

## **Appendix B: Issues relating to the use of DCC's archive service**

- 1.1. NEWA has a very narrow user base and collections that offer potential to inspire, educate and entertain are underutilised. Some of the current issues are outlined below.
- 1.2. Prior to Covid, visitor numbers to the Ruthin archive amounted to circa 1000 per annum, with a further 1000 attending events. Post Covid visitor numbers amount to circa 500 per annum and this figure is gradually increasing.
- 1.3. Events are just being reintroduced as resources permit, and recent events have been well attended.
- 1.4. Based on visitor data collected, some 60% of visitors are DCC residents and 40% come from out of County; some will be repeat visitors.
- 1.5. Visitors predominantly tend to be over the age of 55, potentially due to the barriers to participation, i.e. opening hours within office hours on weekdays, 3 days a week, and no capacity to open at weekends. The limited number of family friendly events offered have attracted a more diverse and younger audience.
- 1.6. Ruthin archive cannot accommodate large groups, which is a limiting factor when trying to encourage school use for example. Archives services have a unique contribution to make to the new School curriculum in Wales as long as there is the capacity to do so.
- 1.7. The current NEWA requirement to run 2 archive buildings; Ruthin and Hawarden, severely restricts capacity to run events elsewhere, and extend the digital offering.
- 1.8. The NEWA website had 140,000 views last year, and the online catalogue and digital images can also be viewed on external websites such as findmypast or [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
- 1.9. A very small proportion of the current collection is digitised. The preferred option provides the capacity to enable further digitisation of the collection in house by archive staff, whereas for the other options further digitisation of the collection would need to be outsourced, and a recent estimate suggests that it would cost circa £50k to digitise just 1% of the collection.

