Mapping the story of County Durham and its people in the First World War

Final Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary

“In 1918, the phrase ‘Lest We Forget’ was coined – 100 years later, we in County Durham have not forgotten the sacrifice of our forefathers. Durham at War assisted in creating an environment for remembrance throughout the County.”

155,345 people have been recorded as engaging with Durham at War over the period September 2014 to April 2019 through: volunteering (269 registered users); exhibitions and events (12,310 people); schools’ learning (3484 children and young people); wider community work with heritage groups (12,669) and the website (126,613 users).

This report has been produced by independent consultant Susan Priestley as the final evaluation of Durham at War, a project led by Durham County Record Office (DCRO) in partnership with the DLI Collection and Durham County Council’s Archaeology Service. The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Durham at War was launched on 10 September 2014 as a First World War centenary project, exactly 100 years after the first Durham Light Infantry soldiers arrived in France with the British Expeditionary Force. The project, which ended in April 2019, linked the archives, objects and sites that survive today, whilst uncovering new stories about local communities from 100 years ago.

This is the third evaluation document for Durham at War: an interim report was produced in April 2017 to assess the emerging outcomes, impacts and achievements of the project at its mid-way point; and a second report was produced in November 2018 to present the impacts of the 2018 Durham at War public and schools’ conferences. This third and final report has been informed by: information and data provided by Durham at War project staff (Durham County Record Office); information and materials taken from the Durham at War website and blog; comments and feedback gathered from people who have engaged with the project over the course of its four-and-a-half year lifespan; and in-depth consultation with 20 Durham at War volunteers carried out by the consultant at several points over the project period. Analysis of all information, data and feedback has identified a number of impressive achievements:

- The Durham at War website has been a huge success - 126,613 users have viewed 578,370 website pages (average of 3 pages per session), with largest number of page 1

1 Kevin Richardson, Durham at War volunteer.
views in a single month recorded as 33,676 in November 2018, coinciding with Armistice. The website now contains 7032 stories and associated items in relation to the First World War, County Durham and its people, which will continue to be available for people to view and add to for the foreseeable future.

- Volunteering has played a major role in Durham at War. A total of 566 people have volunteered with the project: 269 were registered volunteers; and 297 additional people submitted content to the website without registering. In total, volunteers have contributed 16,483.35 hours to the Durham at War project over its lifespan in terms of professional, skilled and unskilled work. This equates to 2,353 days – or the equivalent of just over 9 years of a full-time post.
- Durham at War has made a significant contribution to people’s learning about heritage: 12,310 people were recorded as having engaged with informal learning through Durham at War community exhibitions and events at a range of venues across the old and new County Durham geographical areas; and 3484 schoolchildren have engaged with formal learning activities through new workshops, resources, partnership projects and a schools’ conference.
- Engaging and working with communities across a wider geographical area has provided DCRO with an important platform to promote awareness of Durham at War and opportunities for community heritage groups to publish and share their own stories and research. 12,669 people are recorded as having engaged with partnership projects as participants and/or audiences and whilst we do not have the information to quantify it, partnership working is also likely to have made a significant economic impact by added value for Durham at War and other First World War projects funded through other sources.

Feedback gathered from volunteers and other people who have engaged with Durham at War over the course of its four-and-a-half-year lifespan has been overwhelmingly positive. There is clear evidence that the project has made a significant impact on the lives of the people it has touched and will leave a strong legacy:

**For heritage**, including: the Durham at War website as a major depository of stories and photographs highlighting the impact of the First World War on County Durham and its people; new knowledge, skills and capacity for heritage as a result of research, volunteering and training; and a vast amount of new information and resources to support heritage learning, both informal learning for community heritage groups and individuals, and a contribution to formal teaching and learning in schools through links to the curriculum.

**For people**, including: significantly increased awareness of Durham in the First World War; a wealth of new knowledge and skills gained over the course of the project; new friendships and family connections made as a result of research and volunteering; and the knowledge that the people of County Durham have been recognised, honoured and celebrated for the part they played in the First World War.

“I feel that the project is fulfilling the vow made each Armistice Day that ‘we will remember them’ and it’s a great privilege to help to do that.”

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2 Durham at War volunteer.
Introduction

“Durham at War has been an outstandingly successful project, enjoyed by volunteers, community heritage groups, schools, members of the public and staff alike. We have all learned new facts and made new friends throughout the project; and some have made new links to family they didn’t know they had.”

This report has been produced by independent consultant Susan Priestley to assess the impacts and achievements of Durham at War, a First World War centenary project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and led by Durham County Record Office (DCRO) in partnership with DLI Collection and Durham County Council’s Archaeology Service. The project was launched on 10 September 2014, exactly 100 years after the first Durham Light Infantry soldiers arrived in France with the British Expeditionary Force and ended on 30 April 2019. The project had three overarching elements:

- opportunities for people to learn about the First World War in County Durham, including the experiences of men, women and children in Durham or overseas, and relating to the military, industry, farming, home life and the great social upheaval that went alongside the war itself;
- a wide range of accessible ways for people to participate through volunteering, education and training, all of which facilitated the sharing of information, stories and images through the website, exhibitions, conferences and commemorative events; and
- a significant contribution to the conservation of records, stories and artefacts by bringing together archives, objects and sites associated with the First World War, increasing understanding and helping people to visualise why these things are significant to them.

Evaluation methodology

Evaluation has played a strong role in the project, taking a longitudinal approach to monitoring and measuring progress against targets and identifying outputs and outcomes in relation to heritage and people. Two earlier reports have been produced: an interim valuation mid-way through the project (April 2017); and an evaluation of the Durham at War conferences in November 2018. This final evaluation report aims to present the outputs, outcomes, impacts and achievements across the project’s lifespan and uses:

- the original HLF application and quarterly progress reports;
- the previous two evaluations;

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3 Liz Bregazzi, County Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
• information and data provided by Durham County Record Office; and
• in-depth feedback provided by 20 Durham at War volunteers, several of whom have contributed to the evaluation process at various points across the project lifespan.

Feedback and information has been collated and analysed to measure the project’s achievements against aims set at the project planning stage:

• to create a digital resource to geographically map the collections in Durham which relate to First World War heritage;
• to deliver training for volunteers in research skills, making sense of multiple sources, data analysis, digitisation to approved standards and planning, producing and advertising heritage events and exhibitions;
• to deliver a range of community curated project exhibitions and events at Durham Light Infantry Museum, Durham County Record Office, archaeological sites and in a range of community venues, to include four public conferences, ‘antiques roadshow’ events, museum object handling sessions and tours;
• to use the online mapping interface as a basis to develop new educational activities for schools for visits to Durham County Record Office and Durham Light Infantry Museum;
• to recruit volunteers from under-represented groups including BAME communities, young people and people with disabilities; and
• to work with communities in Durham City, Hartlepool, Tees Valley, Sedgefield, Easington, Darlington, the Wear Valley, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland to explore aspects of First World War heritage that is important to them.
Volunteers have contributed 16,483.35 hours to the Durham at War project over its lifespan in terms of professional, skilled and unskilled work. This equates to 2,353 days – or the equivalent of just over 9 years of a full-time post.

