EYDON'S PHOTO ARCHIVE –
and its surprising consequences

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Background

Eydon Historical Research Group is a small group, of some six to eight active members, which as the name suggests, researches the history of the village of Eydon. In 2006, we began to consider how we should preserve and store not only the photos we had been given or loaned but, more important, the information we had concerning the photos. In this we benefitted from the help and expertise of the enthusiasts behind the Byfield Photo Museum, who have been collecting, digitising, and displaying their photos and database since 1998 and have over 2,700 photos of the village in their archive.

As our plans progressed, one of our members, with experience of applying for grants in the Arts area, urged us to apply for funding from the Lottery. To comply with their aims, the project grew, so that our archive was no longer just for the group's use, but through the media of a website, exhibitions and talks, for anyone interested in researching local history. To our surprise, despite have no fashionable minorities, we received our grant of £7,450, which had to be spent before December 2007.

Setting Standards

During the first few months we concentrated on establishing standards for each stage of the project. We based our work on what the Byfield group had been doing, but we also looked elsewhere and, on the internet, we found the TASI website <www.tasi.ac.uk>. This is the 'Technical Assistance Service for Images' and is a support site for Image Libraries in Higher Education. Its background papers are superb and deal with most issues, from acquiring images, scanning standards, naming conventions, copyrights, to project management and archiving the results. Most of these are dealt with at a simple, management-briefing level as well as at a detailed technical one. Although this is a site for professionals, whose standards are gold-plated, it gave us a good idea of the factors to consider and which standards to adopt when planning and later operating our project.