard copies, the infrastructural needs for a physical and a digital archive, the governance and ownership of this archive, how to make the archive more accessible to communities, the

⁹ See Domenico Di Siena's explanation of the Collective Intelligence Canvas:

<https://civicdesign.media/civic-design-collective-intelligence-canvas/>

processes/agreements for donating or depositing in the archives, and how does the archive relates to other archives. Since some of the topics needed further discussion (governance and ownership, and digital archiving), feedback was taken on these topics, and they were further discussed in the second day of workshops.

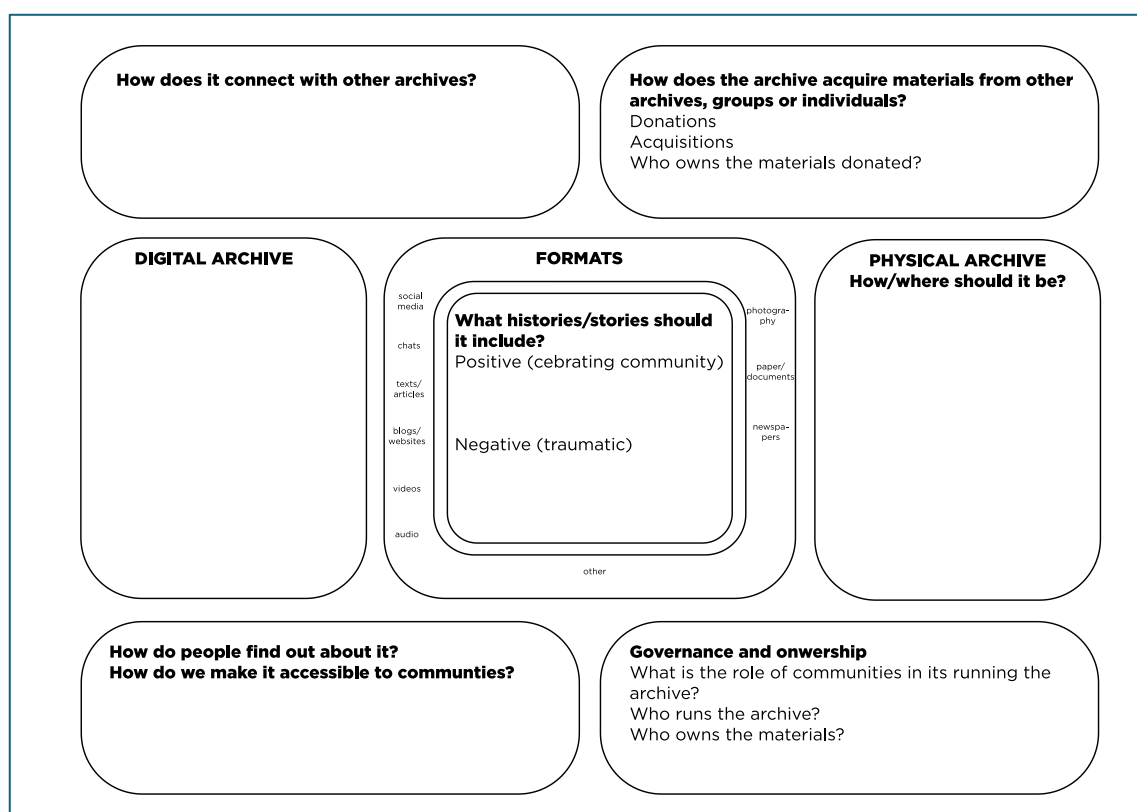


Figure 2.3: Canvas for 'Materials to be stored, access, space, ownership and governance.

Discussion on oral history: Discussion on whose histories should be archived and the value of archiving these voices. For time constraint reasons, this workshop was blended with the one above. The inputs related to oral history were documented using the canvas in figure 2.4. In addition to this, the Discovery Phase team carried out a pilot oral history project.

<p>What is a community/archive for you? social justice</p>	<p>What is the value of an archive? What is the value of archiving?</p>			
<p>What would you expect to find if you were searching in the archive? What is important to keep?</p>				
1870	1900	1950	2000	2024

Figure 2.4: Canvas for oral history discussion.

Community history walk: Guided by Pablo Sendra, Tom Vague, and with contributions from Jacob Rety and workshop participants, the walk visited historic places for social justice such as All Saints Road, the place where Mangrove used to be, Powis Square, Tabernacle, Metro Club, the place where adventure playgrounds started in Acklam Road, Tavistock Crescent, the places where the Black People Information Centre (BPIC) and Unity were, and the Westway. Participants shared their memories associated to these places.

Reporting on preliminary results: The second day of workshops started with Pablo Sendra reporting on preliminary results and getting additional feedback.

Governance and ownership models: Following feedback from the previous workshop, Andrew Flinn presented the aspects they had to consider when looking at the governance and ownership of the archive, and the different models that exist for

community archives providing examples: these included institution-led archive with community input, fully community-led archive, and hybrid approaches where community groups and institutions define collaboration agreements. This was followed by a discussion on these governance models.

How do we decolonise an archive? The organisation Decolonising the Archive made a presentation on the aspects to consider when aiming to decolonise an archive, which included examples of their work, and a collective activity with participants (more details on chapter 3).

Digital archiving: Jacob Rety made a presentation on the benefits of adopting a Web 3.0 approach to digital archiving, which would allow distributed rather than centralised governance. This was followed by a discussion on the principles that the digital infrastructure for archives should follow, which overlapped with the previous discussion on governance. A canvas (figure 2.5) was prepared to guide the discussion on these principles, although in this occasion post it notes were not used (notetaking was used instead).

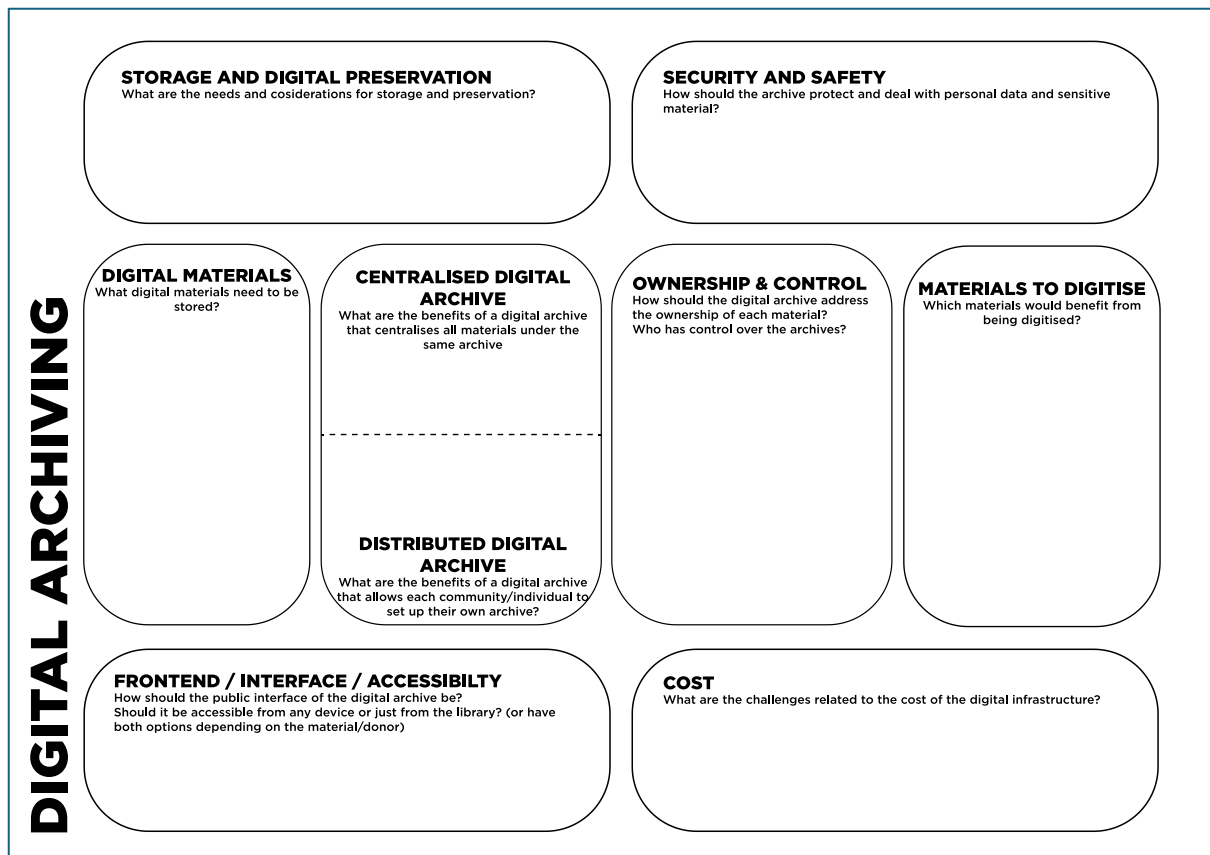


Figure 2.5: Canvas for digital archiving.

Art, culture, and activism: Toby Laurent Belson facilitated a workshop on the role of social-justice-related arts and culture in the archive. A canvas (figure 2.6) was used to facilitate the discussion.

Walking workshop: This walking workshop was conceived and led by three members of the collaborative discovery team: Eve Wedderburn, Kara Blackmore and Thomas Aquilina. As existing and former residents of North Kensington and creative practitioners working within the neighbourhood, the workshop considered walking as a way to ‘access’ the NKSJA through an explorative and participatory approach. It allows the archive to be imagined through movement - but also binds it to the specific context of this place.

Walking is a type of local currency. Through mass movement and procession, it is central to how social justice is articulated in North Kensington. The act of walking is embodied and performative. This is clearly seen in the annual Notting Hill Carnival, bringing together residents and non-residents en masse. As originally part-inspired by the racial murder of Kelso Cochrane, the carnival is also a space of memorial and ritually reenacts a form of social justice as persistence and belonging for Afro-Caribbean communities.

Walking makes visible the grassroots memorials spread across North Kensington, notably connected to the Grenfell tragedy and collective action in the form of the monthly and annual Silent Walk. It creates a way to 'move through' the trauma and make memories with both past and future. These key events and their attendant walks show how the area is not static but in flux and positioned at a historical intersection of social justice.

To consider walking as archive, these are some guiding methodological principles:

- **Immediacy.** Walking gives direct access to the material impacts of social justice.
- **Experiential and embodied.** Walking lends action, duration, attention and collectivity to the work of developing the NK Social Justice Archive.
- **Community.** Walking actively creates a community of experience, memory and perspective.
- **Participatory.** Walking embodies the ambition that the archive is alive and active.
- **Historical significance.** Walking has a historic role in demands for social justice movements.
- **Memorial.** Walking has a specific role in commemorative actions for gathering and marking places

Springgay and Truman explain “place is socially, materially, and politically entangled with walking”¹⁰. Such insights have been central to the walking methodology developed for the discovery phase of the NK Social Justice Archive project. Walking as a methodology enables participants to collectively explore, collate and also actively produce a lived relationship with the history of social justice in North Kensington.

Fundamental to this method of walking *as* archive are the tools and resources:

- **Modes of discussion.** Walking as a group can be done in differing modes of sharing and co-creating archival registers. Such examples include collective group discussion, individual or small group lead reflections; seamless movement between formally structured or open-ended discussion or participant led discussion.
- **Prompts.** In the form of questions, objects, planned and unplanned stops, invitations to engage with non-workshop participants, moments of consideration of what exists in the archive and what has not been added or has been erased
- **Individual narration and oral histories.** Guided or prompted and spontaneous to signify places that are not normally observed in daily journeys, the presence of individuals allows for bumping into each other and signifying what is ‘local’.
- **Signifiers of the built environment.** Street names, parks, graffiti, placards, buildings, shops, individual homes. These help to create a route as a kind of map with stops, marking places of value in the historical social justice discourse

¹⁰ Springgay, Stephanie and Truman, Sarah E. (2018). *Walking Methodologies in a More-than-human World*: WalkingLab. London: Routledge.

2.2 Young people's workshops

In addition to the public workshops mentioned above, the Discovery Phase team organised two young people's workshop to include the voices of young people aged 13 to 17. These include a workshop with RBKC's Youth Council, and a workshop with the students' council of the Kensington Aldridge Academy. The workshops included a presentation on social justice and community archives, and a facilitated discussion that included adapted versions of the canvases used in the public workshops (adapted versions of the canvases in figures 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3).

2.3 Meetings and smaller workshops

In addition to the public workshops, the Discovery Phase team contacted a diversity of community groups/members to have a dedicated meeting to discuss specific aspects of the archives or how they could contribute to, interact with, or use the NKSJA. These meetings had different formats depending on the participants. In some cases, they were condensed versions of the workshops, while in some cases the meetings were very specific to that group's or individual's potential involvement in the archive, and in other cases they were to understand parts of the history of the area or local archiving initiatives. These meetings included residents' association, community interest groups, community groups managing a place/space, groups offering support to migrants or to specific communities, faith groups, artists and people involved in social justice movements.

2.4 Meetings with other archives

To learn from other experiences and to understand potential relationships that the NKSJA could have with other archives, the Discovery Phase team met with staff from The National Archives, staff from the London Museum, the Community Archivist of the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission, and with several community archives in the area, which are at different stages in the process of archiving.

2.5 Drop-in sessions

The team organised three drop-in sessions: two in person and one online on zoom. From the two in-person drop-in sessions, one was at the North Kensington Library on the 18th of July 2024, and one was a stall in Portobello Road Market on Friday the 13th of September 2024 (figure 2.7). The drop-in sessions used similar discussion topics to the workshops or supported residents in filling in the survey.



Figure 2.7: North Kensington Social Justice Archive stall at Portobello Road Market.