“I feel that the project is fulfilling the vow made each Armistice Day that “we will remember them” and it’s a great privilege to help to do that.”

Volunteers were at the heart of the Durham at War project. Recruited through a combination of online and printable registration forms, volunteers undertook initial induction and training sessions, followed by a wide range of tasks, including: indexing and data processing; transcription of diaries and letters; moderating website content; searching online catalogues; adding data to the Historic Environment Record database and map interface; and trialling various forms of data entry. Over the course of the project, Durham at War engaged with 269 registered volunteers and an additional 297 who contributed to the project but were not registered.

It is clear that Durham at War has provided a very positive volunteering experience and made a significant impact on people’s lives, work and learning: through volunteering opportunities, which offered challenges in relation to research and the satisfaction of discovering new information; through social and sharing opportunities with other like-minded people; and through access to stories and information about the First World War in County Durham through exhibitions, talks and events.

Volunteer Profile

“Durham at War has allowed me to acknowledge my debt of gratitude and respect to those whose stories I have in a small way, helped bring to light.”

The volunteer profile has been produced using information provided by the 269 online forms completed by registered volunteers.

Gender

Analysis of online registration forms shows that of the 264 volunteers who answered a question about gender, 61% were women and 39% were men. There has been a slight
increase in the percentage of male volunteers since the interim (April 2017) figures – up from 35% to 39%.

### Gender of volunteers

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39%</td>
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### Age

The age profile for volunteers over the project lifespan shows that the largest age group was people aged 60 and over (38%), possibly due to the significant number of retired volunteers with more free time and greater flexibility in terms of how they use it. Of the remaining volunteers: 30% were aged between 25 and 59 years; 24% were aged between 19 and 25 years; and 8% were aged between 11 and 18 years. The profile has remained largely static since the interim report.

### Location

Analysis of 224 online registration forms shows us that at the half-way point in the project: the majority of volunteers are living in areas with County Durham postcodes (74%); 18% are living in the wider North East region; 7% are living out of the region but in the UK; and 1% are based overseas.
Ethnicity

99% of volunteers were White British.

Disability

22 registered volunteers (around 8%) considered themselves to have a disability.

Volunteer experience

Volunteers have made a significant contribution to workforce capacity for Durham County Record Office, the DLI Collection, and the Historic Environment Record in relation to the Durham at War project. 58% of registered volunteers had experience of volunteering across a broad range of situations and organisations, whilst for 42%, engagement with Durham at War was their first ever experience of volunteering. Volunteers had a broad range of working backgrounds, skills and experience and in terms of hours contributed to Durham at War: 13,012.70 hours (around 1859 days) were recorded as unskilled; 3177.55 hours (around 454 days) were recorded as skilled; and 293.10 hours (around 42 days) were recorded as professional.

In total: Volunteers have contributed 16,483.35 hours to the Durham at War project over its lifespan in terms of professional, skilled and unskilled work. This equates to 2,353 days – or the equivalent of just over 9 years of a full-time post. The breadth and scope of the skills volunteers brought to the project can be seen from just a small sample of feedback:

“I work as a PA so work on computer every day. Proof reading as part of my job. Reading difficult handwriting also an everyday event! Often trawl the internet for information relating to WWI”

“I have quite in-depth skills in typing and word processing, working with spreadsheets and doing research from my degree work. I would like to develop more skills in terms of handling archives.”

“I have been a History teacher for 16 years, but I have never been involved in a project of this kind. I am very keen to contribute to such an interesting project.”
Meeting the project aims

“... We do have to keep on reminding ourselves of how terrible an event a war is, and if you’re going to look at a terrible war, then the Great War is probably one of the most terrible you could ever have fought through. It’s an excellent idea to bring together a county which highlights the First World War as an episode in time but also the contribution made by people who came from your local communities.”

Aim 1: To create a digital resource to geographically map the collections in Durham which relate to First World War heritage.

The Durham at War website was launched in September 2014 and tells the story of County Durham and its people in the First World War, offering the public access to archive, museum and archaeology collections relating to the combined geographical area of County Durham as it was in 1914-1918 and as it is today. The website uses an interactive GIS interface, allowing materials held in the community to be scanned/photographed and uploaded, giving access to people locally and across the world who have connections with and/or an interest in County Durham related First World War history. The original intention had been for the website to remain live until the end of 2018, after which it was to be retained and maintained as a key research tool beyond the lifespan of the project. However, such has been the popularity and demand for the site, Durham County Council has now agreed to pay increased maintenance charges to allow volunteer moderators to add stories and the public to add comments for the foreseeable future.

Volunteers have played a pivotal role in developing and maintaining the site: over the period 2014 to 2019, 566 volunteers have created 1635 pages and posted 266 comments on the Durham at War website; and five of those volunteers have contributed to the moderation of the submitted pages.

Between its launch in 2014 to the end of March 2019, the Durham at War website has seen some significant achievements:

- 126,613 users viewed 578,370 pages (average of 3.17 pages per session), with largest number of page views in a single month recorded as 33,676 in November 2018, coinciding with Armistice.

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6 Mark Smith, Medals Expert and keynote speaker for the 2017 Durham at War conference.
• Although the largest proportion of visitors to the site were from the UK (77.63%), other visits have been recorded from across the world, including the USA (6.66%), Australia (3.25%) and Canada (2.97%), France, New Zealand, Germany, Azerbaijan, Belgium and Ireland.

• Up to the end of April 2019, the Durham at War Website held 7032 stories and related items, contributing significantly to the project’s themes, by:
  - offering a wealth of learning experiences for the 269 registered and 297 unregistered volunteers who have contributed to its content, as well as to the thousands of people of all ages who have viewed and used the stories and information it holds.

  “I learned that men from my own street and neighbouring streets fought and died in WW1 and this led me to research the names on the war memorials in the Stanley area in some depth.”

  - encouraging and facilitating participation in the project by making the stories and images available to a world-wide audience and enabling visitor feedback through the web platform, often leading to people making new family connections and/or friendships.

  “I knew practically nothing about Durham before getting involved in this project. My wife, along with a friend and I, have now visited Durham and its surroundings three times and look forward to coming back again... One side effect of participation was the opportunity to correspond with people from all over the world about their Durham and Canadian connections.”

  “I’ve met so many lovely people and made good friends. Two of my (unknown) relatives contacted me via Durham at War and one of them came to the Isle of Man with me last month to a conference/sneak preview of the Knockaloe Camp.”

