

Forest Hill Library bid from V22 and Community Consortium

This bid has been put together by V22, The Forest Hill Society, The Forest Hill traders' Association and interested individuals. Feedback of what the wider community would like, as well as their concerns, information from the tender pack and Lewisham council, has informed this bid. We understand, however, that this is an important undertaking, both for the council and these organisations, as well as for the community now and in the future. Should we be the chosen provider from the tender exercise, we would look forward to working closely with the community and with Lewisham Council in order to better understand and tailor our objectives to those of the council and the residents of Lewisham whom the library serves.

Please note: This is not the full bid document. Certain sections have been removed to protect privacy of individuals and to remove any financial details in the bid.

The library does more than simply loan books. It underpins every community. It is not just a place for self-improvement, but the supplier of an infrastructure for life and learning, from babies to old age, offering support, help, education, and encouraging a love of reading.

- The Sieghart Independent Library Report for England (18/12/2014)

Introduction

We believe that running a successful community library in Forest Hill will be about having the experience and skills necessary to manage and maintain a listed building, making the best and most appropriate use of the space to generate revenue, working with the community to provide essential support, volunteering time and community guidance, and staying true to a vision of providing community benefit and a valuable resource for learning.

Incorporating local residents and associations within a joint management committee to run the library will bring confidence that the local community is fully committed and involved with the continued running of the building. The community is the ideal seat for an ongoing dialogue on service provision, ensuring service provision remains current with local requirements, public engagement, and the long-term development of community-based services.

This partnership bid brings together V22's considerable experience of renovating, maintaining and transforming buildings, and operating them for arts and community benefit, with representatives from the Forest Hill Society, Forest Hill Traders' Association, and experienced individuals. Together we bring considerable collective experience of building management, a deep-seated local knowledge, a wealth of community contacts and goodwill, and experience of making civic improvements for the benefit of local residents. We believe this bid combines an exceptional team that will be well placed to provide library services; to find, motivate and manage the local volunteers so essential to running a community library; and to build upon the core services of a library to make it a true community space run for and by the community - building upon the needs, interests and aspirations of the people of Forest Hill.

Proposed use of the building. Provide details of the proposed use of the building including:

a) Which building the proposal relates to.

This proposal is for a new community management plan for the Forest Hill Library on Dartmouth Road, SE23.

b) The use of the building, and the services that would be delivered.

A well-maintained and well-run public library is the core offer of our tender to run the new Forest Hill Community Library. In addition, we aim to offer extra content and services that will be best suited to the local community and help to increase the number of people regularly visiting and using the building, extending the library into an even more vibrant and attractive community hub. With V22 running Louise House and the rear Laundry space next door as a specialist art and community centre, it means that the space available for extra services within the wider library offering is greatly expanded and enhanced. We see the Library as playing a key part, together with Louise House and the Forest Hill Pools, in a community hub for the advancement of art, education and the personal and physical wellbeing of local residents. This vision ties in with Lewisham Council's aspirations for these three spaces to be linked as an important and inviting public space.

We believe the continuing provision of library services is essential to the community, especially for such a well-used library as the one in Forest Hill. We would commit ourselves to a continuation of the library services but would like to grow the collection in the direction of a few specialist collections. To compliment the art centre at Louise House we would aim to build a specialist art section. We would do this not only through the Council's library services and collection but through our own strategy for increasing the store of specialist art books. We hope that in addition to the core provision, the contribution of a specialist art library will get more people, young and old, interested in art. With a concentration on the practical side of art in Louise House and the theoretical and historical in the Library, we believe the two buildings together could offer a unique and important offering in terms of a civic art and community centre that would also serve as an additional attraction in Forest Hill. From the community studio events space in the old Laundry at Louise House, V22 and the Library will host talks and symposia, as well as small classes. These would be linked to the library and would host events for specialists as well as beginners, for children and older people and anyone with an interest in learning more about art. The talks and events will build upon our core community offering presented at Louise House. Complementing the use of the community space to the rear of Louise House we would like to present a programme of events to encompass a host of community activities and interests in the library itself.