2.6 Survey to shape the archives

An online survey with open questions was created to capture people's contribution to shape the archives. Participants were asked similar questions to the discussion topics on the archives. The responses were analysed using thematic coding. This included the following:

1. What does the term 'community archive' mean to you?
2. What does the term 'social justice archive' mean to you?
3. Would you like to see a community social justice archive in North Kensington? Why? / Why not?
4. What kind of local stories would you like to be told in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
5. Whose stories would you like to see included in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
6. Would you like the archive to tell the stories of the different communities that have lived in North Kensington over time or to focus on more modern and contemporary lives?
7. Would you like to see the archive reflect more difficult and traumatic histories of the area, or focus more on celebrating the lives and experiences of the local communities?
8. What kind of materials would you like to see collected in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
 - a. Photographs (people and places)
 - b. Film and video
 - c. Oral Histories (film, audio, transcript)
 - d. Documents relating to the area / community
 - e. Ephemera of 'everyday' life (leaflets, tickets, posters, etc)
 - f. Local publications
 - g. Local histories
 - h. Historical maps
 - i. Objects relating to the area
 - j. Other [Space for extra responses]

9. Is there anything you think the archive shouldn't collect?
10. Do you think the Social Justice Archive should be (a) physical (physical items held in a physical accessible space) (b) digital (digitised collections made preserved and accessible to the community via a website or (c) both? If a) or c), where would you like to see the archive held and why?
11. Would you like to see maps being used to connect histories, photographs and memories to particular places? How would you envision this happening?
12. How would you like to see the North Kensington Social Justice Archive being run? Which kind of involvement would you like local communities to have in the running of the archives?
13. Do you have anything else you'd like to add about developing a social justice archive?

2.7 Oral history pilot project

The project carried out an oral history pilot project to explore the methodology and agreements to be made with participants, as well as to include community voices in the archive. This included a total of 5 participants/recordings. The participation agreement explored a range of options in which participants can deposit their recording to the archive.

2.8 Call for participants and indicators of participation

To provide information about the project and call local people for participating in the Discovery Phase, the team created a dedicated Linktree site (figure 2.8):

<https://linktr.ee/northkensingtonarchive>

This site included the flyers inviting to the workshops, the workshops' programme, the drop-in session dates, locations and links, the survey to shape the archive, as well as relevant information such as the Key Decision Report or the composition of the Discovery Phase team. **The site has been visited 624 times** since its creation on the 25th of May 2024 and the time of writing this report on the 14th of October 2024. **The links have been clicked 576 times.**

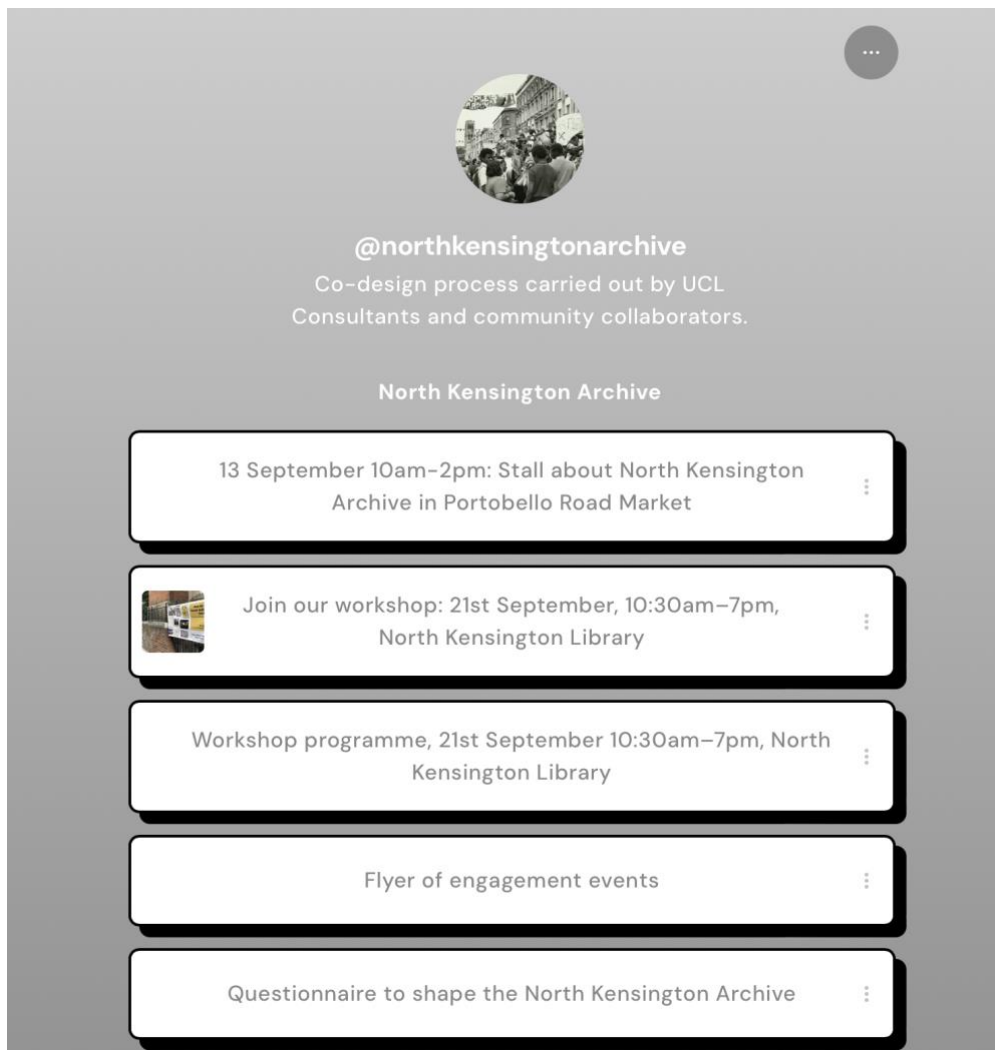


Figure 2.8: Linktree site for advertising community engagement events.

In addition to the website, the invitations to the workshops have been publicised through flyers (figure 2.9), banner (figure 2.10), posters, posts in community websites and social media groups, and RBKC newsletters. It has been forwarded to members of community organisations by these organisations.



Figure 2.9: Flyer for 21st September 2024 workshop.



Figure 2.10: Banner at the entrance of the North Kensington Library.

One of the community collaborators, Jacob Rety, had an outreach role, which included distributing flyers, digital promotion through local group mailing list, website, and social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter/X), visiting and connecting with a range of community groups and organisations, helping to raise awareness about the archive and its objectives. Overall, Jacob Rety engaged with over a hundred people online and 10 people directly in conversations (for the purpose of counting engagement, we are only counting the 10 people engaged in conversations). In addition to this, another of the collaborators, Toby Laurent Belson, reached several local organisations and groups, who forwarded the information on the archives and the engagement programme with their members, as well as artists working about social justice in North Justice in North Kensington.

The figures for participation included:

69 people attending the public workshops

26 attending the young people's workshop (23 young people and 3 adults)

21 people attending drop-in sessions

66 people attending smaller or individual meetings to discuss the archives

17 people filling in the survey to shape the archive

10 people met in person with one of the community collaborators

This is a total of **209 people contributing to shaping the archives¹¹**.

Some participants came to various workshops and dedicated a lot of time to engaging in the project, evidencing a depth of engagement which reflects the level of importance people place on this work. During workshops, participants offered a wealth of examples about their own history with social justice movements in the area, evidencing a rich resource for the development of an archive. Participants described their engagement and relationships with other kinds of archive, evidencing local understanding and appreciation.

¹¹ Note that some people have engaged in more than one way (attendance to workshops, meetings, and filling in survey) and they might be counted more than once.

In order to ensure that a diversity of voices are included in the archive, the team has approached community groups that represent the diversity of the area, including support/cultural groups (or people that have been involved in these) of the Eritrean communities, the Moroccan and Arab-speaking communities, the Spanish communities, the Caribbean communities, Grenfell support groups, faith groups, volunteer organisations, people that manage or have manage cultural spaces, as well as other local and cultural groups. However, as mentioned in the introduction, further engagement needs to take place over the next phases to create and operationalise the archives. This report provides recommendations on that too.

3. Results from engagement: What you told us

This section analyses the contributions from participants in each of the engagement events.

3.1 Community engagement workshops

Workshop 1: What is a community social justice archive for you? Facilitated by Pablo Sendra (23 July 2024)

This was an introductory workshop (figure 3.1) to discuss and understand what people understand by ‘social justice’, ‘community’, what they envision as a social justice community archive, what is the value of archiving, and what they think should be archived. The workshop was led by Pablo Sendra with contributions from other team members. This workshop helps to put a language around the archives and to show how certain terms that might be used for archiving are also contested.

Social justice movements, campaigns, activist, protest

When discussing with participants social justice or associated terms, the following topics emerged:

- **Justice/injustice:** They see social justice as challenging different types of injustices. They also see justice as “something we still need to achieve”. In addition to this, other terms such as “equal rights”, “epistemic justice”, or “decolonisation”, “freedom” or “driving change” were mentioned.
- **Privilege, class, power:** One participant opened the following discussion: To discuss social justice, it is necessary to understand privilege, class and power. This included understanding the unequal landownership and resource distribution in the area. This related to other comments about the lack of resources for certain demographics of the area.
- **Services/facilities:** Various participants mentioned the loss of services and facilities in the area, such as youth centres. This has been a recurrent topic

across the workshops and meetings. They understand social justice as the provision of these facilities and ceasing their closure.

- Housing was also mentioned as a way to achieve social justice.
- “Avoiding gentrification” was also mentioned as a way to achieve social justice, which relates to the points discussed above. Participants mentioned the need of more public participation when approving new developments.
- Positive and negative feelings: the discuss the contrast of positive feelings, such as the joy of protests, with negative feelings, such as the anger caused by injustice.
- There were some mentions of the police, which is something that emerged in other drop-in sessions and discussions. In other conversations, participants mentioned including police records that reflect injustice (from the police) towards some demographics in the archive.

Community, communities, community groups

When discussing what the term community, communities, or community groups mean to people, participants discussed the following points:

- Participants discussed the time and energy given to working for the collective. There was some discussion about the volunteer time people put on campaigning. Some discussion also on thinking as a collective rather than as individuals.
- Challenging the term community: discussion on this term and who is considered ‘community’.
- Learning from each other.
- “Diversity”.
- Terms like “solidarity”, “caring”, “protection” and “friendship” were mentioned.
- Events that are “meaningful”, “inspiring”, “purposeful” were also mentioned when discussing community and social justice.



Figure 3.1 Workshop 23rd July 2024.

Community social justice archive

This activity asked people what they understand by the terms social justice archive or community archive. Given that the Key Decision Report has used both terms, it is important to define what they mean and decide on the final name (e.g. North Kensington Social Justice Archive, North Kensington Community Social Justice Archive, etc.). In the following stages, it is important to be consistent with these terms. The list below summaries the responses given by participants and the discussion that emerged from these responses:

- Archiving struggles and collective action with the purpose of learning from the past to change the present and future.
- A community archive is an archive on the community, created and owned by the community.
- Understanding power.

- A multimedia historical archive of the people of North Kensington.
- A place to introducing residents about the history of the area and to learn about everyday life.
- A discussion about finding the sources: Finding the people that were part of these struggles and campaigns to get their side of the history to ensure that history is not written by the middle class. People also mentioned rectifying the history.
- Visualisations on how the area has developed.

The value of archiving

The list below summaries the responses given by participants about the value of archiving and the discussion that emerged from these responses:

- There were a lot of comments to learn about the past – the injustices, the campaigns fighting injustices, and the victories – so this can help future generations to address injustice.
- Making residents feel included in the history. Bringing knowledge to residents.
- Establishing facts and other comments regarding evidence and truth.
- Including the voices of the people in the history, and documenting the lives of local communities, including cultural events and campaigns.
- Importance of including this in the school curriculum and making the archive educational.

What should be archived

Note the list below reflects what was said in this activity in the workshop. It is an incomplete list, and many other events and campaigns have been brought up during other engagement and conversations. In the analysis of workshop 2 below, there is an expansion of this list:

- Piggeries and potteries of the 1820s.
- Origins of the travellers' communities in the 19th century.
- Portobello Farm in the area where the Spanish school is.
- Spanish community arrived with the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939)
- History of the travellers' community in the Lancaster Road site in the 1960s/1970s, since before the Westway was built.
- Frestonia.
- Dig into records of mental health, as well as police records. There were conversations about looking into police records to look at police's behaviour towards young black people.
- Understanding the origins of Notting Hill Trust and other housing associations to create awareness of their original social purpose and the role of local people in their creation.

Talk by Tom Vague

The local historian Tom Vague gave a talk from the early 19th century struggles (figure 3.2) to the current campaigns of activism, going through key events in history such as the Suffragettes, the origins of the Notting Hill Carnival, the construction of the Westway (figure 3.3), Mangrove Nine, and more recent social justice movements. This expanded some of the discussion participants had had earlier in the workshop, gave an opportunity to participants to learn about the history of the area, as well as contributing with their own memories, experiences and knowledge. The talk was a learning experience as well as a dialogue between participants.



Figures 3.2 and 3.3: Tom Vague's talk on the history of social justice movements in North Kensington.

Workshop 2: Materials to be stored, access, space, ownership and governance + oral history. Facilitated by Joanna Baines, Andrew Flinn and Pablo Sendra (23 July 2024).

The workshops on defining how the archives should be (figure 3.4) and oral history blended as people started address both at the same time in their responses. The workshops were led by Joanna Baines, Andrew Flinn and Pablo Sendra with contributions from other team members.