  - playing a strong part in the conservation of County Durham’s First World War history and heritage, by involving and engaging people in researching and making available to a wide audience 7032 items on the Durham at War website relating to the First World War, County Durham and its people.

The Durham at War Blog

“On 17 October 2013, the first post went live on the blog ‘First World War in County Durham’, which went on to become the Durham at War blog on 15 August 2014... Just over five years later, on 21 December 2018, we are at the last post, no. 268. Up to 18 December 2018, there have been 35,961 page views, the two biggest days being on 10 September 2014, when Durham at War was officially launched, and 11 November 2018, the centenary of Armistice.”

The Durham at War blog was created and maintained by the project’s Collections Access Officer to promote the project to the wider world. 82% of readers were from the UK; 75% of whom were from the North East.

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7 Durham at War volunteer.
8 Volunteer from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
9 Durham at War volunteer.
10 Victoria Oxberry, Collections Access Officer, Durham at War.

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The blog was an important link with volunteers, both in terms of communication and participation – 44 of the total 268 blog posts were written by volunteers.

**Aim 2: To deliver training for volunteers in research skills, making sense of multiple sources, data analysis, digitisation to approved standards and planning, producing and advertising heritage events and exhibitions.**

“I’ve done a wide range of things on the project. I’ve done some moderating on the website, editing and formatting the submitted stories. I’ve researched many men and women from the area and submitted these to the site…”

An extensive programme of training for volunteers, community heritage and other groups has taken place across the region covering a broad range of modules, which have enabled people to build on existing knowledge as well as learning completely new skills. An outline of the training modules shows the breadth and scope of training delivered:

**Module 1:** A training module in partnership with Darlington Local Studies Library. Project staff attended the launch of the Darlington Poppy Project. Local crafters donated hundreds of knitted and crocheted poppies and people were invited to find out more about an individual soldier and label a poppy in his memory. The poppies were displayed in the library.

**Module 2** was a training workshop held as part of an archaeological project at Cocken Hall, in partnership with volunteer archaeology group No Man’s Land and Durham University. The research group searched newspapers in DCRO and online, to transcribe any relevant articles for inclusion on the project website. Information was gathered from the entire history of Cocken Hall, before, during and after the First World War, as well as information on battalions associated with the house and camp. Volunteers were recruited and trained for field walking, to grid and examine the pottery spread and foundations of the bath house, and to do a systematic survey of tree carvings (arborglyphs) on the original drive and wood by the house.

**Module 3:** A partnership with the North East Workers’ Educational Association delivered for Women’s Health, South Tyneside (WHIST). The group was successful in a funding bid to extend their project, and Durham at War project staff accompanied staff from

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11 Durham at War volunteer.
WHiST and WEA and six volunteers on a research project trip to London to visit the Women’s Library at the LSE and The National Archives (TNA).

**Module 4**, the transcriptions and translations of the Riedelski\(^{12}\) correspondence, involved 13 volunteers with language skills in English, Polish, German, Spanish, Italian and French. One of the volunteers, Elaine, proofread and edited 307 letters, taking the correspondence beyond 1917. The last letter in the collection is dated 1932, addressed to Alice Edleston; then news of his sudden death in 1944.

**Module 5: ‘The Shiny Tenth’** a written ‘People’s History’ of 10 DLI using, particularly, the Morant family archives purchased with HLF help in 2013. The diaries and papers of Durham Light Infantry Brigadier General Hubert Morant of The Hermitage, near Hexham, were catalogued as part of Durham at War and transcripts have been available on the website since 2017.

**Module 6: Investing in Children’s ‘Who Cared for Kids’ project.** Durham at War worked with Investing in Children, a group promoting the rights of children and young people, on a project investigating the lives of young people in the First World War, particularly those who were in the care system. The project was a collaboration with 6 young people and their leader who used the research material to produce a presentation to share with other young people. The presentation covered three areas: **Who are we:** We are a part of group of people called Investing In Children that work towards getting young peoples’ voices heard and finding out who cared for children during the First World War; **What our project is about:** Our project is based on who cared for children during the First World War (1914-1918) in County Durham. This project was funded by the Heritage Lottery who funded this project to find out how kids were cared for and who cared for them; and **What we are going to present:** We are here to share what we have found out about all the different types of ways that children have been cared for during the First World War including; Industrial schools, care homes etc.

**Module 7: Training in the use of lidar.** Volunteers worked with consultant archaeologist Paul Frodsham to use lidar data, aerial photographs and Ordnance Survey maps to spot potential archaeological sites of interest in areas of known First World War activity. Each kilometre square was sent out to least two separate volunteers as a check mechanism and they formally recorded what they saw. Volunteers investigated around 900 points of interest across 100 square kilometres of East Durham. The work did not reveal any significant new discoveries but did fulfil its objectives of analysing lidar data for the Historic Environment record (HER) and training volunteers in lidar survey.

**Module 8: Cowshill History Group.** A training workshop to support the group to investigate prisoner of war camps in Weardale, resulting in a breakthrough in research into the Stanhope prisoner of war camp from school records. The resulting research was added to the project website.

**Module 9: The ‘Decades’ project with Investing in Children.** Supported by Durham at War project staff, young people investigated inspirational women throughout the 20th century, starting with World War One and women’s voting rights.

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\(^{12}\) Paul Salvator Riedelski-Piast (also known as Paul Piast-Riedelski or Pawel Zbawca Riedelski-Piast) laid claim to the Polish throne during the First World War and befriended Robert Holmes Edleston of Gainford in County Durham, who supported Riedelski’s pursuits through his own political and social connexions. An extensive collection of correspondence has survived in the Edleston archives at DCRO. See Durham at War [http://www.durhamatwar.org.uk/story/13752/](http://www.durhamatwar.org.uk/story/13752/)
Aim 3: To deliver a range of community curated project exhibitions and events at Durham Light Infantry Museum, Durham County Record Office, archaeological sites and in a range of community venues, to include four public conferences, ‘antiques roadshow’ events, museum object handling sessions and tours.

Over the course of the project 12,310 people were recorded as having engaged with Durham at War community exhibitions and events at a range of venues across the old and new County Durham geographical areas. Many more thousands are likely to have engaged as (unrecorded) audiences.

The Durham at War project exhibitions and events have provided valuable opportunities to work with a range of project partners to develop and disseminate information, materials, stories and resources to schools, heritage groups and individuals across the region. Examples of exhibitions and events that have taken place since the production of the interim evaluation report (April 2017) include:

- Volunteers worked with project staff to design pop-up banners to share the following areas of their research: Royal Navy; John Sheen – A Collection Shared; Girl Guides; Eye Witness at Chérisy; Prisoners of War; Royal Flying Corps; and Advance to Victory 1918. The banners were displayed at: Durham at War conferences; County Hall Armistice commemorations; Durham Cathedral Armistice Service; Gala Theatre Armistice events; and loaned to Belmont First World War project for an event.