From the very beginning one of our key anchor tenants will be The Philosophy Foundation. They are committed to working with us on building up a specialist philosophy section in the library and to running events in both the library and the rear Laundry spaces. We aim to work with future anchor tenants to create core service offerings.

Following discussions and research with other libraries and their users, there are a number of specific activities that would work well to extend the library offer. Popular activities and services that have been provided in other locations include: Ancestry Sessions (Biggin Hill); Lego Club (Mottingham); Code Club (Croydon); Mobile Recycling Service (Peckham); Toddler Takeover (East Dulwich); Tax Advice Service (Northampton); Tool Library (formerly at Peckham).

We would use the additional rooms to the front and rear of the library as studios and workspace areas, rented out to carefully selected tenants in order to increase our community offering, but also to generate a long term revenue stream. V22's waiting list at Louise House is long; a studios, workspace and residency programme at the library will provide further affordable workspace for local artists and creative businesses and will contribute to paying for the core services of the library so that the building can be sustainable from the start and into the long term. We would aim to reinstate the writer-in-residence programme. This writer would contribute to activities and events held in the library and children's library.

We are very impressed with the number of services and activities that the library currently presents for children and young people (38% of visitors are under 18), and we will work with the Council to continue this provision of services. The children's library will be maintained in its current location and the plan is to improve the stock provision to improve contacts with and usage from local schools and to provide more talks from local children's authors. Other extra specialist events and provision for local children will be maintained and enhanced. We will bring authors (and especially children's authors) into the building, and work with local schools to provide curricula-relevant lessons and improve access for local children. We would also work with neighbouring Holy Trinity Primary School and other local schools, on the rear garden space and use this in conjunction with the outdoor and event space in Louise House in order to present activities across these spaces. The services currently offered for young people will continue to benefit the locals of Forest Hill and foster the existing strong sense of community we have come to value in the area.

The bank of computers and internet provision will be maintained and we will look to work with a local computer specialist organisation to maintain and improve the computer infrastructure. We recognise that access to the internet is an essential provision from those on low incomes and those who are out of work. We plan to provide extra help with IT and basic computer skills.

Forest Hill Library, Louise House and Forest Hill Pools form an important row of civic buildings. V22 is currently establishing new public realm space in the front of Louise House and the Library. The delivery of a cohesive community strategy across these sites will complement the successful offering of the pools and create an important civic offering to the heart of Forest Hill in its burgeoning 'cultural quarter'.

c) The length of the lease that you are seeking (note that the Council anticipates the maximum length of lease to be 25 years but will consider requests for a longer term on an exceptional basis).

We would find a 25 year lease acceptable. We believe that on a shorter lease we would struggle to raise funding especially for larger capital projects. V22 would like the Council to consider a lease term of 125 years that would neatly tie in with V22's lease of Louise House. This would allow V22 to co-ordinate the management of the two buildings for the long-term ensuring that both buildings are able to offer a co-ordinated and more economical offering to the local community. It would assist greatly in funding applications and raising finance in the future and would ensure that two important civic buildings are co-ordinated in their community offering, sustainably, for the future of Forest Hill and its residents. It is proposed that the Lease would be subject to a Management Agreement that ties in the participation and interests of local groups integral to this partnership bid (see following section) in order to ensure that our core mission stays on course.

d) If relevant, the estimated number of residents benefiting from each of the services identified and what the community benefit will be.

The continued involvement of the community is integral to this bid as represented by the two strongest local associations of community members: the Forest Hill Society and Forest Hill Traders Association. Community benefit is intrinsically built into our bid structure. A Management Agreement is proposed to provide a basis for regulating the future management of Forest Hill Community Library and the relationship between V22 Foundation as the proposed lessee and the local community groups including: V22 London, the Forest Hill Society, the Forest Hill Traders' Association, and a new group - Friends of the Forest Hill Library. This Management Agreement (please see draft enclosed) will set out the core focus and aspirations for the library and specify that a member of each association will sit on the management committee of the Forest Hill Community Library alongside V22. As partners in this bid, our aspirations are currently shared and we will be working on structures to ensure that these shared aspirations are

consulted on by the community and also written into how we manage the community library in the long term: by the community, for the community.

