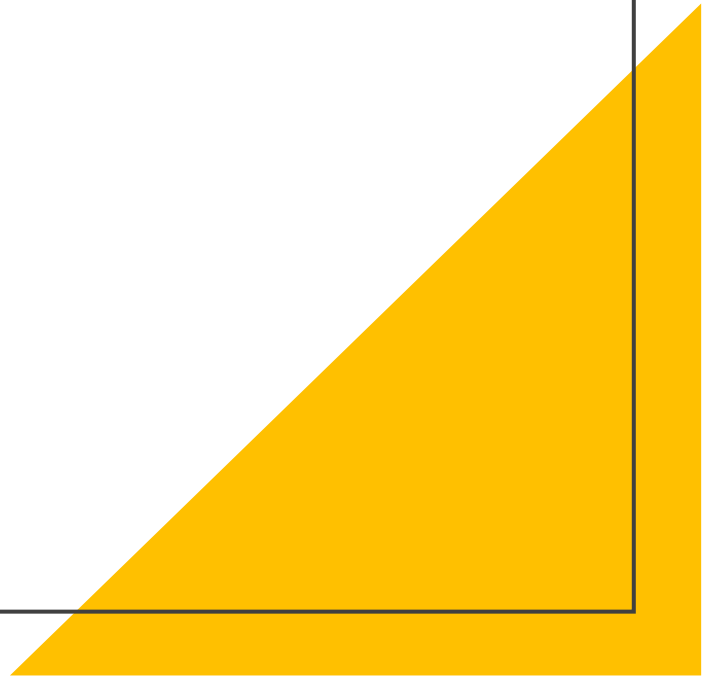# Supporting grassroots communities with web archiving

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The problem

- PhD research at UCL exploring methods for documenting and archiving DIY music spaces
- Cluster of issues around digital information including
  - Lack of knowledge/skills to preserve web content
  - Information becoming inaccessible at a rapid pace
  - Use of digital platforms for organising and community building
  - Social media platforms deleting information through moderation processes
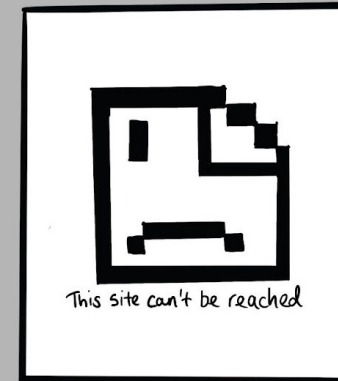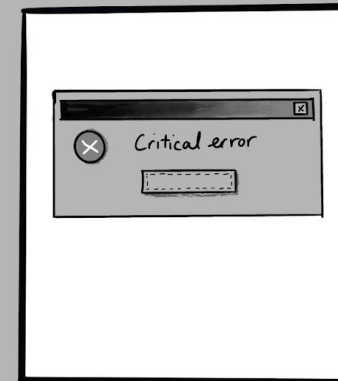
The response

- To coordinate a series of online workshops designed to disseminate skills and knowledge gained in previous professional practice

- Workshops delivered on a sliding scale donation basis (from £0-10)

- Delivered via Zoom and marketed online via social media and listservs

- Pitched as a basic introduction who did not need any experience in archiving

The format

- Emphasis on accessible language (no jargon)
- Space to ask questions and build connections through discussion exercises
- Workshop included:
    - A brief introduction to web archiving
    - Signposting existing schemes (e.g. nominating a site to UKWA)
    - A demo of an open source tool (Conifer)
- Resources and recordings provided afterwards

The result

- Workshops attended by over 140 attendees over seven iterations which almost entirely sold out
- Attendees from activist groups across the world
- Attendees also included information sector workers who attended due to lack of affordable training in web archiving

Future directions

- Build this into a staged programme which introduced more tools, workflows

- Development of more free/low cost online events targeted specifically at grassroots communities

Recording It Ourselves: A Day Event about DIY Cultures, Information, Archives and Histories

Talks, skills sharing and network building

20th March, virtual event (delivered on Zoom)
09:30-17:45

recordingitourselves.wordpress.com
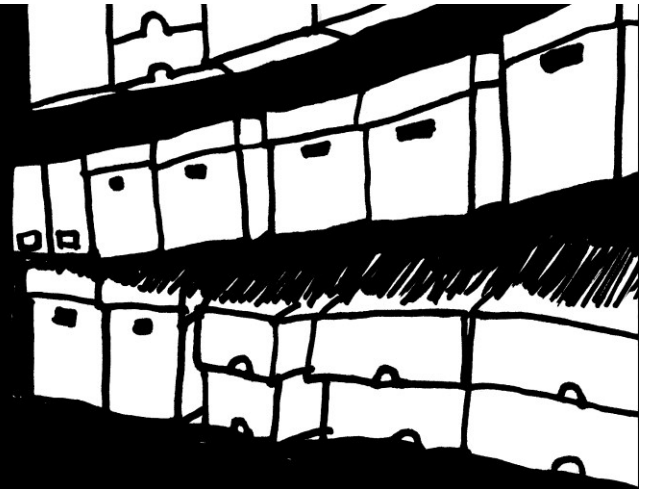
Conclusions

- Archive workers need to build this skill set urgently
- Existing training is not affordable for professionals, let alone community groups
- This affects our ability to support community/grassroots heritage initiatives as a sector
- Using online formats reduces costs (e.g. space hire)
- Marketing free/low cost training outside of professional networks will engage a more diverse group of attendees