- Project staff designed pop-up banners to commemorate VC winners from County Durham and/or associated with the Durham Light Infantry which were: displayed at Durham at War conferences; loaned to Glebe Centre, Murton for the installation of the McNally VC paving stone; displayed at County Hall Armistice commemorations; and loaned to Belmont First World War project for an event.
Durham at War was represented by project staff at a wide variety of First World War events organised by heritage groups, including: a Cleveland Family History Society event at Scotch Corner in April 2017; the North East War Memorials project film showing of ‘Always Remembered’ in Gateshead in May 2017; ‘Yesterday Belongs to You’ at Beamish in July 2017, organised by the County Durham Forum for History and Heritage; the Western Front Association Conference at Chester-le-Street, October 2017 and October 2018; Wolsingham School Memorial Oaks remembrance service, March 2018; and Westminster Abbey Remembrance Service, on 11 November 2018.

Durham at War project staff have contributed research and/or objects to a range of community focused displays and exhibitions, including: ‘When the Bugle Calls’, a DLI Collection and Archives touring exhibition; Durham Cathedral’s ‘Living with the Peace’ – Durham at War loaned Captain Henry Wilkinson’s original diary and sketchbook from his captivity as a Prisoner of War, showing extracts from when the news of the Armistice reached the PoW camp.

A range of exhibitions organised as part of Durham at War, including: an exhibition to commemorate the Battle of the Somme; an exhibition to mark the centenary of a trench raid at Chérisy in September 1917; ‘Unexpected Stories’ from the Durham at War website; Higher Education in the First World War; ‘Durham Women at War’; and ‘100 Years of Women in Politics’; and a touring exhibition in partnership with Durham University ‘Coming Home’.
Exhibitions and Events Highlight: The Durham at War Conferences

“The conferences are our forum and marketplace, where we hear stories of sacrifice more heroic and more horrific than anything heard in a marketplace in Ancient Greece, because our heroes are family – men and women who were born in Durham…”  

Durham at War hosted four conferences over the course of the project, attracting a total audience of 269 people: the 2016 conference attracted an audience of 56; in 2017 attendance was 45; and in 2018 there were two events – the main conference was opened up to the public as well as volunteers and reached an audience of 81 people; and a schools’ conference engaged 80 students and 7 teachers from five schools.

The conferences have played an important role in Durham at War by providing opportunities to learn and share new knowledge and information through comprehensive programmes involving both amateur and professional speakers and specialists.

“I have attended the last two conferences and found the final conference a very interesting combination of experts and volunteers who shared their work and findings. It is unusual for both groups to be making presentations at the same event and that, I believe, was the attraction of the conference.”

Feedback from delegates indicated that the conferences were: enjoyable and inspirational; resulted in a significant amount of new information, knowledge and understanding about the First World War and County Durham; provided good opportunities for people to meet and share stories; and encouraged people to find out more in their own time.

“For the past three years, my wife and I have included the Durham Conference in our annual vacation plans (from Canada). It's been a great reason to visit Durham and the North East of England. I think the conference was worthwhile, especially as a way of getting like-minded people together. For me, personally, it is a way of making new contacts, and refreshing old ones.”

The conferences have left a strong legacy in relation to: introducing new people to heritage, particularly the young people attending the schools’ event, 92% of whom said their participation in the conference was their first knowledge of or visit to Durham County Record Office; a contribution to teaching and learning and the history curriculum in schools by providing information and inspiration to teachers and pupils about a new GCSE topic, ‘Medicine on the Western Front’; and a successful working model bringing together professionals, specialists, amateurs and volunteers, which can be utilised within other projects.

“The Conference enabled schools to access specialist historian input on an area unfamiliar to teachers and that causes some confusion for pupils. The well-chosen, highly knowledgeable speaker engaged pupils and encouraged quality recording and reflection on the issues of WWI

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13 Margaret Eason, volunteer, Durham at War.

14 Durham at War volunteer.

15 Jim Busby, Durham at War volunteer, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
medicine. Teachers report high levels of pupil satisfaction with the event and requests for similar opportunities.¹⁶

**Aim 4: To use the online mapping interface as a basis to develop new educational activities for schools for visits to Durham County Record Office and Durham Light Infantry Museum.**

A total of 3484 schoolchildren have engaged with Durham at War activities and visits over the course of the project.

Stories researched by volunteers, community groups and project staff for the Durham at War mapping interface have been used to develop new educational workshops and online resources for Durham at War and the website has been available for schools to use. The Durham at War project has contributed significantly to teaching and learning through school workshops, projects, visits and events (including the 2018 schools’ conference), led by education staff working with teachers, which have included:

- Free First World War online resources and workshops: War Horse - A Real Local Story; Local Men in Flanders Fields - Tracing a World War 1 Soldier; Remembrance Cards; Football, Forestry and Furnaces - Keeping the Home Fires burning during the ‘Great War’; Enemies in our Midst? Germans in County Durham, 1914; and Coastal Seaham: Investigation – a mystery workshop on the Seaham submarine attack of 1916

- The South Moor Heritage Trail project, which links and interprets the mining, the First World War and social heritage of South Moor through a landscaped heritage trail marking the streets and homes of miners who died in the conflict and had worked at the colliery.

- Durham at War worked in partnership with Beamish Museum to develop and pilot a new Arts Award workshop (funded through the Beamish Major Partnership Museum Arts Award Initiative) using First World War sketchbooks as inspiration. 33 pupils from St Cuthbert’s Primary School in Seaham completed their Bronze Arts Award and received their certificates in March 2019.

¹⁶ Gabrielle Reddington, Leadership Review Adviser Secondary, Durham County Council.
Education Highlight: Michael Heaviside

Michael Heaviside was born in Gilesgate, Durham, in 1880. On 7 September 1914, he enlisted in the Army and joined the 15th (Service) Battalion, Durham Light Infantry, serving as a stretcher bearer. On 6 May 1917, during the Battle of Arras, Private Michael Heaviside crawled across No Man’s Land under heavy rifle and machine gun fire to take water and first aid to a wounded soldier lying in a shell hole. Later that night, he led two other stretcher bearers to the wounded soldier and carried him back to safety. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery.

Durham County Record Office worked with learning officers from the Durham Light Infantry Collection to deliver a project with 180 children from four schools to introduce the local figure of Michael Heaviside and his significance as a Victoria Cross winner.

On 12 July 1917, Michael Heaviside returned home to a hero’s welcome in Stanley, South Moor and Craghead. 100 years later, 180 children from four schools in the area learned about the local man who won the Victoria Cross and what he did to deserve such an accolade.