Working in partnership to provide community-led initiatives, operated by local residents and carefully selected delivery partners, we intend to give an even greater sense of ownership of the new Forest Hill Community Library to the local community.

Current book-borrowing numbers at Forest Hill are higher than average for the borough and have not suffered as much decline as the local or national average, indeed according to the library survey Forest Hill Library footfall was up 17% to more than 14,000 visitors in the year to November 2014 (most recent data). Without cutting any of the services currently supplied, but increasing the range of activities and services on offer, we feel we can expand further on this number of visitors.

We would offer a patronage scheme for 'Friends of Forest Hill Library', with benefits for Friends throughout Forest Hill, with over 40 independent shops in the town already committed to offering discounts to anyone joining this new scheme. This will increase community cohesion and shows the level of support the business community has for our unique bid. The Forest Hill Traders' Association will be able to use their prominent signage in the middle of Forest Hill, as well as inside the shops themselves, to increase awareness of services at the library, and the Forest Hill Society can call on its strong and loyal membership base to support the community library in diverse ways.

Across V22's public programme for the past ten years, it has attracted audiences numbering in excess of 30,000 visitors, shown the work of nearly 1,100 artists, and partnered with more than 1,600 artists and organisations to present events. Our long term goals for our public space in Louise House and the Laundry are ambitious and we want to become an important cultural attraction for Forest Hill. Our work with the local community on this bid has strengthened our foundations in the community and we hope that we can build upon these in the creation of this dynamic new civic space.

e) An identification of the key risks and factors that will affect delivery and/or cost.

Funding Shortfalls

The building needs a certain amount of work done to it. Some works are being done currently through V22's programme of works to the Library and Louise House, but for others funding will need to be secured. There are a number of sources of funding available to cultural and community initiatives such as these and V22 has a strong track record of both securing funding for the short term and running ongoing self-financing initiatives. The partnership with Forest Hill Society and Forest Hill Traders' Association is key to securing essential community support. We believe a crowd-funding initiative as well as a Friends scheme will be successful given the exciting nature of the project and the inclusivity of its delivery partners.

With the help of local volunteers, a dedicated manager, and some shared staffing support with V22's management of Louise House, as well as the ongoing support of the Council's library services, the management of the library can be largely self-financing through space rental, with additional programming and community events supplemented by external funding and community support.

The events model is scalable and programming budgets can be cut back should the need arise. This will not reduce the number of events on offer to the community but rather the financial support we could offer visiting artists, the writer in residence programme, and community projects over and above the use of the space and the assistance of V22 expertise and community support.

Costs of buildings administration and management (an otherwise substantial overhead for stand-alone premises) is shared with Louise House and partially covered within the V22 buildings portfolio. Financial Management systems in place mean that the enterprise can be assessed regularly by experienced practitioners so that adjustments, scaling and business management can happen in good time.

Detailed budgets and accounts are kept by V22 book-keeper and Accounts Manager, Max Hitchings. Max deals with day to day accounts with the overall financial management being overseen by V22's Finance Director, Gazala Jaweed. V22 is also subject to an annual external audit, to the standards of ISDX Markets. V22's appointed auditors are Fryza Bannister.

Managing Director, Tara Cranswick, will closely monitor all expenditure to ensure a smooth cash-flow. V22 completes a monthly cash flow analysis to monitor the Group's position on all buildings, and this would include the library.

The various levels of the V22 Group structure means that the project benefits from considerable expertise and access to forms of funding.

Leasehold Terms

As outlined above we are very interested in talking with the Council about obtaining a lease with a term of 125 years to match the term of the lease recently granted for Louise House. Having a lease with the same term would allow V22 to co-ordinate management of the two buildings into the long term making both buildings more economical and hence increasing the ability to improve the offering to the local community.

We would like a lease that offers some degree of flexibility so that we can make changes with the times to reflect the changing needs of the community and to keep pace with the constant changes in technology into the future.

