



Nottingham, March 2025

Hello everyone,

We hope this finds you all well. Apologies, it's been a while since our last update, but time flies when you're having fun with precious documents!

We are very happy to announce that we completed a major milestone this January:

After many years of processing generous donations of new materials whilst also continually chipping away at our backlog, we have now worked through **everything** we hold in our collections. Every box, bundle, folder, envelope and plastic bag have now been unpacked, processed and their contents added to our catalogue.



Sparrow Artwork by Craig Humpston

We are incredibly thankful to each and every person who generously donated materials to us, contributing to this amazing treasure trove of rare or even unique items.

We currently have well over 22,000 items on our system, with almost all of the physical materials enclosed in hundreds of archival grade boxes. As we processed these items we continually built up our Digital Library, amassing some 8,400 items to date, [accessible on our website without paywall or need to register](#).

Over the years the physical documents had to be processed and securely packed off-site in smaller batches. Thus many related items, such as individual issues of one news bulletin or other, ended up spread between a handful of different archive boxes. We are now resolving this, neatly merging all original records in an effort to optimise storage space and vastly improving prompt findability.



Some of the newly reorganised boxes full of happy and tidy documents – also the labels just got much prettier!

This step requires a major reorganisation of our physical collections, which will also enable us to know how much space remains for new materials.

We have enthusiastically thrown ourselves into this work and plan to complete it this year.

During that time we will sadly have very little capacity to digitise materials (though please still feel free [to get in touch](#) if you would like us to digitise specific items for your research projects). We are however already marking items to be added to the Digital Library once the physical records have been reorganised. Given that we are rather excitable ticking that 'To Be Scanned' button as we revisit all our fantastic materials, we will likely reach out asking for your favourites as soon as we are ready to once more fire up scanner and camera.

Over the next few months we will be able to arrange limited visits by appointment and the Digital Library is of course always open. It is however likely that not all items you might wish to consult in person will be accessible before the reorganisation is complete.

We remain happy and grateful to be contacted regarding donations of new materials and receive new issues of current news bulletins etc., but processing these to appear on the catalogue might take longer than normal and we may not be able to accept larger donations of new materials over the next months.

We recommend you hang on to any large collections for the time being and get in touch with us in early 2026, but if you have anything really special that you'd otherwise have to throw away or is in danger of damage, please [get in touch](#).

If you find yourself with some time on your hands and would like to support our work through any volunteering, we are always keen on anyone helping us curate our digital collections.

Although we have dedicated sections on our website for runs of papers such as *Freedom* or *Class War*, or subjects such as [local LGBTQ+ newsletters](#), there are many other materials that could be shown off like that. So if you are for instance into music zines, or interested in Animal Liberation struggles, we would be thrilled if you want to compile a list of relevant materials from our Digital Library, ideally alongside a few snippets of contextual information which we could host on the website to help other people discover amazing materials.

We are furthermore of course always very appreciative of any [financial support you may be able to provide](#). Although the project is stable at this time, costs have been rising. Any contribution, no matter how small, be it through PayPal or Standing Order (the latter works out a bit better for us, so please [get in touch](#) if you are looking to set up a recurring payment), helps share the financial burden between more shoulders.

Finally, we were never keen on social media, but after we abandoned Twitter/X for obvious reasons (the account remains active at this time but is dormant), we do need a new way besides our email list ([contact us to be added](#)) and website to share updates. We are pondering on this and will keep you in the loop, any suggestions are of course welcome.

But now, there are some piles of documents demanding our attention, so we will get right back to it!

Look after yourselves and each other.

With all our very best wishes

*The Sparrows' Nest Collective*

[www.thesparrowsnest.org.uk](http://www.thesparrowsnest.org.uk)