The children discussed the history of the Victoria Cross and the meaning of the award, getting the chance to design their own medals for qualities which they felt deserved to be recognised. The action for which Heaviside, as a stretcher bearer, won the VC was examined and some of the older groups looked at the poem “The Stretcher Bearer” by Tommy Crawford, who served in the same battalion as Michael Heaviside. All of the groups used contemporary maps and a newspaper article to trace the 1917 procession through Stanley and Craghead that was organised in Heaviside’s honour. The schools then actively participated in the 2017 centenary commemoration of the parade, with many dressing in period costume in order to line the streets and wave flags.

“I hope you are all proud of your roles in making the last two days of memorable events which are unlikely to be forgotten for years.”

Councillor Mark Davinson, Craghead and South Moor.
Aim 5: To recruit volunteers from under-represented groups including BAME communities, young people and people with disabilities.

The total number of volunteers registered with the Durham at War project over the period September 2014 to April 2019 is 269, with an additional 297 people who contributed to the website but did not register.

Durham at War has been an accessible and inclusive project which has engaged a broad range of volunteers: 32% were young people aged up to 25 years; 8% considered themselves to have a disability; and 1% were from BAME backgrounds. Examples of ways in which Durham at War has engaged under-represented groups and individuals include:

- A New College Durham student on the autistic spectrum completed a volunteering placement in DCRO as part of a Disability Access to Work programme, where he transcribed the war diary of the 4th Battalion Durham Light Infantry, a home-based battalion.
- The project established a working relationship with the BAM Sisterhood! project through the Angelou Centre, a black women-led organisation based in Newcastle. The group worked with Durham at War project staff and Newcastle University Library to develop a story around Gertrude Bell, who was born into a wealthy family at Washington Old Hall in 1868. Discussions are taking place about the group’s ongoing links with Durham at War.
- Durham at War established links with Identity on Tyneside’s project, Beyond the Western Front: What the War means to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities today.


Diversity Highlight: Otherness

“(Otherness is...) A workshop for a group of young women from Newcastle, aged 8-14 years. They come from Muslim households whose families originate from South Asia. As well as studying the idea of “Otherness” during the First World War, the girls are learning to box. So, my challenge was to put together a workshop that included the South Asian experience of the First World War and try to sneak in a bit of boxing!”

Above: Participants in ‘Otherness'

Otherness was a partnership project with ID on Tyne which focused on nearly 1.5 million men from pre-partition India, which included the present countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar, who volunteered during the First World War. Indian army troops were shipped to Europe at the beginning of the war and Sepoys were involved in some of the earliest battles. According to the British Council, 50,000 Indian men were killed, 65,000 injured and 10,000 reported as missing.

The project engaged a group of young girls, aged between 8-12 years old, with ancestry from the Indian subcontinent. The girls worked with volunteer Historian, Peter Livesey to research archival evidence within the region in relation to foreignness and migration. Participants used research materials from Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, Durham County Record Office and Newcastle City Library to explore what groups of people from around the world came and settled during the First World War. Who was here and how they were treated? What life was like for these people seen as ‘other’ by the host population?’

“Fortunately, I knew that James Fish would not let me down. James trained at Bede College in Durham and served with the 8th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry. He was captured and spent much of the war at Rennbahn prisoner of war camp near Munster. James seemed to have been an avid collector of photographs and his album of camp photos is a gem. His pictures show life in the camp, including the theatre performances and boxing matches that prisoners arranged to keep themselves busy. So not only did he tick the boxing box (or should that be ring!) for me, but his photographs of the inmates at the camp helped me to find a way into the South Asian men who served during the war...”

18 Jo Vietze, Volunteer Coordinator, Durham at War.
19 Jo Vietze, Volunteer Coordinator, Durham at War.
Aim 6: To work with communities in Durham City, Hartlepool, Tees Valley, Sedgefield, Easington, Darlington, the Wear Valley, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland to explore aspects of First World War heritage that is important to them.

Over the course of the project 12,669 people were recorded as having engaged with Durham at War project staff to explore aspects of First World War heritage.

Project staff have established contact with colleagues, community heritage groups and individuals from across the region and beyond to add value to Durham at War – and other - First World War centenary projects funded by HLF, by:

- providing information to community groups in the UK and abroad to help them to commemorate DLI officers and soldiers connected to their town or village, or DLI units involved in liberating them from German occupation;
- supporting groups to develop new partnerships and establish First World War activity in the region; and
- enabling individuals and community heritage groups to share their research and stories, commemorative booklets and exhibitions through the Durham at War website.

Engaging and working with communities across a wider geographical area has provided an important platform for DCRO to promote awareness of the Durham at War project, as well as opportunities for community heritage groups to publish and share their own stories and research. Whilst we do not have the information to quantify it, partnership working is also likely to have made a significant economic impact by enhancing funding and resources across the Durham at War and projects funded through other sources.
"In March 1918, Joseph Backhouse, Headteacher of Wolsingham School in Weardale, planted 12 saplings in memory of pupils who had lost their lives in the Great War. By the time the war ended in November of that year, six more saplings had been planted. Over years, the young trees grew into mighty oaks, and they remain a living memorial and poignant reminder of the high cost of war.""20

DCRO staff worked with Wolsingham School on a programme of archive workshops as part of a project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (the school was awarded £10,000), which was named ‘A Community Commemoration of our Living Tribute to Our Fallen’. Young people from the school, worked alongside archivists from Durham County Record Office and experts from Durham at War and local history groups, to uncover more about the men’s lives. Pupils interviewed descendants and members of the community and collected memories, stories and photographs for a refurbished memorabilia room. The funding also allowed the school to design and install new informative tree plaques for each of the 18 fallen soldiers, as well as ceramic plaques to be located at their birthplaces.

DCRO conservators conserved and digitised the soldiers’ original photographs which are now deposited at DCRO. The originals have been replaced with high quality reproductions in the conserved frame.

20 The Northern Echo.
Above: Conservation work on Wolsingham’s memorial plaque. The image on the left is the ‘before’ and the image on the right shows the same photograph after conservation on top of the other conserved and repackaged photographs.

“DCRO conservators are currently working on conservation of the memorial plaque for the school, which has photos of all the former pupils for whom the memorial oaks were planted.”

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21 Liz Bregazzi, County Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
Outcomes, impacts and achievements

“I feel that the Durham at War project and others such as ours fostered a ‘Spirit of Remembrance’ throughout County Durham which was taken up by the local press and general public to present a respectful commemoration for the centenary of the end of the hostilities. We did not and have not forgotten the sacrifice of so many.”

The information presented within this report shows clear evidence of the strong impact Durham at War has had on the people it has involved and engaged. The project has resulted in a number of outputs, outcomes, impacts and achievements across its three overarching areas of Learning, Participation and Conservation.

