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The Set Up

We anticipate that not everybody will be interested in all aspects of the project so it will be broken down into its constituent parts with dedicated groups of volunteers, assisted where necessary by interns from the Universities and professionals. The targets and budgets agreed with the Heritage Lottery Fund will be delegated to these groups who will report back regularly to a Project Management Team.

The Website

Maraid Design have designed a dedicated website for the project. This will provide a portal to the archive material we research as well as making it accessible to a wider public through video, narrative and a selection of the most interesting aspects of the research. The site is nearly ready to go public as we load the material we already have, to make it interesting enough to get people involved. We have also created Facebook Groups for all the 4 research areas (google 'York Greenways' and follow the links).

Branding

We commissioned Studio Belly Timber to create a 'brand' which will ensure a recognizable identity across the website and all our publicity. That is now our icon at the top.

Research

This will be realised in stages. Initially we have been lucky to get the services of a PhD student from York University, Sophie Vohra, an expert in Railway History and the ways it is celebrated. Her task as an intern was to set up a research framework that is transferable to all the other research areas within the project. This was done in conjunction with York Explore and Maraid Design. She then undertook a scoping exercise to identify potential sources of railway material. Thanks Sophie, great work.

York Explore will host an archiving training day early in December once we have a core team of researchers lined up. In the meantime Kit Bennett is loading archive material, initially from Bishopthorpe Local History Group, and you will shortly be able to see that on line. Anyone interested in getting involved as a researcher (training given) please contact Peter at hello@yorkgreenways.org.

Interns and Placements

As well as Sophie – whose internship was restricted to 40 hours and has now ended – we have submitted 'wish lists' to the University of York, York St John and Askham Bryan College. These will be advertised to students in the relevant departments. Peter has had a stall at York St John's Student Volunteering Fair and is visiting York College, the University of York and Asham Bryan over the next couple of weeks.

Railway History

Apart from students we are now looking for interested volunteers. We already have a response from one lady who was born and brought up in railway cottages along the route and the York Railway Appreciation Society will be raising the project at their next meeting. We have also been in touch with the North East Railway Society and York Civic Trust. We can't understand the impact of the

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railway without knowing what went before and Fishergate, Fulford and Heslington Local History Society have agreed to undertake research on the river traffic between Selby and York.

The Selby Coalfield

This aspect of the project is being supported by the National Coal Mining Museum near Wakefield. Now the research framework is in place we will be looking for volunteers interested in looking into the history of this short-lived venture, the initial optimism of the 'super-pit', the miners strike and the untimely closure.

The National Cycle Network & Solar System Greenway

The purchase of the rail line by Sustrans, the construction of the path and the addition of the Solar System Greenway is well documented and many of those involved are still in contact. The aim here will be to locate and categorise the varied items of interest which are scattered in a number of locations. We are already in contact with key players and much intriguing archive material is held in the archives of Bishopthorpe Local History Group. Again, volunteers welcome.

Natural History

Improving the biodiversity of the path is one of York Greenways main concerns and records of the wildlife along what is now a 'Green Corridor' were made from time to time from the start. Locating these records will enable us to devise a history of the impact of the changing maintenance and management regimes over the years

Oral History

As well as locating and categorising existing archive material we want to add to the record by means of an oral history programme. We are building a list of potential interviewees with interesting memories and will be providing equipment and training for a programme of oral history recording, both audio and visual. We now have the equipment and expert help and will be conducting pilot interviews shortly

Interpretation Boards

We have funds for permanent interpretation boards which will be created towards the end of the project. In the meantime there will be temporary boards at key locations to be erected with help from Brunswick Organic Nursery in September.

Artwork and Media

Degree students from the Department of Contemporary Crafts and Graphic Arts at York College have started producing concepts for themed artwork through the winter terms for display – both temporary and permanent – in the spring and summer. With artwork on the bridges along the path the Greenway will become a linear art gallery. We will be meeting the students this week.

We are also working with street artists to cooperate on a project to create quality artwork in areas spoilt by tagging though some of the recent work is of high quality and we hope the authorities will leave it alone. If the unknown artist(s?) would contact us we would be happy to talk about future cooperation.

Early plans for digital media had to be dropped to keep within funding limits but we will be looking for additional sources of funding to pursue some of these very exciting initiatives.

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We will be recording events on still and moving cameras with a view to editing into documentary film at the end of the project and Dave Thorp has allowed us to use his astonishing CGI re-creations on our website.

Public Engagement

We are fortunate in having York CVS agreeing to employ a Project Worker on our behalf. With the research framework well under way, their main aim will be to support the engagement of the public in the project through talks, visits and practical involvement. Discussions are under way with Get Cycling and Bike Belles to develop a programme of events and activities aimed particularly at those groups presently less involved in cycling or walking.

The Schools Programme

A key element of the engagement strategy will be the schools programme and we have already had a 'launch' day for those 110 children from the three local schools who will be Year 5 next year. The project themes will be integrated into numerous parts of their curriculum culminating in a Pageant in the summer and a teaching pack. We have met the Year 5 teachers and will be developing the programme with them.

If any of the above is of interest to you we would love to have you involved.

You can find out more on the website and contact us by way of

hello@yorkgreenways.org

If you have a story to tell we would love to hear it. Let us know at

hello@yorkgreenways.org