Listed Building Requirements

We are concerned about possible future capital requirements to enable step-free access to the front entrance (should there be a change in law) and similar requirements that might be imposed by changes in legislation that would not be economically viable to complete in a listed building; especially one where the potential of generating additional income is so limited.

Inclusivity

It has been a particular concern of the local community fighting to preserve library services within the council offering, that any other organisation may not be as inclusive as a council-run initiative.

The very ethos of V22 and its shared ownership structure is that art and education should be for everyone regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or parental status, class, sexuality, disability, age, religious beliefs, health or HIV status.

V22 believes that it is wrong to hinder equality of opportunity and that passive policies will not in themselves provide equality of opportunity for artists and organisations, other participators, potential and actual employees. V22's vision is of a fair society where artists, local people and communities are able to shape their future, be independent, and concentrate on their aims and visions for the future. We believe that the diversity and independence of the arts sector give it a unique role to play in responding to the complex needs of our society.

As in all of our arts centres and creative clusters, we aim to work with the local council to ensure that we respond to any particular policies in place which are specific to the local area and to encourage all the artists, creative partners and networks with which we work to do the same.

Since being awarded the tender for Louise House, we are very pleased to have developed a good relationship with the Council and the local community. We believe that our partnership with the community will ensure that we remain open and receptive to all, that any issues arising around equal opportunities, diversity or inclusivity, can be dealt with in a timely fashion from within the partnership, and that together we can make this our mission well into the future. Please find attached V22's existing Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy; we look forward to working with our new partners and the council on a policy tailored to the library and its specific needs.

f) Details of how a community library service will be offered within the building

The currently under-utilised space at the front of the library, as well as the room currently reserved as an audio/visual area can be let to local artists, creative entrepreneurs and businesses. This allows us to not only form key relationships with chosen tenants to support the library offer, but enables a much needed revenue stream to afford a dedicated manager for the library. This manager will work with volunteers and V22 staff to deliver the library services as well as events and programmes which compliment this core offering.

Key aims of our bid include:

1. To create a re-energised library that will partner with cultural and educational organisations to provide opportunities to children and adults alike to improve their literacy, education, prospects and sense of community.
2. To provide a library service that is a natural complement and partner to primary and secondary schools and to partner with them to offer a greater range of support and services.
3. To be a core provider of IT and 'Digital Education' – it is estimated that 20% of the population still have no digital technology at home and far more fail to understand how to make the most of what they do have (Sieghart Report Dec 2014). It will be our intention to provide greater access to and education on digital technology in a bid to make the community not only digitally literate, but digitally fluent.

Go-On Lewisham report that 67,500 adults in Lewisham do not have the five Basic Digital Skills needed to succeed in our evolving digital age and 22% of Lewisham small businesses do not feel confident using the internet. We have already established a dialogue with Go-On Lewisham and have made clear our intent to work with them so that the Library can become a key location for improving this digital skills base.

4. To specialise in certain fields: by partnering with V22 at Louise House, The Philosophy Foundation, and future 'anchor tenants', we have an opportunity to create specialist sections of the library and present a host of specialist events that will also attract members of the public from across London and the UK.
5. We aim to provide a 'universal service' and deliver services fairly and equally, to engage with minority groups within the community, e.g. providing books for those who do not have English as a primary language; providing help for job seekers; for the elderly, etc. We would also like to build on existing services offered to the blind and partially sighted.
6. The Arts Council has carried out research which recommends, in its paper *Guiding Principles For Local Authorities*, that if libraries are to move out of local authority control they should be run by

members of the community in which they exist. It notes that community run libraries are most adept at recruiting volunteers and raising funds and that their visions are long-term, with better understanding of generating new activities, services and income streams. It is our aim to be a leading example of such an organisation, with highly valued volunteers driving initiatives and engagement.

7. Protection of current opening times, clubs and services.

Book Strategy for Forest Hill Library

Books are the most important asset of any library. Even in the era of Kindles, cheap books on the Internet, and an internet reference section greater than anything imagined in an encyclopaedia, books are important to a community.