Learning

Durham at War has enabled and facilitated a massive amount of learning about the First World War, County Durham, its people and the wider world. The learning has extended to project staff, volunteers and participants, and pupils and students within formal education.

Learning has perhaps made the biggest impact on the project volunteers, many of whom have fed back that they have increased their knowledge, regardless of their starting point.

“… as the author of several battalion histories published before 2014, I already had considerable knowledge of the county Durham men in the Army during the First World War. I would say that… I came to understand more about the home front and subjects like women’s suffrage and munition workers.”

“Being a Great War local historian, I was keen to learn more about the efforts of people from my own county and this was undoubtedly achieved by viewing the contributions to the Durham at War website.”

“I knew practically nothing about Durham before getting involved with this project. So where to even start… by contributing to the many biographies of Durham men (and one woman) who

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22 Kevin Richardson, Durham at War volunteer and contributor to ‘In the Pink’.
23 Durham at War volunteer.
24 Durham at War volunteer.
served in the CEF, I’ve learned personal stories about many of the people who immigrated here and made Canada their adopted home.”

“I have certainly learned a lot from Durham at War, not just from my own research, but by reading and listening to other people who have been involved in the project. Who knew about concrete ships being built on Wearside?”

In some cases, new learning has led to people looking at their existing knowledge from a different perspective.

“I’ve learned so much from the project that listing everything would be impossible! As an example, I’ve discovered a great deal about the weapons, battles and military strategies, something that wasn’t covered in my degree course. It was very refreshing too to have the conventional view of WW1 (i.e. pointless; futile; lions led by donkeys, etc.) challenged – a new perspective for me.”

Learning has extended to Durham at War staff who have clearly added to their knowledge of heritage over the course of the project.

“We learned new facts practically every day throughout the project. I was particularly interested in the way attitudes changed to German immigrants discussed at the first conference – my great grandfather was a German immigrant and the family had to change its name to my great grandmother’s maiden name; I knew this had happened but it was fascinating to find out how this affected so many and to draw comparisons with the attitude to immigrants today.”

“I’m not sure I can sum up what I have learned on this project, it is so vast and varied. I found out things that have surprised me, made me laugh, and made me cry. I have learned that telling the story of the war from the personal perspective is a successful approach. People are interested in people.”

“For me, the massive contribution of volunteers, their skills and their enjoyment along the way, points the way to how we should aim to engage people with archives in the future...The Durham at War website design and structure has also worked well. The underlying format of stories for people, places, events and organisations is thoroughly tried and tested. This format could successfully be applied to other archive collections/periods of history. I’m pleased to have been part of this project, which has meant so much to individuals and local communities in helping them to commemorate something very special.”

Durham at War has made a significant contribution to formal learning – 3484 schoolchildren have engaged through the many workshop sessions, talks, events, partnership projects and the 2018 schools conference.

“We were particularly interested to attend as it catered for our needs in regard to our Paper 1 GCSE exam (Medicine on the Western Front). The content provided the students with wonderful contextual knowledge. It is also great for the students to listen to an expert as their interest is sparked.”

25 Jim Busby, Durham at War volunteer, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
26 Durham at War volunteer.
27 Durham at War volunteer.
28 Liz Bregazzi, County Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
29 Victoria Oxberry, Collections Access Officer, Durham at War.
30 Gill Parkes, Principal Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
31 Helen Crank, Subject Leader for History, Sedgefield Community College.
“The Conference enabled schools to access specialist historian input on an area unfamiliar to teachers and that causes some confusion for pupils. The well-chosen, highly knowledgeable speaker engaged pupils and encouraged quality recording and reflection on the issues of WWI medicine. Teachers report high levels of pupil satisfaction with the event and requests for similar opportunities.”

Durham at War has contributed to further and higher education through a number of internship and work experience opportunities, including: internships through Erasmus for Candela and Silvia; internships for Teesside University graduates Peter, Daniel and Steven; and internships and work experience opportunities to students from Northumbria University (2nd year History), Durham University and numerous individual students, graduates and sixth form students.

Finally, the new learning has – and continues – to be shared, not only through the website but through links and connections made through the project.

“I was put in touch with a PhD student, via Jo and Victoria, who lives in London and is writing a thesis on WW1 remembrance. I was able to provide him with a copy of my grandfather’s diary, plus photos etc. I met Sylvie Fisch at Durham at War and contributed to her book ‘World War 1 and the German Communities in the North East of England.’”

**Participation**

155,345 people have participated in the Durham at War project over the period September 2014 to April 2019 through: volunteering (269 registered users); exhibitions and events (12,310 people); schools’ learning (3484 children and young people); wider community work with heritage groups (12,669) and the website (126,613 users).

Durham at War has enabled many thousands of people to participate in First World War heritage through volunteering, the website, partnership projects, events and activities. In addition to the 155,345 people who participated directly in the project, many thousands more have participated as (unrecorded) audiences at project activities and events developed through partnership working with community heritage groups.

Participation in Durham at War volunteering and training has contributed to heritage skills and capacity. Of the 269 registered volunteers for Durham at War to date, 41% are volunteering for the very first time. This is a strong indicator of the way in which the project is reaching new audiences for heritage, particularly in relation to the way people are actively engaging, as opposed to being passive spectators, and thus making a significant contribution to skills development and capacity in the sector.

Participation in Durham at War has contributed to volunteers’ health and wellbeing by creating a sense of purpose, offering opportunities to meet new people, family links and offering progression.

“Newly retired, it gave me a purpose on long winter afternoons…”

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33 Durham at War volunteer.
34 Durham at War volunteer.
“… I was nervous about letting some of my skills become rusty when I retired, and this project has been perfect for putting my mind at ease on that score.”\textsuperscript{35}

“Having been reminded how much I enjoy using my research skills, I’m hoping that I might be able to go into a job which uses some of the skills and knowledge I’ve been using on the project…”\textsuperscript{36}

**Durham at War has enabled and facilitated participation in the project from people across the world.** Project research and the Durham at War website and conferences have forged new links and friendships throughout County Durham, across the country and overseas, creating a worldwide community connected by the First World War. The geographical reach of the project has been vast, with website data recording online engagement from as far afield as Australia, Canada and Azerbaijan.

“One side effect of participation was the opportunity to correspond with people from all over the world about their Durham and Canadian connections.”\textsuperscript{37}

“My brief was to look primarily at men from Durham who had emigrated to Australia by 1914 and the role they played in the Australian Army… I spent many afternoons on my computer researching the Australian soldiers and attended two out of the three conferences.”\textsuperscript{38}

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\textsuperscript{35} Durham at War volunteer.
\textsuperscript{36} Durham at War volunteer.
\textsuperscript{37} Durham At War volunteer, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
\textsuperscript{38} Durham at War volunteer.
Participation Highlight: Volunteering

Individual Volunteer Profile

“I didn’t grow up in Durham, but having been here for about 15 years now, it feels like home and it’s been special to get to know the stories of people from this area.”