The first canvas looked at the following issues:

Stories that should be archived (positive and negative), this discussion blended with which oral histories should be archived:

This continues the discussion in workshop 1 (and the talk) around what should be archived. As mentioned earlier, this list is incomplete as it reflects just this discussion:

- Powis Square.
- Grenfell.
- Migration and migrant stories.
- Rachman (landlord) activities in the area and how the people were affected.
- Mike Braybrook and the Print Shop
- Notting Hill Carnival.
- Colville Nursery.
- Frestonia.
- Albion Free State
- Acklam Adventure Playground
- Minutes of board meetings of organisations such as Westway Trust, Council, Venture Centre.
- Shops and cafes as meeting places.
- Music, books, films.
- Metro Four.
- Mangrove Nine.
- Save Trellick and Edenham campaign and the co-design of their Community Plan with the project 'Develop Trellick?'

Materials that should be archived (physical and digital):

Participants agreed on the importance of both digital and physical materials, which should include the following:

- Official records in addition to people's narratives on social justice events.

- Oral histories.
- Photographs.
- A documentation of the Grenfell memorial quilts (not the physical one, but a documentation of them)
- Histories related to racism and injustice.
- Participants mentioned that the storage conditions are very important in they are to donate or deposit materials.
- Looking at what has already been documented. Examples of oral history projects, such as Ishmahil Blagrove's book, which captures different voices about same events.
- Example of the Tate mixed multimedia exhibition on Women in Revolt.
- Some discussing about archiving blogs, the internet archive, and the digital vulnerability of what is online. (A more in-depth discussion on digital archiving followed in the September workshop).
- Looking at the records of the Labour Party about social movements in the area.
- Look at individual stories of key events, such as Mangrove Nine.
- Family and social justice campaigning: kids coming to protests.
- Include the Spanish, Moroccan and Portuguese communities.
- Almanaar.
- Arts, musicians.
- Education institutions like the college, which is 150 years old, and schools.
- Kensington and Chelsea Social Council and the archives/materials they have.
- The changing appearance of the built environment was named as a record of social justice losses and gains.
- The role of street art, both informal and formal was described as a live archive of pressing social justice issues.

Making the archive accessible to local communities:

Participants discussed the following considerations and proposals to make the archives accessible to local communities:

- Accessible for all: young people, elderly, disabled, sight impaired.
- Need to meet the needs of all ages.
- Some discussion about the contrast between official cataloguing skills and unofficial cataloguing skills.
- Organise talks and exhibitions. These exhibitions can rotate every couple of months.
- Consider those who cannot access digital technologies.
- An archive that works for research, for storytelling, and for exploring.
- There should be an access point to the NKSJA at North Kensington Library. The information should stay in this area, so it is not locked away.
- The other space mentioned as a site was Canalside House.
- Students working with archives. Archive as a teaching resource.

The discussion above opens the question on what is the archive: a fully functioning archive, or an engagement space (to activate materials from the archive and create) and umbrella concept joining collections held in other spaces.

Early discussions on governance, further developed in the September workshop:

The workshop included a discussion on the governance of the archives and the role of the community in running the archives. Since the discussion did not conclude, this was expanded on the September workshop incorporating some of the feedback received. The responses and discussion points raised by participants in the July workshop included:

- An archive in local hands.

- Maintenance of funding stream for ensuring longevity. There were also some discussions on the limitations on what you can do with £1 million.
- Engage with the college (Morley) to train young people to run the archives.
- An archive of archives, or an archive with multiple collections.
- There were some early discussions on community-led governance models that were further discussed in the September workshop, including that agency should be with the community, that there should be a community governance group in charge of it, which is independent but in good relationship with the council. This was followed by a discussion with Andrew Flinn on the governance models of community archives and the different relationships they can have with institutions. This was expanded in September.
- Concerns on charging fees for taking photos of the archives. Community members did not want the council to make money from community donations to the archive.
- Some discussions about copyright staying with the owners. And in general, having a spirit in which the value belongs to the community and the donors.

Road is a traumatic story for many. It is where Mangrove was (figure 3.5).

- Powis Square: The square was opened to the public because of people claiming for it (figure 3.6). It is a space for children. It hosts the Carnival World Music Stage.
- Tabernacle: home to the Mangrove Steel Band and the Notting Hill Carnival.
- Powis Mews: John Lennon used the studios here. John Lennon supported the Mangrove Nine trial.
- Metro Club (figure 3.7): youth club, multipurpose space. Placards were done here for protests. The Metronome Steel Band were here (now in The Factory in Meanwhile Gardens). It had very good food. It was used by the Spanish community and the Black community. There has not been any recognition about the injustice in losing this space.
- Tavistock Crescent, where the London Free School adventure playgrounds were built.
- 301-303 Portobello Road: where the Black People Information Centre (BPIC) used to be. It had a black library, a Caribbean restaurant, office, and nursery.
- After the BPIC came Unity Association, which was located in Thorpe Close (figure 3.8).
- Pepper Pot in Thorpe Close.
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau used to be under the Westway in Ladbroke Grove, where the Pret currently is.



Figure 3.5: Blue Plaque commemorating the founder of the Mangrove in All Saints Road.

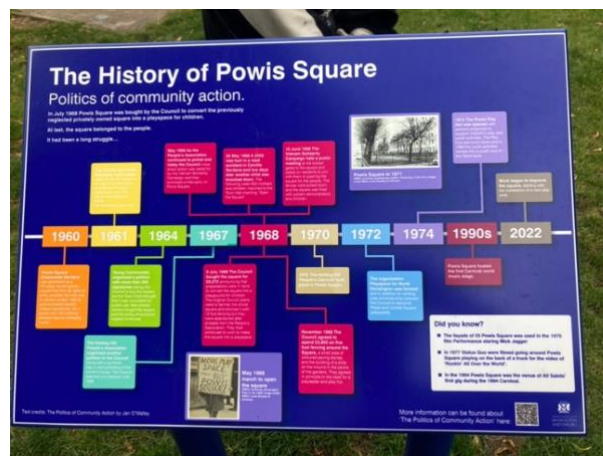


Figure 3.6: History of Powis Square, board located in the Square.



Figure 3.7: Sign remembering the location of the Metro Club.



Figure 3.8: Former location of Unity Association under the Westway.

Workshop 4: Models of governance, ownership and community control.

Facilitated by Andrew Flinn (21 September 2024).

There is no single model for community archive governance – operate on a spectrum from total independence and autonomy to collaboration even co-control / co-ownership with another partner (typically an archive (local authority or university, etc), museum or library service, or occasionally some other partner. This would tend to exclude a form of community archive in which all collections are held and managed by a heritage partner without any community oversight but are just an archive (or collection of archives) about a community/ies.

Two main ways of thinking about this:

- 1) The governance structure (who runs and makes decisions about the archive, including physical and digital hosting of the archive) both at the level of the community archivist/s and any Trustee board / Friends of Archive that may provide further strategic governance and represent community control and continuity, especially for funding and charitable status, etc)
- 2) Ownership of collections. If a community archive is independent then would tend to own its own collections (though even here community depositors may wish to retain ownership over collections) but if collections are held in partnership with another public archive or other heritage curatorial bodies then there may be more complicated ownership models. Most professional archives and museums will have an expectation of donation (and transfer of ownership) in order to fully use, make available and care for collections (physical and digital, over time and to acknowledgement costs of preservation, cataloguing, storage). However, whilst this is often presented as only option, it is not and as owners of the collections, they can stipulate measures of control and retain ownership via the donation or depositor agreement.

Worth noting that a long-term deposit agreement can give archive or museum some reassurance regarding time of agreement whilst retaining ownership and say / authority in managing and handling of collection.

Why is retaining ownership important? Symbolically and practically important. Allows community to retain ownership over own history and stories, including for instance oral histories – retaining the ability to tell its own story. More practically retaining ownership (physical and/or intellectual) allows the community to retain an important say in how the archive is managed (for instance how it is catalogued, whether or not it digitised, if it is made accessible, to whom and under what conditions).

Potential models of ownership and governance:

- 1) Independent community archive (physical, digital, hybrid). For instance, the *George Padmore Institute & Archive* or *Black Cultural Archive*.

Advantages: control of collections (own and / or deposited / donated), access to external funding but own staff / volunteers and a Board of Trustees / Governance structure drawn from community.

Disadvantages: cost and long term sustainability. If physical archive, is there a property owned by community or available on very long-term low cost fixed rent, otherwise accommodation for collections can be extremely costly and precarious. Similar resourcing issues over long-term digital storage and preservation. Are there staffing and community resources to actively support archive as independent body over time?

- 2) Partnerships with other bodies (local authority archives or museums etc) with deposit and donation agreements at the level of the individual collection.

Potential models of these different relations are to be found with the *Huntley and Rukus! Archive collections at London (Metropolitan) Archives*, or *relationships with community collections at Tower Hamlets or Manchester*

Advantages – potential to retain ownership and control / influence over collections via the Terms of the Agreement without the community necessarily having to bear the cost, expertise and resource of sustaining collection access and preservation over time. In digital archives there may be a useful model here for local held accessible collections plus long term preservation of digital archive in a centrally professionally managed and funded digital archive. The deposit or donation agreement allows for appointment of Friends or Trustees

bodies or simply individual donors to advise on the treatment of the archive (cataloguing, access arrangements, events around the archives), leading to shared decision-making on treatment of the collections. Note – there are often time limits on these agreements (10 years for instance, when both parties can review and for instance, deposits can become permanent donations if community donor satisfied and trusts heritage partner.

Disadvantages - loss of immediate control, physical ownership and direct access to collections. Over time interest and participation in managing affairs of archive may reduce leaving collections in the sole management and control of partner. Needs a sustained community engagement.

- 3) Community Institutional partnership with local authority archives / library service (or university, etc). Rather than at level of individual collections there is a single community-owned archive (with multiple collections and donors) for instance a unified NKSJA with a close partnership (funding, property, staffing, digital infrastructure) with local library and archive service. *Example for instance Working Class Movement Library in Salford (connected with and part of Salford library service).*

Advantages - funding and accommodation provision arrangements with local authority, some security. Staff employed by LA but appointed with reference to Trustees. Collections held in Trust and a strong trustee board and governance arrangements intended to maintain the ownership and ethos of the original community collectors and owners.

Disadvantages – quite a complex structure both at community level (single institution even if many collections) and for local authority. Long term commitment on part of community (and partner) and while it offers some stability, also subject to pressures on partner library and archive services funding and resources.

The discussion that followed about these different models noted the difficulty and financial cost of the wholly independent model (a question was asked

whether this cost could actually be quantified and there was no real answer as too many factors unknown but very significant investment over time).

One participant spoke from their own experience of working with Huntley archive and the London Metropolitan Archives (now London Archives) and as a Friend of the Huntley Archive and what had been possible when working in partnership in supporting the cataloguing, promotion and activation of the archive.

There was discussion about whether there should be one single or many archives (some collections being retained by owners, and others at other places being linked to the NKSJA).

Questions were asked about the relationship between the digital and physical archives in these models.

Final points were made about necessity of relationship of trust with Library and Archives Service but not Council and very important from participant about how these models if to work and community-led model to be made reality, requires significant long-term commitment and effort on part of community members (even the partnership models.)

Workshop 5: How we decolonise an archive workshop, delivered by the organisation Decolonising the Archive (21 September 2024)

Report written by Decolonising the Archive summarising the contents, activities, discussion, and conclusions from their workshop:

Decolonising the Archive (DTA) held their How to Decolonise An Archive workshop at the North Kensington Library on the 21st September, 2024. The workshop was facilitated by Connie Bell.

The workshop was well attended by community members and had a stronger representation from the senior citizen members of the community.

The workshop presented a backdrop to the work that DTA does so as to establish a living example and link to decolonial approaches around archives and collections. The workshop then facilitated examples of other spaces and organisations doing radical work and how they go about achieving their goal, such as the Homeless Archive, The Anarchist Archive, The Library of Africa and African Literature archive, etc.

Many questions were raised under what type of archive practice would they as a group incorporate, alongside what type of repository space they would provide. The participants seemed a bit hesitant initially as they were sceptical about working with the council and weary about being supported to actualise such an endeavour as they had been let down numerous times or passed over by groups that had a stronger vernacular. The issues of language barriers were raised. The participants also had very traditional ideas around how an archive should look and be experienced.

As such DTA addressed those matters and ideas raised by using examples of work they had done and how they went about doing it. We demonstrated through our Whilst You Archive Me and Progress film and documentary project the power of oral history and archives using ephemeras, photos and conversations that would facilitate memories of projects achieved already by the community in the past and further establish the ties between all of participants as a community. DTA facilitated an opportunity to examine the need to create a counter reality for the community that is believable and achievable and got participants to explore this by having a breakout group conversation around what services they could provide that radically addressed the dearth of support within the community by local authority services. Within that capacity, the community realised that they wanted a space where they can link all the great work already being done by members across the borough to be mapped

and traced in an accessible way in their archive and that they could provide that service. They also wanted to revive a youth program that had been shut down on a neighbouring street and agreed amongst themselves that they would want to provide those youths a space to hold intergenerational oral history sessions with them and offer skills training in this area to the young people.

The question was raised by DTA on whether they had agreed as a group as to the strengths of the group, so that they could have a conversation as to how to access all the talent in the space and generate movement towards making the concept a reality. The participants, in response to that query, began to document the talent that was present in the room alongside their names and contact information. I then initiated that they book a follow-on meeting to ensure that the matters raised are attended to. As such It was agreed by the participants that they would meet again soon and communicate via email and WhatsApp.

The matter of obtaining training was raised by the participants and DTA suggested that their program offers Community Archive training, and this may be an avenue for them to explore. They expressed this would be meaningful to them as having a one-off workshop was not enough and they would need more opportunity and time to be able to sit with the new knowledge in different contexts.