Two groups remain major users of libraries: young children learning to read, and older people with a little more leisure time to read books. However, we believe books are for everybody and library books can play an important role for all students, no matter what age, and speakers of English as a second language wishing to improve their vocabulary skills.

Many local residents have been concerned about the reduction in borrowing figures from other community libraries, and this is part of our core strategy behind running a library – minimising the reduction in borrowing over the next 5-10 years.

To achieve this we are considering a number of approaches:

1. Working with primary and secondary schools as key stakeholders to ensure school visits remain part of the curriculum, especially from the close neighbours (Holy Trinity, Eliot Bank, Kelvin Grove, St Georges, Horniman Primary, Forest Hill School and Sydenham School).
2. Maximising stock levels with a good variety of books and some of the classic most popular books for children and adults.
3. Creating small specialist collections that bring in more people, including those from further afield.
4. Encouraging donations of non-English language books (primarily for children) that may be difficult to access in England, this would encourage use by families whose first language is not English. This will allow them to pass on non-English language stories to their children, as well as encouraging them to read more in English too, to help them build up further confidence with the English language.

Our specialist collections will be designed to complement the work of our partner organisations. The first will be books on Art for use by Forest Hill's growing artistic community and particular by artists working in Louise House. With an Art library we wish to inspire but also to provide serious analysis of art and art history.

The second specialist collection would relate to philosophy – from Ancient Greek to 21st century philosophy. This would not just include Great Works but practical philosophy as well, ranging from historic to contemporary philosophers. Part of the collection would also include philosophy books for children and teenagers, as well as books for teachers doing philosophy in schools and picture books that have philosophical questions within them for younger children. These books would complement the work of The Philosophy Foundation but also provide a deeper understanding of philosophy for students and adults wishing to explore philosophical concepts further.

These specialist collections do not need to be large and we would adjust the size available according to demand, but we believe that encouraging value to be placed on such collections in the community will bring in different users of the library who may not have considered using them.

Core to all of these book strategies is increasing stock levels, primarily through donations. We wish to ensure that donated books are available for including in the collections (assuming they are in good condition and of interest to the general public). Other donated books could be sold in the library, but we want to focus on book lending, not sales. Rather than devoting too much space to second hand books for sale, we would prefer to build up a stock and have a book fair with second hand books and publications from independent publishers several times a year.

Capacity

Provide details of the lead organisation that would be responsible for entering into the lease and overall management of the building or buildings and details of partnerships and other arrangements that would be in place to deliver the services and activities.

a) The name of organisation

ABOUT V22

V22 is a multifaceted art organisation, with a shared ownership model, which specialises in the collection of contemporary art, the production of exhibitions and events, the provision of artists' studios, workspaces and artisans' workshops at affordable rates, and the running of community engagement and education programmes.

V22's mission is to build a new kind of art institution. Through V22's shared ownership model key beneficiaries contribute to the decisions that affect V22 as well as its social impact and objectives. This means that the prevention of social 'mission drift' is intrinsically built into V22's structure.

The V22 Group is made up of 3 complimentary companies:

V22 plc

V22 plc owns our art collection and is listed on the smallest of the three London Stock Exchanges: ISDX-ICAP Market. We believe that a public company best supports our ideal of administering an art collection based upon shared ownership. The stock market is a proven system of asset sharing, supported by proven, reliable and transparent rules and structures. The shareholders of the company include the artists in the collection, in some cases their dealers, and a wide variety of investor-patrons. These investors range from young people with an interest in art, to businessmen interested in alternative assets, to retired ladies and gentlemen in the country who enjoy coming to our exhibitions, meeting the artists and feeling that they are contributing to contemporary culture in an innovative way.

V22 listed as a founding member of London's new Social Stock Exchange in 2013. We believe this to be an important step for V22 as the SSX creates key introductions for us to larger funds and foundations interested in social impact and ethical investing, whilst validating our social impact. V22 is proud to have been shortlisted as Social Impact Company of the Year in the Small Cap awards in 2014 and 2016.

V22 London Ltd

V22 London Ltd is a private company wholly owned by V22 plc which currently runs seven studio buildings in London. They are situated in Dalston, Lewisham, Forest Hill, Homerton, Hackney Wick, Peckham and Bermondsey, providing affordable workspace for nearly 400 artists, artisans and creative practitioners.