F has been a long-serving volunteer with Durham at War and has contributed evaluation feedback several times. This mini profile has been produced using F’s comments and responses between January 2017 and April 2019.

“I’ve realised I’ve been working on the project since May 2016. Can’t believe it’s been so long. It’s flown over.”

Reasons for participating

“I’ve done quite a bit of volunteering, but this is very different to what I’ve done before – other volunteering has always involved looking after little kids… I got into the project via my support worker who had heard about the project. I have long-term health issues and thought some volunteering in a different area might be good… I did a degree at university in Durham before I had to stop work with ill health and it’s been great to go back to researching and learning again. I’d forgotten how much I loved really getting into a topic.”

Participation

“It feels like I do a whole range of things on the project… I’m continuing to do some moderating for the site which was the first thing I started with. I’ve also been researching various people from County Durham… I also worked with another volunteer on putting together information on Girl Guiding in County Durham during the war and making a display which was used at the Durham at War conference (in 2018). Since September, I’ve been going into the office to work alongside Jo and Victoria for a couple of days a week.”

Learning

“… I’ve learned how to do researching, looking at censuses and family history records, newspapers and memorial sites… I’ve been learning how to look at new websites such as for information on VAD nurses and prisoners of war, etc… I love all the learning I’m doing and it’s great to be using research, compiling and writing skills which I hadn’t used for years since my degree.”

“I had never been interested in WW1, but this gave me an interest in the battlefields and surrounding areas. I Google places etc. I feel I’m being educated. Even my reading material has changed.”

Impacts over the project period

“I think the biggest thing for me is that it’s slowly increasing my confidence in myself and I am able to do things I didn’t think I would… I did a talk at the most recent conference and also went into one of the school sessions with Jo as an extra pair of hands!”
Conservation

“For starters, it puts the events of World War One back to the front of memory, not just the military aspects, but also what it meant for the people back at home, something too easy to forget. The project has created a body of knowledge that might otherwise never have been compiled.”

Durham at War has made a major contribution to local heritage conservation through a comprehensive volunteering programme which has resulted in the Durham at War website, which now contains 7032 items relating to the First World War, County Durham and its people. The project has identified, researched and made available a significant amount of hitherto unknown stories and information relating to real people, many of whom have descendants still living in County Durham.

“The project has helped to conserve WW1 heritage in Durham… by encouraging participation in the project directly, such as getting people to add stories to the website. The fact that it is still available is a major benefit.”

“I am convinced that the project will help to conserve Durham’s WW1 heritage – there is so much interest, especially from young people. It’s vital that we pass on our knowledge and I believe the project has undoubtedly helped to do so.”

“I think it has massively conserved the WW1 heritage of the people of County Durham and created a fabulous extended depository of the background of the role of the people, places and institutions in Durham in WW1.”

Durham at War has contributed to local heritage conservation through the Lidar Landscapes project, which enabled volunteers with an interest in landscape archaeology to learn about lidar and to use it in archaeological survey work in relation to the First World War.

“ALSM (or ‘airborne laser swath mapping’) data, more commonly referred to as ‘lidar’ (originally a portmanteau of ‘light’ and ‘radar’) is a relatively new information source being used by archaeologists to discover, interpret and record archaeological sites (Crutchley & Crow 2009).”

Volunteers used lidar to examine a series of areas where activities relating to the First World War took place, subsequently studying the data to record any remnants of the sites or other features of potential archaeological importance. Lidar is significantly contributing to heritage conservation where archaeological evidence has disappeared due to building and modern agriculture, as illustrated by the findings recorded below from one of the chosen First World War sites, Deerbolt Training Camp.

“Little if any sign of the First World War camp survives above ground, though earthworks of a contemporary rifle range do survive, and have been recorded on lidar, on the south bank of the Deepdale Beck, to the west. This image demonstrates something of the time-depth of the

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39 Durham at War volunteer.
40 Durham at War volunteer.
41 Durham at War volunteer.
42 Durham at War volunteer.
43 Paul Frodsham, Project Consultant, Oracle Heritage Services.
The project has left a strong legacy in terms of the training given to volunteers and the lidar findings, which are now available to help others with their own research.

“The results of this project, in terms of volunteer training and in establishing the extent to which surface traces of the target sites still survive, has been generally successful, and the methodology could certainly be adapted to enable the undertaking of further projects in future… The project archive will be incorporated into the County Durham (in a couple of cases Tyne and Wear) Historic Environment Record (HER). Here, it will be available for anyone planning new research projects, while also potentially contributing to future landscape management.”

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44 Paul Frodsham, Project Consultant, Oracle Heritage Services.
45 Paul Frodsham, Project Consultant, Oracle Heritage Services.
Summary and legacy

“It goes without saying that The Heritage Lottery funding has made all this possible and leaves a long-term legacy now and in the future for so many people both young and old. The County of Durham and its only Infantry Regiment of 37 battalions in WW1 ‘The Durham Light Infantry’ have always been intertwined, but never so much as now, as this project has brought so many members of the public together under one banner – ‘Durham at War’.” 46

The information and feedback presented within this report clearly shows that Durham at War has not only achieved its aims but has also resulted in strong outputs, outcomes, impacts and achievements. Furthermore, the working process has played a strong part in the project’s successes and is a successful model for future projects – not just for Durham County Record Office, but by way of the sharing of information across heritage organisations across the region and further afield.

In summing up the information and feedback presented within this report, it’s clear that the Durham at War project has made a massive contribution to local First World War heritage and left a lasting legacy in relation to Heritage and People.

Durham at War: Legacy in relation to Heritage

“This project has given a lot of ownership to volunteers and has greatly helped us to make collections more accessible. We would never have achieved so much if we had to rely solely on staff resources. Flexible working for volunteers, including working from home on digital content, has been a resounding success in terms of volunteer satisfaction and retention. Volunteers have built up significant and transferrable skills. It would be good to offer new avenues for volunteer research once the Durham History Centre is open.” 47

Durham at War has created a comprehensive depository of stories, photographs, data and other information relating to the impact of the First World War on County Durham, its people and its links to the wider world. Not only has this provided opportunities for people to contribute to the Durham at War website by making available their own family stories and/or time and expertise, it has also made this information available to a world-wide audience. The success of the website has led to a decision to extend it as an editable (as opposed to viewable)

46 Chris Lawton, MBE DL, Major (Retd), Rifles County Secretary, Durham.
47 Gill Parkes, Principal Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
resource for the foreseeable future, meaning that volunteers can continue with their work and more people can gain from both existing and new information and stories posted.