To conclude the group were able to expand their notions and ideas around what their archive could look like and what services their archive could offer to support their sustainability and lessen their dependence on the council. How they will manifest this is up to a continued conversation and planning process.

Workshop 6: Digital archiving, delivered by Jacob Rety followed up by a discussion with everyone (21 September 2024).

Report written by Jacob Rety summarising the activities delivered in his workshop on digital infrastructure¹²:

Introduction

This exploration of digital infrastructure for the NKSJA builds on 20 years of experience in the digital media space including through various prominent campaigns in the area. Having collaborated with artists, technologists, and activists, I have helped produce films, print media, petitions, websites, and social media platforms. My particular interest lies in using modern technology to drive social change, which aligned with the goals of the NKSJA. My role in this project included exploring potential technological solutions for the archive's digital infrastructure.

Exploring Digital Infrastructure for NKSJA

After participating in the initial workshop, I became aware of several key concerns from the community regarding digital archiving. These included questions about:

- Ownership of digital materials
- Access and beneficiaries
- Maintenance and preservation of digital archives

It also became clear that there was uncertainty regarding what the digital aspect of the NKSJA would look like. We learnt that there exists a wide number of personal and group archives held by individuals and organisations in the area, that some well-known collections have been deposited in other London-based archives. The scope of digital archiving for NKSJA had not yet been fully defined. In response, I began

¹² Note that this workshop involved the presentation of one option of digital infrastructure. It is not the intention of this report to be prescriptive about the digital infrastructure to use. However, the presentation of this example of decentralised digital infrastructure sparked the conversation among participants on the communities' priorities for digital infrastructure.

exploring potential solutions to address these challenges, focusing on the need for a system that offered flexibility, accessibility, and community control.

Introduction to the Solid Project

Based on these considerations, I introduced the **Solid Project** as a potential digital infrastructure solution for NKSJA. Solid Pods, a decentralised technology pioneered by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, seemed to align well with the archive's goals of community ownership, access control, and data sovereignty.

What are Solid Pods? Solid Pods are decentralised data storage systems that allow individuals or organisations to retain control over their data. This means that rather than a single central entity managing the entire digital archive, each contributor (whether an individual, community group, or institution) can host their own "Pod." These Pods can be linked together to form a cohesive digital archive while still respecting the autonomy of each contributor.

Community Feedback and Exploration

After reaching out to the Solid Project community forum, I received positive feedback and interest in the NKSJA as a use case for Solid technology. I was invited to give a presentation on the NKSJA Solid Pods use case at a meeting of the **BCS (Chartered Institute for IT)** and connected with a developer from Belgium working on an annotation platform based on **W3C Web Annotation standards**. This platform could potentially allow users to annotate a wide variety of online resources, from PDFs to videos, creating a more interactive and engaging digital archive.

We discussed further integration of Solid Pods into the NKSJA, leading to the following conceptual framework for how it could be implemented:

Conceptual Framework for NKSJA Using Solid Pods

1. Decentralised Storage of Digital Collections:

- **Individuals and organisations:** Community members, historians, and local organisations can each host their own Solid Pods, storing their contributions such as documents, photographs, oral histories, or other media.
- **Central Archive:** A central physical archive (e.g., a library or local history museum) could host its own Solid Pod while also linking to the decentralised Pods, providing a unified digital collection accessible both online and at the physical location.

2. Interoperability and Linking:

- Solid Pods use open standards and linked data formats, allowing seamless connections between different Pods. For instance, an oral history stored in one Pod could be linked to photographs or documents stored in another.

3. Access Control:

- Pod owners can manage who has access to their data, granting public or restricted access based on their preferences. The central archive could negotiate permissions for certain collections to be made publicly available or used in exhibitions.

4. Collaboration and Contribution:

- Multiple Pods could contribute to a shared project, such as a community-driven exhibition. Contributors could continuously update their Pods, ensuring the archive remains a living, evolving resource.

5. Long-Term Preservation and Portability:

- Solid Pods ensure that data is not tied to a single platform. Contributors can move their data between providers or self-host without breaking links in the archive.

6. Physical and Digital Integration:

- At the physical archive, digital collections could be accessed via public terminals, with QR codes or NFC tags linking physical exhibits to their digital counterparts.

Potential Benefits

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** The digital archive could be accessed from anywhere, broadening its audience.
- **Community Engagement:** By allowing individuals and organisations to control their own data, the archive could encourage more diverse contributions.
- **Data Sovereignty:** Contributors retain ownership of their data, potentially encouraging greater participation.

Challenges

- **Technical support:** Individuals and organisations may need support to set up and maintain their Pods.
- **Interoperability:** Consistency in standards will be key to ensuring smooth integration between Pods.
- **Data integrity:** Ensuring the authenticity of decentralised data may require oversight or verification.

Presentation of Solid Pods

During the second day of workshops, I presented Solid Pods to participants. While most participants had not heard of Solid Pods or Web 3.0, there was noticeable interest in its potential, though concerns around security and complexity were also raised.

Conclusion

The Solid framework offers a unique opportunity for the NKSJA to create a decentralised, community-driven archive. While Solid Pods address many concerns raised during the workshops—such as ownership, accessibility, and preservation—further exploration is needed. Based on my research, a small-scale, feasible prototype pilot could be trialled within a relatively short time-frame, involving a handful of interested community members.

Ultimately, by adopting this approach, the NKSJA has the potential to create a truly innovative, inclusive archive that reflects the diversity and history of the North Kensington community.

Workshop 7: Arts Culture and Activism workshop, delivered by Toby Laurent Belson (21 September 2024)

Report written by Toby Laurent Belson, summarising the activities, discussion and conclusions of the workshop on Arts, Culture and Activism:

The Arts, Culture and Activism workshop was introduced as a way to go deeper into the discussions from the first part of the day. Specifically, it sought to bring out examples of **Practice, People, Places and Policy** that could/should be engaged with by this Social Justice Archive (figure 3.9).

Because so much of the conversation had, rightly, been focused on the way in which the archive could/should be set up, or on the challenging relationship held between community and council, or on current and historical issues that affect the communities of North Kensington, or the ways in which culture play/ed out in the area, there was not necessarily much by way of specific named examples of the people or places that contribute/d to the renowned richness of the North Kensington community. Therefore this workshop was designed to produce a collection of what could be seen as practical starting points for what a Social Justice Archive for North Kensington should include.

As with other workshops, it is important to note what is missing. An exercise like this is limited by who is in the room. And so, each input deserves and requires a full exploration and unpacking by people with lived experience of the North Kensington communities, recognising that this may lead to the identification of what is missing. An example of this “identification of the missing” came about with a participant whose relatives had history with the well-known Mangrove Restaurant on All Saints Road. It was felt that Mangrove’s history as a club and a space for African people - not only African Caribbean - was less well known. The depth of history means that a single word - in this case ‘Mangrove’ - can bring about an immense and diverse wealth of experiences, recollections and meanings.

As an example, from one contribution under the heading of **‘Places’**:

“Westway

BMX track

Acklam Adventure

Meanwhile Skatepark”

If we take each line:

Westway

Westway can be viewed as an entire area to explore and uncover. Whether that be the Westway as a physical construction (the A40 elevated motorway), or as an organisation (the Westway Trust). The Westway covers 23 acres of land and the organisation that manages the land has operated for over fifty years. The mention of ‘Westway’ has the potential to open up a myriad of connections, conversations, memories and archival materials, involving a large range of individuals, informal groups and organisations.

BMX track

The BMX track no longer exists, but has a very strong place in local memory. It is one example of the autonomous, self-developed play spaces that have existed in the area for the past 60 years. It also connects to the local culture of activity known as 'extreme sports'. North Kensington has been at the 1970/80/90s forefront (as it was with adventure playgrounds in the post-war period) of the development of sports and art forms such as skateboarding (Meanwhile), BMX (Meanwhile and Westway), climbing (Westway) and graffiti (Wornington Road, Trellick and Westway)

Acklam Adventure

Acklam Adventure is an opening to other adventure play spaces, including Venture and Hornimans playgrounds, as well as other informal play spaces and the history of why they were created. These in turn lead to the culture of self-build, autonomy and agency that has developed in the local area, amongst a diverse range of communities. Because this is a play space that no longer exists, it also opens up issues of development, regeneration and destruction, which have heavily influenced feelings of trauma and loss in the local area - as well as opened up possibilities for use - and are a part of the difficult relationship many hold with the local council and other authorities and institutions involved in development.

Meanwhile skatepark

Meanwhile skatepark opens a connection to other local skate areas, such as Bay66 or Meanwhile 2 (Royal Oak). It also has a graffiti connection, being close to the Hall of Fame at Trellick Tower, and is heavily used by BMX riders. Meanwhile's history is another part of the autonomous self-build culture - with a well-documented history of its artist founder - and is another example of both the outstanding success and simultaneously uneasy, contested and often traumatic nature of local community development. It is notable that the present precarious or contested nature of some of these historical spaces draws the historical unease into the present day, initiating a time travel of sorts - precarious communities of today battling against social or

spatial injustice having a sense of being the same as the precarious communities of yesterday doing likewise.

Conclusions from the Art, Culture and Activism workshop

Overall, this example from a single contribution shows how a relatively short list of specific places, people, practices or policies can open up to a full exploration of North Kensington's social histories or its requirements for a Social Justice Archive. In this case it is play space and extreme sports or cultural activity in North Kensington.

But equally it could be about housing, Carnival, grassroots publishing, markets, Powis Square, Maxilla, Frestonia, All Saints Road, London Lighthouse, protests, speeches, potteries, police stations, law centres, schools, colleges, youth clubs, music, blogging, poetry, walks, or numerous named individuals. Therefore, each contribution from the attending community members of different generations and backgrounds can be taken as an excellent starting point for further exploration, especially into areas not yet identified.

Rather than narrow or summarise the input from the participants, and in doing so risk missing or misrepresenting the depth and range of that input, the conclusion of this workshop is that this space made space to produce clear evidence of that depth and range, yet it only skimmed the surface.

This workshop showed how critical it is that a Social Justice Archive in North Kensington understands its main resource and value to be held within its communities. It should find reliable, secure and equitable ways to build strong relationships with its communities and enable the embedded knowledge and experience to present and represent itself. In achieving this connection with the resource, the value of the resource must then be kept and engaged with heavily and consistently by those same communities.

As this Discovery Phase shows, it is through these community-led and supported and appropriately funded conversations and events that hidden histories can be uncovered, valued and protected for current and future generations.



Figure 3.9: Workshop on Art, Culture and Activism

Workshop 8: Walking Workshop, delivered by Eve Wedderburn, Kara Blackmore and Thomas Aquilina (21 September 2024).

On 21 September 2024 a walking workshop was conducted by Eve Wedderburn, Kara Blackmore and Thomas Aquilina. It concluded a day of archive-related activities held at the North Kensington Library. Departing from the library, the walk lasted almost two-hours, visiting three key sites of resistance: Notting Hill Methodist Church, the space where Maxilla Hall Social Club and The Wall of Truth are located, and the Westway. The walk ended at the intersection between Ladbroke Grove and the Westway - at the site of the shrine-mounted poem on the green mosaiced wall “We walk in silence out of respect...” by Daniel Renwick.

The outcome of the walking workshop was defined by the number of people who joined, detail of oral history shared, level of vulnerability when sharing about violent or contested pasts. Additional key sites and destinations not visited due to time

constraints included, but not limited to, The Tabernacle, Portobello Road, and Meanwhile Gardens.

Related to the methodological principles and resources, the workshop walked with these questions:

- What is the use of the guided and unguided tour in the archive?
- What does walking give us - or allow us to do differently?
- How do you make present the missing?

Key voices from social justice movements related to the Mangrove Nine, members of arts-based activism organisations and local housing justice campaigners. A spontaneous encounter happened with a key activist who not only joined the conversation but also signalled an urgent struggle against fascism that connects North Kensington and the nation.

The Wall of Truth and Hope Gardens became significant anchor points for the walk, as well as an artist's book as a device for guiding discussion around a key component of social justice and belonging in North Kensington. Future walks for archiving could include recording conversations from participants, provided they provide their consent.

Important insights on how to produce a language around the archive were shared, such as spatial and artistic collection/registers. One example came about in the oral history discussion to ensure the social justice archive is in the local and often familiar/colloquial way of referring to the space. Even one mention was made of a kind of Ladbroke Grove patios.

We consider this walk as a reflection of the social justice archive itself, noting the continued incompleteness of social justice archiving as a lived practice. Note that all walking workshop organisers have been involved in other walks that inform the recommendations.



Figure 3.10: Unfolding Thomas Aquilina's book on North Kensington during the walk.

Conclusions

Together, our workshop and attendant research demonstrates the spatialising demands for justice through taking ownership of the archive as embodied practice and subverting archival repositories by using the urban landscape as a reference point.

Limitations of Walking

- Make clear that the work of social justice is always incomplete and ongoing.
- Access: carefully consider the timing of organising a walk and recognise that this is a physical activity.

3.2 *Young people's workshops*

The young people's workshops used adapted versions of the canvases used in the 23rd of July 2024 workshops. There were some overlaps on the responses with what the adults had replied, while others were different or made emphasis on other aspects.

Social justice: when discussing what is social justice for them, they discussed similar topics to adults such as equal rights, fairness, and issues around inequalities. They also mentioned events such as Carnival or traumatic events like Grenfell. However, they also mentioned concerns that had not been mentioned by adults, such as knife crime. They also mentioned that justice is “helping people”.

Community: there were a lot of references to people coming together, sharing love, togetherness, supporting each other, having fun, and staying united. There were also ideas about spreading awareness.

Places: When discussing places the emphasis was mainly in youth clubs and sport facilities.