V22 London has organised and arranged over 30 fine art exhibitions over the past five years, and has been involved in community projects such as Dalston Now and the Dalston Eastern Curve Garden.

V22 Foundation

Although the V22 group has a long track record of successfully organising and presenting exhibitions and events, early in 2011 we felt that the time had come to set up a separate wing of the organisation with clearly defined charitable and cultural aims.

To this end, V22 formed a not-for-profit company: the V22 Foundation, a company limited by guarantee with specific non-profit objectives and a non-profit distribution clause written into its Articles. This structure focuses its efforts upon the production of high quality programming and effective charitable engagement, opening up more possibilities for the artists and groups with whom we work. The V22 Foundation's aims, as enshrined in its Articles of Association, are the following:

- (1) to foster, promote, advance, maintain and improve public education and to promote interest in, access to and appreciation of visual art and culture
- (2) to aid, assist and educate necessitous artists
- (3) to enable and promote the production and exhibition of art

The Foundation now runs all of V22's exhibitions, education and community projects. V22's Young London exhibition series has exhibited the work of nearly 100 emerging artists and has assisted in the trajectory of their careers. Our Summer Club has presented over 250 events in partnership with over 1,000 artists and partner organisations.

At Louise House, as part of its £315,000 Arts Council Small Capital Grants award in 2015/16, V22 Foundation purchased a 125 year lease on the rear Laundry building of Louise House. It is here, and in the rear garden, that V22 Foundation will operate the educational and community initiatives as well as the exhibitions programme around our Studio+ offering at Louise House.

It is envisioned that V22 Foundation will enter into the long leasehold with Lewisham Council for Forest Hill Library.

b) Copy of constitution/Trust Deed/Memorandum and Articles of Association (as applicable)

Please see attached V22 Foundation Articles of Association

Please see attached draft Heads of Terms for a Management Agreement between: V22, Forest Hill Society, Forest Hill Traders' Association and future Friends of the library.

c) The names of partner organisations, what their role would be and whether this arrangement is confirmed or proposed.

V22 Community Partnership for Forest Hill Library

V22 has engaged with the Forest Hill community extensively since 2013. We have made contact with societies, organisations, traders' associations, businesses, organisations and individuals. It has always been important to how V22 grows to involve local people in our programming because we benefit from our situation within communities. We are keen to strengthen our existing ties to the localities in which we work. We are also deeply interested in arts-led regeneration processes. We believe that grass-roots ties with local people are the foundations for the most positive impacts that we can have in supporting our role

of regeneration. The current works being undertaken to Louise House have been informed by this community engagement and we have had a fantastic response to our ideas and plans which have come about thereby.

We are particularly delighted that this process of community consultation has led to the formation of confirmed relationships which now underpin our current partnership bid for taking Forest Hill Library forward as a community-run library. Working in partnership with The Forest Hill Society and the Forest Hill Traders' Association means that V22 can participate in an offering truly for the community by the community.

The role of the Forest Hill Society

Forest Hill Society is a well-established civic society. They have strong links with local residents and traders. The Town Centre has been top of the priorities for the Forest Hill Society since 2010. The Society has campaigned hard for investment in the Town Centre, successfully gathering over 12,000 signatures for petitions demanding a new pool complex and better transport connections. These community ties and reach, as well as interests and aspirations for the area, will be vital in forming a community library which meets the needs of the local population and continues to do so into the future.

The role of the Forest Hill Traders' Association

Having the Forest Hill Traders' Association as part of the bid team allows for cross-promotion and a way of generating both income for the library and the small businesses within the community. Library patrons joining any 'Friends of' scheme could be rewarded with a card presentable at participating small businesses in the town to gain discounts or special offers. Similarly the member businesses themselves will display posters advertising events in the library, calls for volunteers, works with Friends, etc.

g) Details of previous property management experience.

V22 has set up and run nine studio buildings, providing affordable studio, workshop and workspace to more than 2,500 artists and creative professionals in London over the past ten years. It still runs seven of these buildings across north and south east London.