“I hope that future generations researching their forbears will come across the site and be able to find out what their family did… a valuable primary source for future researchers.”

“The website has proved very useful to people researching their family members involved in WW1. The fact that it is still available is a major benefit.”

There is strong evidence of people’s desire and will to continue to contribute to Durham’s First World War heritage beyond the lifespan of the Durham at War project.

“What I hope to do at some future point is to gather up paper copies of my notes and summaries and present them to the Durham Record Office for archival use. I need advice on how to do that.”

“I am sure many more people are aware of the First World War heritage of the County owing to the website. It’s just a shame it had to come to an end as there are many more stories out there waiting to be told.”

Durham at War has built new skills and capacity for heritage through a comprehensive volunteering and training programme for a broad range of people. Volunteers have contributed 16,483.35 hours to the project over its lifespan in terms of professional, skilled and unskilled work. This equates to 2,353 days – or the equivalent of just over 9 years of a full-time post. This has not only made a strong impact on local heritage in relation to this one project but is also highly likely to carry on impacting on heritage throughout the region – and beyond – long afterwards through continued research, study and volunteering.

“The Durham at War project encouraged me to learn more about WW1 from historical accounts, novels, films and documentaries. It even inspired me to take a cycle tour to the battlefields and graveyards of the Somme and Ypres.”

Durham at War has added value to a vast range of community heritage First World War projects: maximising funding and resources; enhancing content through specialist research and access to archives; and providing a platform for groups to publicise events and publish their research.

“… the project has encouraged various groups and individuals to do their own research, even to the extent of producing their own books and films.”

“Our two local history groups pursued our own work and our film (HLF funded ‘In the Pink’) to commemorate our 244 men lost as a result of the war. We dipped in and out of the website.”

Durham at War has made a significant and ongoing contribution to heritage teaching and learning in schools. A total of 3484 schoolchildren have engaged with Durham at War activities and visits over the course of the project through First World War related workshops, projects and the 2018 schools conference. The materials and resources created have left a
last legacy in relation to a contribution to the curriculum, most notably support in teaching a new topic – ‘Medicine on the Western Front’. The ripple effect to other schools can already be seen in consultation feedback from a teacher who brought students to the conference. “We could only take eight Year 10 students in cars and they gained so much. Andy Robertshaw was brilliant. We benefitted so much from the conference that we contacted Andy to ask him to come to school to do another session and we had interest from another nine schools. Andy did two days with two sessions each day and he had the pupils in the palm of his hand – they have covered the content of their exam topic in that one session.”

“The work done with schools has passed that knowledge on to the next generation, helping it to stay alive for the future.”

**Durham at War: Legacy in relation to People**

“Durham at War has helped me to learn a huge amount about Durham and its people during WW1. At an immediate family level... I learned that my grandfather had served in the Royal Marines as a stretcher-bearer when I thought he had been exempted from service as a coal miner.”

Feedback presented within this report clearly shows the massive impact Durham at War has had on the people who have engaged with it and the long-term benefits which will continue to impact long into the future.

*Durham at War leaves behind a wealth of new skills and expertise,* by way of more knowledgeable staff, an enthusiastic and skilled volunteer force and much more awareness about the part County Durham and its people played in the First World War. Furthermore, the knowledge continues to ripple out to other projects and areas of volunteers’ lives and learning.

“I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of volunteering with Durham at War and as it comes to an end it has inspired me to volunteer with another project, transcribing Royal Navy WW1 service records to continue to use the skills I have learned during the Durham project and gain even more knowledge of the Navy in WW1.”

“I was pleased to work with a great team – Gill, Jo and Victoria – all of whom encouraged me to study for an MA in Great Britain and the First World War.”

“Looking for something to occupy my time on retiring from full-time employment, I came across Durham at war quite by accident... but what a joy and an education it has been for me to work on the project. I have learnt more than I ever thought I wanted to know about World War 1, an interest that will now stay with me forever.”

Furthermore, the new learning, knowledge and skills gained by students as part of internships and work placements has led to employment, thus contributing to careers in heritage and related work areas.

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55 Caroline West, History Teacher, Hermitage Academy.  
56 Durham at War volunteer.  
57 Durham at War volunteer.  
58 Durham at War volunteer.  
59 Durham at War volunteer who has since been awarded an MA.
Durham at War has honoured and celebrated the people of County Durham who played a part in the First World War, bringing to life long-lost stories and helping people to add to and further their research about the roles their own family members played in the First World War. Many volunteers have reported identification of new family history relating to the First World War which, in some cases, has led to new family connections.

“I have met so many lovely people and made good friends…two of my (unknown) relatives contacted me via Durham at War…”\textsuperscript{60}

“Victoria gave me the contact details of another relative of Arthur’s who volunteers for the project and I got in touch and now we are friends as well as relatives, having met for the first time for a ‘changing lives’ piece for the HLF website.”

Durham at War has resulted in new links and partnership with community heritage groups, which will endure beyond Durham at War. The project has supported and enhanced many projects led by other groups and externally funded, thus adding value and making a long-lasting contribution to knowledge and skills.

“One satisfying outcome of Durham at War is that it has added value to many community heritage First World war projects…”\textsuperscript{61}

Durham at War has resulted in a range of resources for future use by DCRO, schools and community heritage groups. Exhibitions, pop-up banners, school workshop sessions and activities and the ‘Tommies’\textsuperscript{62} are just some of the resources which have been well utilised over the project lifespan and which will continue to be available to support First World War formal and informal learning.

Finally, volunteer feedback suggests that the end of Durham at War will leave a hole in many people’s lives and that although the project itself might have come to an end, there is still a significant appetite – and will – to continue. There is still more to do…

“For me the project was fantastic. Newly retired, it gave me a purpose for the long winter afternoons. I am just devastated the project finished before I had completed my Australian soldiers (I only got to the Ms).”\textsuperscript{63}

“I’m sure many more people are aware of the First World war heritage of the County owing to the website. It’s just a shame it had to come to an end as there are so many more stories out there waiting to be told.”\textsuperscript{64}

“I feel that the project is fulfilling the vow made each Armistice Day that ‘we will remember them’ and it’s a great privilege to help to do that.”\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{60} Durham at War volunteer.
\textsuperscript{61} Liz Bregazzi, County Archivist, Durham County Record Office.
\textsuperscript{62} The ‘Tommies’ are life-sized aluminium outline statues produced by veterans working for There But Not There Charity to commemorate the fallen [https://shop.therebutnotthere.org.uk/collections/our-tommy/products/lifesizetommy](https://shop.therebutnotthere.org.uk/collections/our-tommy/products/lifesizetommy)
\textsuperscript{63} Durham at War volunteer.
\textsuperscript{64} Durham at War volunteer.
\textsuperscript{65} Durham at War volunteer.