Value of a community archive: keeping history so children can see how things have changed. Allowing future generations understand and learn about the area. Providing hope for the future to prevent infringement of rights to happen or avoiding the same mistakes. Don't forget about injustices, which includes holding people into account. They also discussed the importance of preservation.

What to include in the archives: Black history, women history and the Suffragettes, the Windrush Generation, Notting Hill Carnival, Grenfell Tower fire, saving the Library, involvement in WW2. Both traumatic events to avoid that similar things happen again and highlighting how communities have overcome injustices to inspire future generations. They mentioned putting sensitive materials in a separate place so people do not have to go through it if they don't want to.

What formats to include: both physical and digital materials. Photographs, newspapers, posters, objects, clothes, vinyl, CDs, videos, songs, reports, podcasts, letters, thesis, postcards, books, documents and records, diaries, artifacts.

Where it could be and how it could be the space: they discussed that it should be like a museum and it should be in a space where people go, such as the Town Hall. Other spaces they discussed was at the Lighthouse building, where the Museum of Brands is.

Digital archive: a creative and easy to use website, where things are organised chronologically and that is multilingual. They also mentioned it should be in a government website.

How it can reach communities: They had a wide range of ideas that can inform the public-facing and educational events proposed in other parts of this report: social media adverts, leaflets and posters, doing events where they give free samples and free food, open evenings, day trips with schools and quizzes, games to discover things, organising assemblies, making it obvious so people know what is there.

3.3 Meetings, drop-in sessions and smaller workshops

The meetings, small workshops and drop-in sessions included a diversity of formats:

- Discussing the archives with a community organisation or an individual.
- Drop-in sessions where the same activities as the workshops were done.
- Small workshop with a residents' association.
- Attending a meeting of another residents' association to discuss the archives.
- Meet community and institutional archives.
- Supporting individuals to fill in the survey.

The key topics emerging from the meetings were:

- The diversity of community archives in North Kensington and the relationship they could have with a NKSJA. A lot of the meetings pointed towards community archives and other documentation projects

that the Discovery Phase team has then searched online to find more information about. This has been reflected in chapter 4.

- In some meetings, the discussion was about how the NKSJA could support the existing archiving and documenting initiatives, or to support digitising and documenting existing projects. The types of support mentioned included providing a digital infrastructure contributing towards documenting, or providing training.
- In some of the meetings, there was a discussion on whether they would trust RBKC to run the archives, or which other forms of governance could exist. This connected to the discussion on what they would expect from the North Kensington Archive, which included professional capability, long-term preservation, and degrees of community control. However, there were different views on the governance of the archive, with some leaning towards RBKC running it and others towards a community-led archives. Chapter 4 discusses this in detail and provides recommendations.
- Some meetings also revealed that some people want the archives to happen soon, rather than having to wait for years. This connected to the idea of running activities related to the archive materials before the (physical and/or digital) archive is delivered.
- Discussions on the potential locations of the NKSJA. These are reflected in chapter 4.
- The meetings also included discussions on the digital infrastructure the archives should have.
- Other meetings also suggested who else the Discovery Phase should meet, which led to a snowballing sampling when contacting people for meetings.
- Some meetings discussed the role of the artists in activating the archives, and how the NKSJA should involve local artists (through paid work) to do so. The idea of making sure that the archives are active

with exhibitions and public-facing activities came across a lot both in meetings and workshops.

- In relation to the above, some mentioned that the archive should be creative, and this might encourage people to donate their materials.
- Some meetings also discussed bringing the archives to the street and spreading them across North Kensington with QR codes that would link to a digital website/archive with further information. The idea of having commemorative plaques of social justice was also discussed. There are similar precedents such as the stars in the floor celebrating different aspects of North Kensington in Thorpe Close (figure 3.11).
- Questions on whether the archive would be paper materials (and digital items) or whether it would include artifacts and objects.
- Meetings also revealed the relevance of the support organisations that migrant communities have established in North Kensington to help migrant communities with various issues, including support in education (e.g. supplementary schools), welfare, legal support, housing, cultural centres, and others. These organisations have records, documents, and documentation projects that can be very relevant for the NKSJA.
- In relation to the above, the meetings highlighted that the archives should engaged with migrant communities that have settled in North Kensington, including but not limited to: the Moroccan communities, the Caribbean communities, the Spanish communities, the Portuguese communities, the Eritrean communities, the Somali communities, and many others that exist in the area.
- There are various groups, organisations and artists that have taken various initiatives in response to the Grenfell Tower fire, using a diversity of media such as art, poetry, art therapy, tapestry, documenting or collecting testimonies.

- The meetings also mention various publications that should be part of the archive, such as The Black Liberator Magazine¹³.
- It also pointed towards people that are not sufficiently recognised in history and whose stories should be told.
- The meetings with other institutional archives were helpful to understand what they are doing and to discuss how to address the different community preferences that were emerging in the engagement events. They also pointed towards local authorities developing similar initiatives, such as Archive+ in Manchester, a “partnership of archive & local history organisations at Manchester Central Library”¹⁴, or Croydon Archives, who, as part of the Borough of Culture, have procured a digital preservation system, is recruiting staff and is engaging young people¹⁵.

¹³ <https://catalogue.georgepadmoreinstitute.org/records/JOU/3>.

¹⁴ <https://manchesterarchiveplus.wordpress.com>

¹⁵ <https://www.culturecroydon.com/council-secures-249000-funding-to-digitally-transform-croydon-archives/>



Figure 3.11: Star in Thorpe Close celebrating music in North Kensington.

3.4 Survey

The questions of the surveys are analysed in three blocks of questions: introductory questions on the NKSJA, questions on the stories and materials it should include, and questions about how the archives should be and their governance. The responses were analysed through thematic coding, which is the most common analytical method for qualitative data. The sections below explain the key themes in each of the block of questions and some selected quotes to illustrate the views expressed in these themes.

Block 1: Introductory questions

The first block of questions aimed to understand people's understanding about community archives and social justice archives, and the value they see in creating one for North Kensington.

The questions were the following:

- What does the term 'community archive' mean to you?
- What does the term 'social justice archive' mean to you?

- Would you like to see a community social justice archive in North Kensington? Why? / Why not?

The responses can be classified in the following themes:

- **Documenting:** “Collecting all the available information about past and present actions and events that happen in the area”; “places that are important and close down after the community for many years”.
- **Storing, keeping and preserving:** “A preservation of records, reports and artefacts from and about the community”.
- **Availability of the information, sharing history, evidence, history told by the community, with the aim of influencing the present and the future:** “it is also about the truth and who gets to tell it”.
- **Grassroots or community-led nature of the archive:** “collected by, managed or supported by and approved by the community incorporating people, places, stories and local histories that are most important for this community.”
- **Relevance for documenting the history of migrant communities in the area:** “Eritrean community, how it settled in North Kensington, which challenges it had, how it succeeded, and what was the response of local government.”
- **Public-facing archive, location, museum, exhibitions, publications and events to make the archive accessible and reach wider audiences:** “Probably more public facing than 'archive' itself would imply”; “an archive being accessible locally to the community in local assets such as Canalside House, The Noth Ken Library, the Tabernacle, and even the glass booths along Thorpe Close (Westway) - well as digitally and across the schools and colleges of the North.”

Block 2: Materials that should go in the archives

The second block included questions about the types of stories/histories people would like to find in the archives, and the types of materials.

The questions included:

- What kind of local stories would you like to be told in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
- Whose stories would you like to see included in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
- Would you like the archive to tell the stories of the different communities that have lived in North Kensington over time or to focus on more modern and contemporary lives?
- Would you like to see the archive reflect more difficult and traumatic histories of the area, or focus more on celebrating the lives and experiences of the local communities?
- What kind of materials would you like to see collected in a North Kensington Social Justice Archive?
- Is there anything you think the archive shouldn't collect?

The responses can be classified in the following themes:

- **People's stories, everyday stories, stories from the elderly:** "the women who keep the community going"; "The stories of ordinary life of people who lived in the area".
- **Grenfell:** "Grenfell needs to be part of it."
- **Stories of protest, class and race struggles:** "The struggles for housing, for better housing conditions, for playspace and amenities for children, any struggles for social justice, against racism, Grenfell, Powis Square, Westway, office and other space for local groups. the murder of Kelso Cochrane". "Graffiti and civil disobedience stories of the estates working together well. Frestonia, the Mangrove Nine, the real story of how Notting hill housing trust started, Grenfell, the slums,

rock against racism, the struggle against teddy boys, the EDL, the racist police. the various protests ie,. the north ken library, KCC college turning into Morley College, housing struggles, Westway 23, Maxilla, the Paddington Print shop. the squatting movement all over the area- all saints road with the Clash, Stoneleigh Street, the Lesbian squat near Oxford gardens meanwhile gardens”.

- **Relevance for documenting the history of migrant communities in the area:** “how we contributed to the society”.
- **Content for education for the younger generations:** “Create an archive that brings the history closer to the new generations.”
- **Availability of the information, sharing history, evidence, history told by the community, with the aim of influencing the present and the future:** “learn from difficult and traumatic histories to consider how we can make people's experiences and lives better today - by including both (positive and traumatic experiences) there is a focus on how one interacts and influences the other”.

Block 3: How should the archives be and their governance

The third block included questions about the how people envision a physical and/or digital archive, as well as the governance, ownership and control of the archive.

The questions included:

- Do you think the Social Justice Archive should be (a) physical (physical items held in a physical accessible space) (b) digital (digitised collections made preserved and accessible to the community) or (c) both. If (a) or (c): Where should it be?
- Would you like to see maps being used to connect histories, photographs and memories to particular places? How would you envision this happening?

- How would you like to see the North Kensington Social Justice Archive being run? Which kind of involvement would you like local communities to have in the running of the archives?
- Do you have anything else you'd like to add about developing a social justice archive?

The responses can be classified in the following themes:

- **Public-facing archive, location, museum, exhibitions, publications and events to make the archive accessible and reach wider audiences:** "North Kensington Library (Ladbroke Grove) as the central space for the physical archive. And also having screens and computers for the digital archive. If the archive is about North Kensington, it should be in North Kensington"; "it should be in a library under Westway"; "Physical space. With a showcase in a different theme that changes around so it will bring more people"; "At the library. Or at a currently empty building which could be repurposed - that one where Bramley Rd meets St Helens Gardens"; "the archive should be in a building that we have lost as a community and that has been reclaimed".
- **Digital infrastructure:** "whether to go for a distributed networked approach, or a centralised one ... whether to stitch together existing tools and systems, or develop a custom solution".
- **Governance, ownership and control:** note that there was a wide diversity of views here, included but not limited to: "a mixture of community people and professional people"; "It should be run by and for the community - this might include hiring top quality professionals who work on behalf of the community"; "strictly held under the protection of RBKC, and also fact checked by RBKC"; "local people trained and paid to look after the archive- with continuous funding for the future"; "have a third party/RBKC Libraries running the archive however, I would want to see a board of trustees making decisions

about the archives who are elected by and are from the North Ken Community”.

- **Grassroots or community-led nature of the archive:** “How to reach out to the wider community.”

3.5 Oral history pilot project

The project carried out five oral history interviews as an oral history pilot project.

While this is out of the scope of the Discovery Phase, this pilot oral history project has:

- Collected relevant testimonies about social justice in the area.
- Explored issues around ownership of the recordings, close/open access, and the preferences that people may have about this.
- Started an oral history project that can be continued.

4. Findings and recommendations

4.1 Existing community archives in North Kensington or projects to document its social justice history

There is a wide diversity of existing (or under development) community archives in North Kensington. They vary in scope: some overarching, some specific to a group, space, or time period. They also vary in their stages of development: some are already completed and deposited in an archive, some are under development, and some are planning to apply for funding for developing them. They also vary on the relationship they want to have with a potential NKSJA that is delivered with the involvement of RBKC: some would like to benefit from the long-term preservation opportunities this may bring, while others prefer to create the archives themselves and have access to some support such as training. Some organisations already had funding such as Heritage Lottery Fund to develop the archives, while others are planning to apply for funding.

The table below summarises some of these existing archiving initiatives. Note that this report does not mention to what extent these organisations would like to be involved in the NKSJA as some of them don't have a defined position on this and it may depend on the governance of the NKSJA.

Name of the archive	Scope	Stage of development	Physical archive location	Digital archive location
HistoryTalk – North Kensington Community Archive	This is the only archive that covers a wide diversity of social justice topics, groups and periods in North Kensington. See figure 4.1 for details on content.	Completed	RBKC Local Studies	Not digitised

Kensington Narrators ¹⁶	Community responses to Grenfell Tower fire	Completed	Bishopsgate Institute	A digital version was held by FerArts but the website is no longer working.
Maxilla Nursery	Maxilla Nursery	Completed	Bishopsgate Institute	http://maxillaarchive.com The digital archive is in a Wordpress (or similar) website. The hosting is being paid by one of the creators of the archive.
Troublemakers	Activism in North Kensington in 1960s/70s	Initiated and under development	They have some tapes and each of them may have paper-based materials.	They have created a wiki website and the content is fed by a google spreadsheet. They are initiating a Layers of London/Humap map.
Meanwhile Gardens	Meanwhile Gardens	Initiated.	The Factory in Meanwhile Gardens	Although there are some digitised photographs in their website (https://meanwhile-gardens.org.uk/history/16), there is not a digital archive.
Metronomes	Metronomes	Initiated.	The Factory in Meanwhile Gardens	

¹⁶ <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/research/centres/raphael-samuel-history-centre/north-kensington-archive-and-heritage-project>

Frestonia	Frestonia	They have the materials, but they are not classified or catalogued	At the home of one of the residents	Although there is a website about Frestonia (http://www.frestonia.org), that is a different initiative from the archiving initiative mentioned here.
Westway Trust Archive Forum	History of Westway Trust, North Kensington Amenity Trust and the previous years towards its formation.	Meetings have taken place		
Colville Community History Project and Tom Vague (Figures 4.2 and 4.3)	North Kensington / Colville.	Completed.	Tom Vague	Not digitised.
Beryl Foster Archive	Community printing press	Completed	British Library	
Mike Braybrook Archive	Community printing press	Completed	British Library	
Kelso Cochrane archive	Kelson Cochrane	Completed	Kensal Library	

Table 4.1: Community archives in North Kensington.