V22's most relevant experience is its involvement in the neighbouring property: Louise House, Forest Hill.

In 2013 V22 was proud to be awarded the tender for a long leasehold of Louise House. Part of the tender application process involved a commitment to secure funding to bring the property back into use (this has been achieved), to restore the property (considerable works have been done to both buildings) and to create a sustainable cultural centre for the area (well in hand and well received by the community thus far).

Occupation of the premises commenced in 2014 after extensive repair works and the front building has been fully let to artists ever since. We have been very pleased with the feedback we have received about how helpful it is to have such provision in the neighbourhood for local artists and our tenants who have moved to Forest Hill have reported how welcoming the community has been and how much they have grown to like the area. As envisioned, we have artists at a variety of stages in their careers, from Turner Prize nominees to those just starting out.

The rear building has been awaiting funds to undertake some structural repairs, which have commenced, and will host a public programme of events, exhibitions and residencies starting in summer 2016.

Details of the sources of funding secured or proposed sources of funding.

The building requires some works and has some up front capital cost requirements. The Council has said in the tender guidance that they prepared to consider requests for minor contributions to condition works required to the buildings. We would request that the council consider a contribution to part or all of the immediate works required: £64,750. For any shortfall, as well as for capital requirements for future years, we intend to raise grant finance and initiate a crowd-funding scheme. Identified sources of Grant Funding include:

Heritage Lottery Funding: Community Buildings
The SITA Trust
Arts Council England
The Leche Trust
The Peter De Haan Charitable Trust
The Paul Hamlyn Foundation
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Jerwood Charitable Foundation
Clore Duffield Foundation
The Jack Petchey Foundation
The Drapers' Charitable Fund
The Mercers' Company
Woodward Charitable Trust
Rayne Foundation

We believe we will be successful in many of these applications and initiatives given the nature and scope of the project and its delivery partners.

The management of the building as a library is of paramount importance. With the help of local volunteers, a library manager, and some shared staffing support with neighbouring V22, this can be largely self-financing through space rental, with additional programming and community events supplemented by external funding and community support.

We intend to start a Friends of Forest Hill Library annual membership and support scheme. More than forty local shops and traders have already offered discounts to our Friends and we believe there will be strong support from the wider community.

While we recognise there will be financial constraints and that any additional services we offer must be funded, we feel we are in the best position to deliver a secure and stable library, a sustainable service with the community at its heart. We believe we can deliver a service that encourages reading and book-borrowing, that promotes digital literacy, that provides a welcoming and safe environment for learners of all ages and backgrounds and a community hub that helps people find the information they are looking for, and also open their eyes to possibilities they had not even considered.

Description of plans to involve the local community

Provide details of contact within the local community to date and plans to involve local people and organisations in the design and delivery of services. This may include plans for recruiting and supporting volunteers, service user groups and links with local voluntary and community groups, clubs and associations.

In addition to the groups and libraries already mentioned previously in this document, we have also been in touch with Sydenham library and been to visit a group of volunteers who work to run the library. It was inspiring to learn about how they have overcome the challenges they have had to face and it has been integral to developing our volunteer strategy to learn about the challenges faced by the volunteers themselves.

Both the Forest Hill Society and Forest Hill Traders' Association have existing relationships with the Library, not just as members and neighbours, but they have held events and meetings at the library for the community over several years. Both have good working relationships with current and prior councillors, civil servants and the local police service and have a strong record of engaging the community and raising money and awareness for a variety of causes.

The Forest Hill Society has already had 60 local residents come forward as volunteers to help run the library if this bid should be successful. We would expect this number to increase further as we get closer to the time of taking over management of the library. A strong Friends group will be a great source for new volunteers for years in the future.

We aim to create an advisory board made up of key local activators. This would be an informal board but would allow us to gauge feedback from the community and test out new ideas before embarking on them.

We would encourage the involvement of teachers from local schools to sit on the advisory board to ensure that our plans fit with the needs of local schools and of the curriculum.

We would like to be able to work with a local charity to help with job searches and applications.