In addition to this, there are other community organisations, venues, groups or individuals that have created their own blog as a form of digital archiving. For example, the venue that existed under the Westway “The Flyover” has a Tumblr blog with all its archive: <https://www.tumblr.com/flyoverportobello>. There are also groups that have created their own interactive timeline or map, with explanations and photography: <https://www.westway23.org/westway-timeline.php>. There are also blogs that have a strong relevance for the recent history of the area, such as the Grenfell Action Group blog (<https://grenfellactiongroup.wordpress.com>), which should be digitally preserved.

There are other cultural organisations such as the Notting Hill Carnival and the Tabernacle (and many others) that the NKSJA needs to engage with. There are also various archives that have already been deposited at the British Library (in addition to those mentioned in table 4.1) such as an archive on the Moroccan community, that have records about North Kensington.

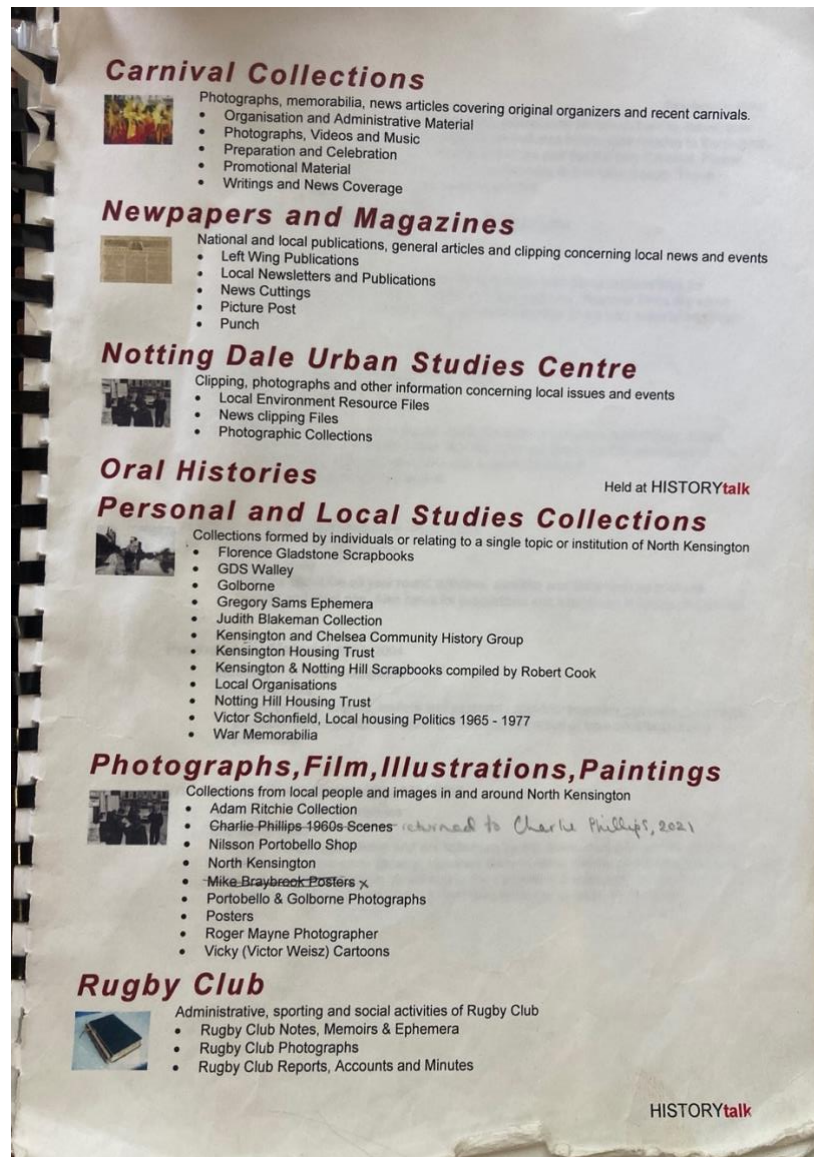


Figure 4.1: Contents of HISTORYtalk's North Kensington Community Archive, deposited at RBKC Local Studies Archive.



Figures 4.2 and 4.3: Colville Community History Project and Tom Vague's Archive.

Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission archive and potential overlaps and interaction. The Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission is looking at developing a “public digital archive and physical repository of the spontaneous memorials and commemorative tributes”¹⁷ and has appointed a Community Archivist for that purpose. This is also one of the 16 recommendations made by the Grenfell Tower Commission Report in November 2023: “The Commission recommends the development of an archive, working with experts including The National Archives. Some elements of the archive would potentially only be accessible to bereaved family members and survivors”¹⁸.

¹⁷ <https://www.grenfelltowermemorial.co.uk/archivist>.

¹⁸ Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission (2023). Remembering Grenfell: Recommendations and next steps to a memorial, p. 13.

https://media.grenfelltowermemorial.co.uk/public/attachment/Grenfell%20Tower%20Memorial%20Commission%20report_10Nov2023_1.pdf

During the next steps of the creation of the NKSJA there needs to be interaction with the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission on the documentation of the Grenfell Tower fire, as there might be some overlaps in the scope.

There are materials already in the RBKC Local Studies Archive, but it is necessary to develop an acquisitions policy on what could go in the NKSJA. In addition to History Talk's North Kensington Community Archive, which includes the collections shown in figure 4.1, RBKC Local Studies Archive is already looking after other materials related to social justice in the area. For example, searches on the RBKC Local Studies and Archives online catalogue¹⁹ show some results relevant to the NKSJA when searching key words such as 'community'. For example, "a collection of newscuttings used by the author of "The Politics of Community Action" (Jan O'Malley)" (ref MS 17216-17243), or a series of documents (community workshop and community notebook) related to the Motorway Development Trust (ref 21101), the organisation that Adam Ritchie, John O'Malley, and others created from the North Kensington Playspace Group to claim the space under the Westway for community use. There are many other materials that might not appear when searching 'community' and that might still be relevant for social justice in North Kensington. RBKC needs to thoroughly evaluate all its existing holdings to see what could be part of the NKSJA.

RBKC should build partnerships or collaborate with other archives that have materials related to social justice in North Kensington. Other archives such as the London Museum, the London Archives, the British Library, the Bishopsgate Institute, or the Black Cultural Archives have materials related to social justice in North Kensington. The NKSJA could cross-reference to those materials or explore

¹⁹ The RBKC Local Studies and Archives online catalogue can be found here: <https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/CalmView/Advanced.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog>. It has around 22,000 entries, but they do not have categories, and it is difficult to identify what type of materials are. A lot of it is material relating to properties in the area, such as mortgages and leases. There are some digitised photos.

other forms of collaboration (e.g. incorporating them to the digital collection of the NKSJA).

There are multiple existing oral history projects, testimonies, documentation projects, documentary films, and books that relate to social justice in North Kensington and could be included in the NKSJA (with permission from the authors). RBKC and the NKSJA need to search for these materials and build partnerships or agreements with their owners in order to ensure that the NKSJA is inclusive and reflective of local history. Some examples are listed below. This an incomplete list that comes from meetings with community groups and individuals, which would need to be expanded with further engagement:

- Book: Bagrove Jr, Ishmahil (2022) *The Frontline: A story of struggle, resistance and black identity in Notting Hill*. The book is based on interviews, which could be very good material for the archive.
- Book: O'Malley, Jan (1977, re-edited 2020) *The Politics of Community Action*.
- Book: Talsi, Souad (2022): *Breaking the violent silence: Transforming the lives of women who suffer domestic abuse*. The book explains stories and the work of the organisation Al-Hasaniya.
- Book: Herron, Samantha, in collaboration with Souad Talsi and Al-Hasaniya. *Dardasha: testimonies of migration by Moroccan women*.
- Book: Feather, Stuart (2014, re-edited 2016). *Blowing the lid: Gay Liberation, Sexual Revolution and Radical Queens*.
- Documentary film: *Grove Roots*. History of Ladbroke Grove.
- Exhibition (now website): The Real Faces of the Royal Borough: portraits and personal stories of “displacement, gentrification, and other housing injustices”: <https://www.facesoftheroyalborough.com>
- Video/recorded testimonies: Grenfell Speaks: <https://grenfellspeaks.com>
- Art and poetry: Poetry4Grenfell, by Kamitan Arts. <https://www.kamitanarts.com/poetry4grenfell/>

- Theatre piece: Dictating to the Estate, written by Nathaniel McBride. Documents the Grenfell Tower fire. There is also an unpublished part of the script that depicts the North Kensington Library campaign, which could be added to the archive too. <https://www.dictatingtotheestate.com>

North Kensington is a place that has had a diverse influx of people based on migration across different time periods. These migrant communities created their own support groups and social infrastructure, including the Law Centre, supplementary schools, support and advice organisations, and cultural centres. Some of these organisations still exist while some have disappeared. Each of these organisations (or individuals that were part of it) have documents that could contribute to the NKSJA. These include (this list is just an example and it is incomplete):

- Law Centre.
- Westway Information Centre, Citizen's Advice Bureau (closed).
- Black People Information Centre (closed).
- Unity (closed although Westway Housing Association is a legacy of it).
- Westway Housing Association.
- Al-Hasaniya: Moroccan Women Centre.
- Oremi Centre.

Groups need resources to complete some of the tasks of archiving, compiling testimonies and documenting: Some groups have unfinished projects that need funding and/or support to complete preparations for transfer to the NKSJA. Some organisations may need support printing digital material, others may need help sorting and cataloguing the information they have, others need support digitising items, and others need a digital and/or physical infrastructure that secures the preservation of the materials. Digital community archives are often hosted on websites paid for by an individual or group, which is lost once they stop renewing the hosting.

Recommendations:

The NKSJA should collaborate with existing community archives and documentation initiatives to bring them together under an umbrella NKSJA. It should clearly communicate the benefits of joining NKSJA, such as physical and digital preservation, professional expertise, infrastructure, outreach, public engagement, retention of community ownership and control, and training for material preparation to be deposited into the NKSJA.

To ensure preservation, professional expertise, and ongoing public/community engagement, secure long-term funding beyond a one-off allocation for sustained operation.

NKSJA should reach out to groups with significant documentation on social justice, even if they lack formal archives. This includes groups supporting migrant communities, some of which are no longer active, with materials held by former members.

RBKC should carry out a review of their holdings in the Local Studies Archive to see what materials they already have related to social justice in North Kensington. This includes the materials that communities or individuals have already deposited there or donated.

NKSJA can pilot this report's recommendations using materials already in the RBKC Local Studies Archive, including the HISTORYTalks North Kensington Community Archive and individual donations related to social justice. These collections should be transferred to NKSJA with the owners' permission when necessary.

Carefully allocate NKSJA resources to support and enhance existing local archives and collections. The archive should prioritise the value of the local community in its mission and purpose.

Building community cohesion through walks:

- Use walking in North Kensington to bring together community action and history, making it a key part of the social justice archive.
- Work with partners to create educational walks, particularly for young people.

- Use the everyday language of the local community in the archive.

4.2 Governance of the archives

Achieving the advantages of both a community archive and an institutional

archive: a community archive is generally managed by a community organisation, who are the custodians of materials, and have a community-led board or committee who are the decision-makers over what is done with the materials and how the archive is managed. One of the issues with a community archive is that lack of funding and other capacity issues often result in short-term storage and preservation strategies in comparison with an institutional archive, which often have digital preservation packages, and physical infrastructure with a controlled environment to preserve paper-based materials in the long term. Another issue is that community archives normally depend on the time of volunteers and needs to be continuously raising or applying for funding. In an institutional archive, the institution (in this case RBKC) is the custodian of the materials and have decision-making power over them. One advantages of an institutional archive is that there are staff in charge of cataloguing and taking care of the materials. In addition to that, when an institutional archive has a digital preservation system in place (which is one of this report's recommendations, building on the work of other local authorities such as Croydon, see section 4.4), this can bring the advantage of long-term digital preservation.

The decision on the governance model does not need to be binary and go for either fully community controlled or institutionally controlled. There is a diversity of hybrid models, in which community hold certain decision-making powers over the archives or certain collections, and the institution provides the staff, facilities and infrastructure to take care of the materials and ensure its preservation (both physical and digital). During the workshops, Andrew Flinn, Chair of the Community Archives and Heritage Group, shared with participants different models with examples:

- Fully independent community archive, such as George Padmore Institute and Archive, or the Black Cultural Archive. They have control

over the collections. They have external funding, but they have their own staff and volunteers. They have a board of trustees and a community-led governance.

- Community archive deposited/donated in an institution, such as the Huntley Archive and the Rukus! Archive, which are in the London Archives. In this case, the community organisation behind the archives and the institution where it is being deposited/donated sign a terms of agreement. This normally imply the appointment of “Friends of” bodies to advise on the treatment of the archive (cataloguing, access arrangements, events around archives). There is a shared decision-making between the institution and the community group.
- Partnership between community group and institution, such as the Working Class Movement in Salford: In this case, the funding and accommodation is provided by the local authority, and the staff is employed by the local authority, but the collections is held in Trust. There is a board of trustees and governance arrangements intended to maintain the ownership and ethos of the original collectors and owners.

The complexity in North Kensington is that there is not just one community archive and one community organisation to create a partnership with the institution. As previously mentioned, there are many community archive initiatives in North Kensington, all at different stages of development, and all with different views on the relationship that they would like to have with RBKC. This makes the partnership model more complex. However, there are some key principles and recommendations that emerge from the workshops:

A granular approach, in which each community archive can define the relationship they have with the NKSJA and RBKC: Since there are many community archiving initiatives and each of them have different views regarding the relationship they want to have with RBKC, it is not possible to have a one-fits-all approach to the relationship between each of the community archives and the

NKSJA and RBKC. The NKSJA community steering board (see recommendation on community steering board below) and RBKC can develop an acquisition policy and some template “terms of the agreement” that outlines different types of relationships, and then each community archive can choose one of these templates and enter a dialogue with RBKC and the NKSJA community steering board to tailor the agreement. These agreements can include options such as:

- The community archive is deposited (physical and/or digital materials) in the NKSJA, where RBKC will provide staff and ensure the preservation of the archive, but the community group retains ownership of the archive. The community group can organise public-facing activities (and have access to funding and support to do so) such as exhibitions, workshops and educational activities around the materials of the archive.
- The community archive (physical or digital materials) is donated to the NKSJA and transfers the ownership and control over the archive to the NKSJA.
- The NKSJA supports digitising and cataloguing of the materials of a community archive and this community archive becomes part of the NKSJA digital archive, while the community group retains ownership of the archive (and potentially retain the physical materials if they exist).
- Not all collections from community archives will eventually be deposited or donated, and supporting the communities to care for and provide access to their collections will be key.
- For those community archives, groups or individuals that do deposit their collections, the NKSJA (and their staff) should provide clear guidance and training on what this means, and future access and reproduction rights should be specified to ensure on-going trust in the relationship with RBKC and the NKSJA.
- Note that donating or depositing physical and/or digital materials have storage and cost implications that need to be considered when developing the acquisitions policy.

Based on the above, the NKSJA should be an engagement space (for activation of materials and creation) that acts as an umbrella of other community archives, as well as a physical and digital infrastructure for the preservation of paper-based and digital materials. The section on recommendations on the physical and digital infrastructure discuss the need to assess the feasibility and cost of storage.

The need for the creation of a community steering board (or equivalent) that has decision-making power over the NKSJA: the composition of the board needs to represent the diversity of North Kensington and include representation from different community groups, including those that have or are creating their own archives. This recruitment process needs to be done carefully and transparently. The board should have a constitution, should meet regularly, and the meetings should be minuted, and with actions. While the participation on the board is voluntary, the time spent on the board should be compensated to remove barriers to participation. The creation of a community steering board needs to be combined with further strategies for public participation, which expands the involvement of North Kensington communities.

Aside from this Discovery Phase, the participatory structure that exists is the Community Forum that meets every three months at the North Kensington Library. While this public forum can be kept to maintain a continuous dialogue with local communities, it is necessary to have a community steering board/committee that have a more formal structure, a wider representation of local communities and community archive initiatives, defined roles, decision-making power, and with more regular meetings to make this project happen.

This community steering board does not adopt any legal form at the beginning. It can just have a constitution and an agreement with RBKC on its role. The constitution

should explain the decision-making power of the community steering board over the NKSJA. The community can later decide whether it should adopt any legal form.

Issues to consider:

Various community groups have reservations on depositing their archive with RBKC because of previous relationships with the local authority. These issues need to be addressed, and it is important to dedicate time to improve relationships with these groups and make agreements that are beneficial to them and not extractive. Some community groups mentioned that it might be encouraging to join the NKSJA if they see that other community groups/archives in the area have also joined the NKSJA. So it can be good to pilot the terms of agreement with some community groups in order to motivate others to follow.

People who manage community archives as well as other community members have concerns on the fact that RBKC asks for payments to take photographs of materials in their Local Studies Archive. They are concerned that RBKC may make profit from the materials they are donating. These issues also need to be considered when drafting the template terms of agreement.

Communicate very clearly which are the benefits for community archives and individuals in depositing their materials with the NKSJA. These can include:

- Long-term preservation of physical and digital materials. And structures to make those archives securely accessible and available for public use, in line with community wishes and relevant legislation such as GDPR.
- Digital infrastructure they can benefit from.
- Ensuring that the initiative is funded and financially sustainable in the long term.
- Professional capability to maintain, manage and catalogue the archives.

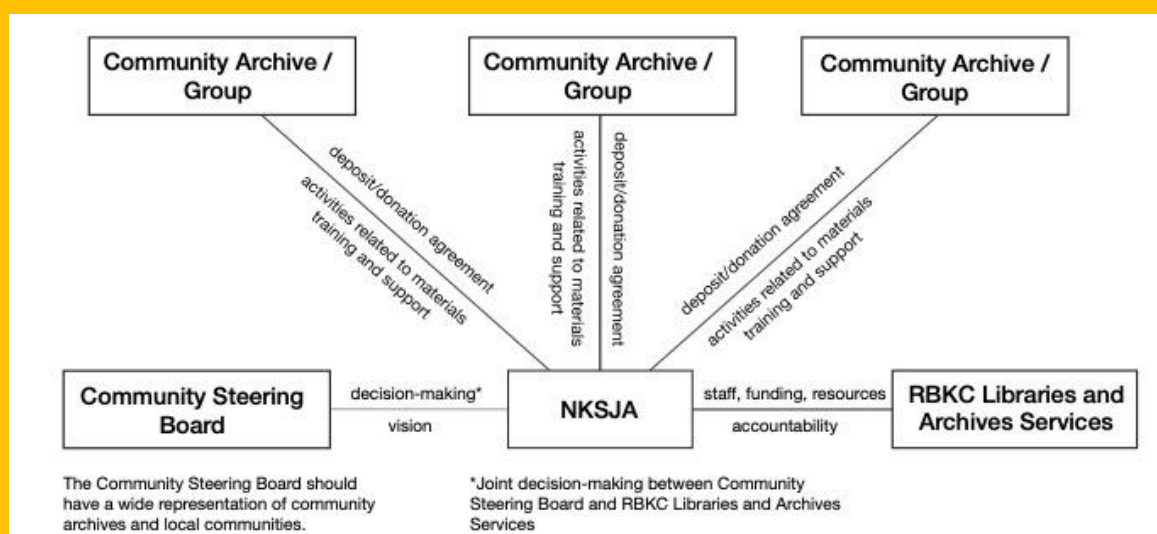
- Maintaining community control.
- Training opportunities.

Recommendations:

The NKSJA should serve as an engagement space for activating materials, acting as an umbrella for other community archives. It should provide both physical and digital infrastructure for preserving paper-based and digital materials.

Create a community steering board with decision-making power over the NKSJA. It should have a constitution, transparent recruitment for broad community representation, and defined roles. The board will collaborate closely with RBKC on NKSJA delivery and management. This community steering board does not need to be an incorporated organisation initially. The community can later decide whether it should adopt any legal form.

The recommended governance follows this diagram:



Allow for a granular approach in which each community archive can have tailored terms of agreement with NKSJA and RBKC. The community steering board and RBKC can prepare adaptable template agreements for each situation.

The NKSJA needs immediate, visible examples of community control and collaboration to build trust with local people, both past and present. The [Community Archives and Heritage Group](#) has a map with examples all over the UK that can inspire the NKSJA.

Consider how the NKSJA will sit alongside RBKC's existing archives and whether existing governance models and resources have capacity to support its unique needs. RBKC should research institutions holding distinct archives alongside other holdings and look for best practice models.

Clearly communicate to community archives and individuals the benefits of depositing materials with the NKSJA:

- Long-term preservation of physical and digital materials, with secure public access in line with community wishes and GDPR.
- Access to digital infrastructure.
- Long-term financial sustainability of the initiative.
- Professional capability to maintain, manage and catalogue the archives.
- Degrees of community control.
- Training opportunities.

Ensure these benefits are the stated purpose and deliverables of the archive, and that both RBKC and NKSJA are committed to achieving them.

Begin creating terms of agreement with some groups to pilot the NKSJA, motivating others to join. Consider timeframes and termination terms for these agreements, similar to materials on deposit.

Make clear the ways in which the governance of the NKSJA is meeting the aims as set out in the Key Decision Report and meeting the recommendations of this Discovery Phase.

Making the NKSJA durable through walking activities:

- Keeping the archive alive: The archive should be dynamic, not just a repository.
- Walking workshops: Regular (quarterly or half-yearly) walking workshops should engage with the archival material, shaping and defining the archive itself. These workshops serve as a fundamental review and evaluation tool, introducing new material and voices.
- Visible on the streets: The archive should be experienced on the streets of North Kensington through processions, memorials, and community gatherings.

- Guided and unguided walks: Create walks that provide direct access to the archive and memory, accompanied by images, videos, sound, and artwork.
- Archive keepers: Resource a group of 'archive keepers' who are social justice guides embedded in their own movements. This encourages chance encounters and perpetuates the living component of archives for social justice.

4.3 Physical infrastructure: space, location, and facilities

The NKSJA should be a curated space with rotating exhibitions of the archive materials following different themes, which is kept active, and which hosts many public-facing and educational activities, including engaging with schools. The space can also have dedicated computers and software to access the digital archive, as well as a space to go through paper-based materials. The building where this curated space is could also have storage to host a representative selection of the NKSJA, subject to feasibility of adapting a physical space for storage of materials that secure preservation. This curated space should be the main place for the NKSJA and should be in North Kensington.

The recommendation above provides a definition of the idea that many participants taking part in this Discovery Phase have of **what a NKSJA should be**:

1. A place for activating materials, exhibitions, public-facing and educational activities, creation, which brings together collections from many community archives in North Kensington.
2. A provision of physical and digital infrastructure, as well as specialist staff, to catalogue and securely preserve both paper-based and digital materials.

As the points below suggest, for delivering these two complementary visions it is necessary to **assess the current materials that the RBKC Local Studies Archive have that could be potentially transferred to NKSJA, and the potential to grow**

with new acquisitions and agreements with other community archives. This will give an idea of how much storage is needed and the space implications of new acquisitions.

Storage: It is important to evaluate the storage needs in the medium term (within the current allocated budget) and in the long term (with additional funding).

- A medium-term solution could include creating a small storage facility to host some key materials within the same building of the activating space of the NKSJA, and using some of the space available of the Local Studies Archive (RBKC needs to evaluate how much it could dedicate to the NKSJA).
- A long-term solution (which would need further funding) could involve that the NKSJA has a dedicated facility / space / building that includes activating spaces, access to digital collections, and storage facilities for all the NKSJA collections (see more details below on medium term and long-term solutions).

It is necessary to carry out a feasibility study that considers costs for a medium-term solution within the budget and long-term future aspirations (with further funding). Before carrying out a feasibility study, RBKC needs to evaluate the potential space needed to store the collections or materials related to social justice in North Kensington that they already hold (see earlier recommendation) and the potential for new acquisitions.

Location: These where the possibilities discussed for the location of the NKSJA:

- **North Kensington Library:** Yellow Room as the curated space for exhibitions, public-facing activities, and access to the digital archive. Given the ambitions discussed on the workshop, this might require not just intervention on the Yellow Room, but a radical rethinking of the

library to accommodate space requirements for exhibitions, digital displays, meeting space, performance space, and (if possible) some storage space²⁰. The abovementioned feasibility study needs to look at the scope and cost of this transformation, which includes finding a place that could be adapted as a small storage space for a selection of materials from the NKSJA. This would involve some capital funding in the adaptation of the building. One of the disadvantages mentioned was the poor accessibility of the library, which only has step-free access from the basement rather than directly from the street. Another disadvantage is that it would lose some sitting/study space or spaces for meetings, although the library already has the community room and the computer desks upstairs.

- **Other community space in North Kensington that already has funding to be built or could potentially have funding as part of other regeneration project.** Spaces mentioned were Maxilla City, in which own consultation process the idea of a Museum of North Kensington emerged²¹. Other space is the Venture Centre, which will get a larger space as part of the redevelopment of Wornington Green. Another option that was mentioned was the Canalside House, which is part of a regeneration area. The issue with these spaces is that have their own timelines for regeneration. Associating the NKSJA to these spaces brings the risk of delaying the NKSJA if the delivery of that space is delayed. Having a dedicated space also puts more pressure on staff. The NKSJA has budget for a full-time archivist and two part-time apprentices. If the NKSJA has a dedicated space outside an RBKC library, a large proportion of the time of the staff may risk being

²⁰ See example of what other local authorities have done, such as Newham's Barking Road Library, which is being transformed into archive and learning space: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/regeneration-1/canning-town-old-library>

²¹ <https://www.maxillacity.com/musuems>

focused on managing the space rather than on creating, cataloguing, and managing the archive.

- **Other spaces (some currently occupied with other uses, some empty) that have been traditionally associated with social justice in North Kensington and/or that were ‘lost’²²:** a dedicated facility, space or building in a space historically associated with social justice (the four spaces mentioned above also have an association to social justice), or as a survey response mentioned, a space that has been lost. Examples of buildings that have been lost include the place where the Westway Information Centre and Citizen's Advice Bureau used to be, currently occupied by a private school and a private chain café, the former Bramley Adventure Playground under the Westway (which belongs to the Westway Trust), the people's hall on Freston Road, or the Curve. There is a history of spaces related to social justice (see discussion in section 4.1) and support to communities that have been lost and could be recovered for the purpose of the archive.
- Other spaces/buildings mentioned were the Lighthouse building, which currently hosts the Museum of Brands and the Kensington and Chelsea Social Council (KCSC), and which in the past hosted a centre for people with HIV and AIDS.

These spaces mentioned above have a close relationship with social justice history in the area, which makes them relevant to hosting the social justice archive. From the budget and timeline perspective, **adapting a space at the North Kensington Library seems the most feasible approach for the medium-term solution, although a feasibility study needs to be conducted to explore the cost and scope of this adaptation to have further evidence. A long-term solution with further funding – and with the potential growth of the NKSJA with new**

²² When participants refer to a community space or a space related to social justice as ‘lost’, they mean that it no longer has a community use, or a use associated to social justice.

acquisitions – could explore the possibility of creating a dedicated facility, space or building for the NKSJA in some of the other buildings mentioned above.

In any case, this is a conversation that needs to be taken with the community through the participatory structures to be set up (i.e. the community steering board and wider engagement), and with the evidence provided by feasibility studies that explore the scope and cost of these medium-term and long-term solutions.

Long-term aspiration of a dedicated space or building for the archives: The reflection above indicates a potential long-term aspiration of having a dedicated space for the NKSJA, such as other archives like the Black Cultural Archives do. This is not feasible within the £1 million pound budget allocated to the project (the cost of the Black Cultural Archives was £7 million over 10 years ago²³), but could be taken as a long-term aspiration that would need further budget and fundraising. This building would store all materials related to social justice in North Kensington, as well as having a continuous public engagement programme with exhibitions, public-facing events, and educational activities. Establishing the medium-term solution can also help to indicate the next steps for the long-term aspirations. As discussed in one of the workshops: “start smaller and grow bigger”.

History trail: The archive should be taken to the public space and have a history trail with plaques and QR codes that can link to the digital archive. Organising public-facing activities and educational activities such as walks can create a dialogue and knowledge exchange about the history of the area.

Recommendations:

The NKSJA should feature a curated space with rotating themed exhibitions, hosting public and educational activities, including school engagement. It should

²³ <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2014/jul/29/black-cultural-archives-new-centre-brixton#:~:text=The%20total%20cost%20was%20£,including%20Bloomberg%20and%20Lambeth%20Council.>

store a representative selection of materials, subject to feasibility of adapting a physical space for storage of materials that secure preservation. The space should also have dedicated computers and software to access the digital archive, as well as a space to go through paper-based materials.

Location: this report has presented options for the location of the NKSJA: either at the North Kensington Library or at a newly created community space, which could be associated with other ongoing projects. While it is for the community to decide the location of the NKSJA, this report recommends establishing a medium-term access point to the NKSJA at the North Kensington Library. Additionally, it recommends conducting a feasibility study to determine what can be delivered within the budget at this space. This access point will aim to have the characteristics explained above.

The report recommends evaluating and adopting medium- and long-term locations:

- Medium-term location: begin with a medium-term location that fits within the current budget: a space at the North Kensington Library that includes exhibition space, digital collection access, and small storage facility (subject to feasibility and cost).
- Long-term aspiration: Once the NKSJA is consolidated, secure further funding for expansion or having a larger dedicated space to celebrate social justice in North Kensington, featuring activation spaces, digital collections access, and storage for the NKSJA.

Carry out feasibility studies for physical infrastructure considering both medium- and long-term scenarios to assess what fits within the existing budget, and the cost of future aspirations. These feasibility studies will inform location and scope of the NKSJA. Before carrying out the feasibility study, RBKC should evaluate the space needed for existing and potential new social justice collections.

Consider very carefully how resources are spent on physical infrastructure or feasibility studies, as these can typically drain resources quickly. Ensure significant community involvement in design, consultation, and procurement, with decision-making powers for the community steering group. Following the Public Services

(Social Value) Act 2012, NKSJA needs to consider how the procurement process can “improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area”.

The access point to the NKSJA and the website (see digital infrastructure) can point towards the location of other community archives that are not deposited at NKSJA and are held by other organisations or groups.

History trail: Create a public history trail with plaques and QR codes linking to digital resources. Train local community members to lead walking tours, offering historical exploration and contemporary reflection on the archive.

4.4 Digital infrastructure

The digital archive should reflect the governance structure of the NKSJA: This means that it should allow for different degrees of community control, and allow different community organisations to contribute to it²⁴.

A digital infrastructure that community archives and community groups can benefit from: rather than each community group paying for their own digital infrastructure, which does not guarantee long term preservation, the NKSJA could provide a digital infrastructure where communities can develop their own archive and contribute to the umbrella NKSJA.

A digital infrastructure that reflects the governance structure of the archive: For example, if the decision is to have the NKSJA as an umbrella for community archives, the digital infrastructure should reflect a distributed governance model that allows groups to create their own archive and at the same time contribute to the umbrella NKSJA. This provides the benefit of providing one digital infrastructure that is funded, maintained and ensure digital preservation without groups having to invest on this, and at the same time the NKSJA is crowdsourced through many

²⁴ Something like Mukurtu (<https://mukurtu.org/>) offers a CMS and archive function which allows for 'safekeeping' of community objects with community control over access.

contributions. The workshops explored the opportunities that the web 3.0 can bring to create a digital infrastructure that enables this distributed governance, such as the Solid Project presented by Jacob Rety (see chapter 3)²⁵. There are other groups such as the Troublemakers who are developing their archive over mapping platforms that enable this distribute approach, such as Layers of London (<https://www.layersoflondon.org>), which builds in Humap (<https://humap.me>), and allows different groups to contribute towards a map with different layers. Like Layers of London, there are other open-source tools that allow this collaborative mapping, such as the Memory Mapper (<https://memorymapper.github.io>). It is important to note that these platforms are not archives or storage systems, but with ways of engaging with publics. The digital objects that are placed in these platforms need to be managed for their long-term preservation (see relationship between the frontend and the back end below). The digital objects More interactive community engagement tools may develop in the coming years, and RBKC should ensure it is continually aware of new technologies to best engage communities – and should be responsive to community suggestions of best practice in this area.

Digital preservation: The chosen digital infrastructure needs to be built with digital preservation tools and systems integrated. The digital preservation system would need to work with the overall digital preservation strategy of RBKC.

The Sector Development Manager for London at The National Archives suggests that “rather than a digital preservation system being procured specifically for the NKSJA so that born-digital and digitised material can be actively preserved, RBKC should incorporate the digital preservation of any community collections into its wider planning for its digital preservation needs.” They “strongly suggest that the budget for this digital preservation system does not come out of the budget for the NKSJA. Should budget be taken out of this project for the digital preservation system and

²⁵ Note that only one option for digital infrastructure was presented. This does not mean that this report is prescriptive about using this digital infrastructure. The aim was to foster the conversation about how a distributed digital infrastructure could be.

capacity the archive service needs anyway, this could undermine communities' trust in the project." They "see no practical reason for a digital preservation system being acquired solely for the NKSJA project as well as a separate one for the archive service's wider needs. This would be a duplication of systems and mean twice the ongoing costs."

Relationship between the backend and the frontend: The backend of the digital infrastructure is the collection management system which has the digital preservation system integrated within it. The frontend should be an accessible website that it is easy to navigate, and which retrieves information from the backend that can be made publicly available. Some things to consider:

- **Flow of information from the backend to the frontend**²⁶: the London Museum has put in place a system that retrieves information from its collection management system into their website.
<https://www.londonmuseum.org.uk/collections/>
- **Flow of information from the frontend to the backend**: if there is a frontend website such as the Layers of London one (or another equivalent system where community groups can contribute to by adding items on their layer), it would be necessary to explore how this item introduced by a community group in the frontend website can become an item in the collection management system. This would need to be moderated and the technical feasibility of it needs to be studied (see recommendation below on feasibility study).
- **Moderation and criteria to be added to the archive**: with a distributed system where community groups can add their own items,

²⁶ Some archive systems operate both a front end and backend CMS type approach - CALM does this at the very technical level for archive services (with a digital preservation software integrated) but also something more open access like Omeka offers front end access and construction of exhibitions and pathways with a backend CMS approach that again could be integrated with a digital preservation / digital archive.

this would need moderation and a set of criteria to approve content to be included into the collection of the NKSJA.

- **Collection management system that reflects a community-led archive:** the London Museum has incorporated in the collection management system a description of the item by the community group or individual who deposited it. This is one example of how the collection management system could reflect the community-led nature of the archive.
- **A visual and accessible website:** The frontend website needs to be very visual and have different ways of searching (place, time, etc.).

Need of a feasibility study to look at the technical feasibility and cost of the recommendations above: given the complexity of the recommendations explained above, it is necessary to carry out a feasibility study to explore whether is technically feasible to develop this digital infrastructure, and what would be the cost. This will also have to take account of the RBKC Libraries and Archives Services' needs and how this integrates in with their systems as ultimately they will have to manage it.

Recommendations:

Create a digital infrastructure that community archives and community groups can benefit from, ensuring long-term preservation. This allows them to create their own archives while contributing to the umbrella NKSJA digital archive. The digital infrastructure should reflect the governance structure adopted by the NKSJA, exploring innovative digital solutions.

Put in place digital preservation systems and tools. The Sector Development Manager for London at The National Archives suggests that "rather than a digital preservation system being procured specifically for the NKSJA so that born-digital and digitised material can be actively preserved, RBKC should incorporate the digital preservation of any community collections into its wider planning for its digital preservation needs." They "strongly suggest that the budget for this digital preservation system does not come out of the budget for the NKSJA. Should

budget be taken out of this project for the digital preservation system and capacity the archive service needs anyway, this could undermine communities' trust in the project." They "see no practical reason for a digital preservation system being acquired solely for the NKSJA project as well as a separate one for the archive service's wider needs. This would be a duplication of systems and mean twice the ongoing costs."

Create an accessible, easy-to-navigate website linked to the digital archive collections. Ensure continuous investment to prevent digital obsolescence.

Conduct a feasibility study to assess the technical feasibility and cost of the digital archive recommendations.

Ensure community involvement in decisions about digital infrastructure. Following the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, NKSJA needs to consider how the procurement process can "improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area".

4.5 Continuously involving communities in contributing to the archives and activating the archives: support they need

Community artists, local people involved in the cultural sector, and community groups should support the activation of the archives, both in the present day while the (physical and digital) archives are being created, and once the archives are delivered. This means that it is not necessary to wait various years to see the NKSJA being delivered. The NKSJA can start existing immediately by involving local artists and other local people and groups to develop activities related to the materials in the archives. And then continue with these activities when the archives are delivered. The workshops and meetings demonstrated that one of the main interests of local communities is keeping the archives active. These activities need be resourced and those who deliver them need to be paid for their work. It could be done through open calls. The North Kensington Library can be a space to

start organising these activities. As an example, Hackney Archives²⁷ do a lot of work with communities including co-curation (and they have a Friends of the Archive²⁸ membership charity that supports the work of Hackney Archives).

Organise educational activities involving schools and young people. As part of the public-facing programme mentioned above.

Support existing documentation projects to be completed: there are community groups or artists that have started documentation projects but that need support to be completed. Again, this could be supported through an open call.

Support those groups and individuals that have a lot of materials to catalogue it and digitise it, including adding it to the digital archive.

Upskill communities to create their own archives. Some communities want to create their own archives, and they would like training opportunities to learn how to do so. This could be part of the activities of the NKSJA, involving organisations that provide this type of training, involving organisations that provide this type of training²⁹.

²⁷ <https://hackney.gov.uk/archives>

²⁸ <https://hackneyhistory.org>.

²⁹ Decolonising the Archives and at times the Black Cultural Archives have offered archive upskilling courses and workshops. Community Archives and Heritage Group could be involved but has more limitations because it is run by volunteers. CAHG would be happy to be involved also but there are some limitations in terms of volunteer time. The Digital Preservation Coalition can also run digital preservation workshops. Some community archives have seen running their own workshops as a way of empowering their own communities.

Recommendations:

Begin building awareness of the NKSJA before launching the physical and digital archives through public-facing and educational activities. Involve local artists, cultural sector workers, and community groups to build trust and increase local awareness.

Integrating spatial justice practice through walking:

- Develop walking as an archive to explore and understand different places, especially those that are often overlooked or forgotten.
- Have local social justice leaders or storytellers guide the walks.
- Commission a series of spatial prompts (interventions in the public realm) based on items in the archive to inspire thought and discussion during the walks.

Support community groups and artists in completing their ongoing documentation projects.

Support groups and individuals with extensive materials in cataloguing and preparing them for depositing and digitising them for inclusion in the digital archive.

Upskilling communities to create their own archives.

Ensure equality and fair pay for community artists, cultural sector workers, and community groups supporting the archives, both during delivery and after, according to national and regional standards³⁰.

Commission and resource new projects which use innovative methods to curate and access the archive.

Following the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, consider how procurement processes can “improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area”.

³⁰ See [Art Council England's document on Equality and Fair Pay](#), as well as guidelines on rates of pay of relevant trade unions such as [Artists' Union England](#).

4.6 Next steps

Building on the previous finding and recommendations, this report recommends the following next steps:

Recommendations:

Next steps:

- Create a community steering board to represent the wider community.
- Develop a strategy for further engagement, with a programme of activities that widens participation.
- Conduct feasibility studies on digital infrastructure and physical space adaptation for exhibitions, public events, and storage.
- Draft templates for terms of agreements with community archives or groups to establish a relationship with the NKSJA.
- Organize public activities to engage with the archive materials before the physical and digital archives are ready.
- Pilot the NKSJA with the collections already at the Local Studies: cataloguing and building the digital archive.
- Develop agreements with community archive groups to expand the catalogue and the digital archive.
- Deliver the NKSJA medium-term space within the budget, including a curated space, small storage facility (subject to feasibility/cost), and dedicated computer and software access to the digital archive.
- Launch the space with a programme of activities that involves and is driven by community groups, community archives, community artists, local curators, and schools.
- Once established, seek funding for a more ambitious project that can provide the NKSJA its own building or space.