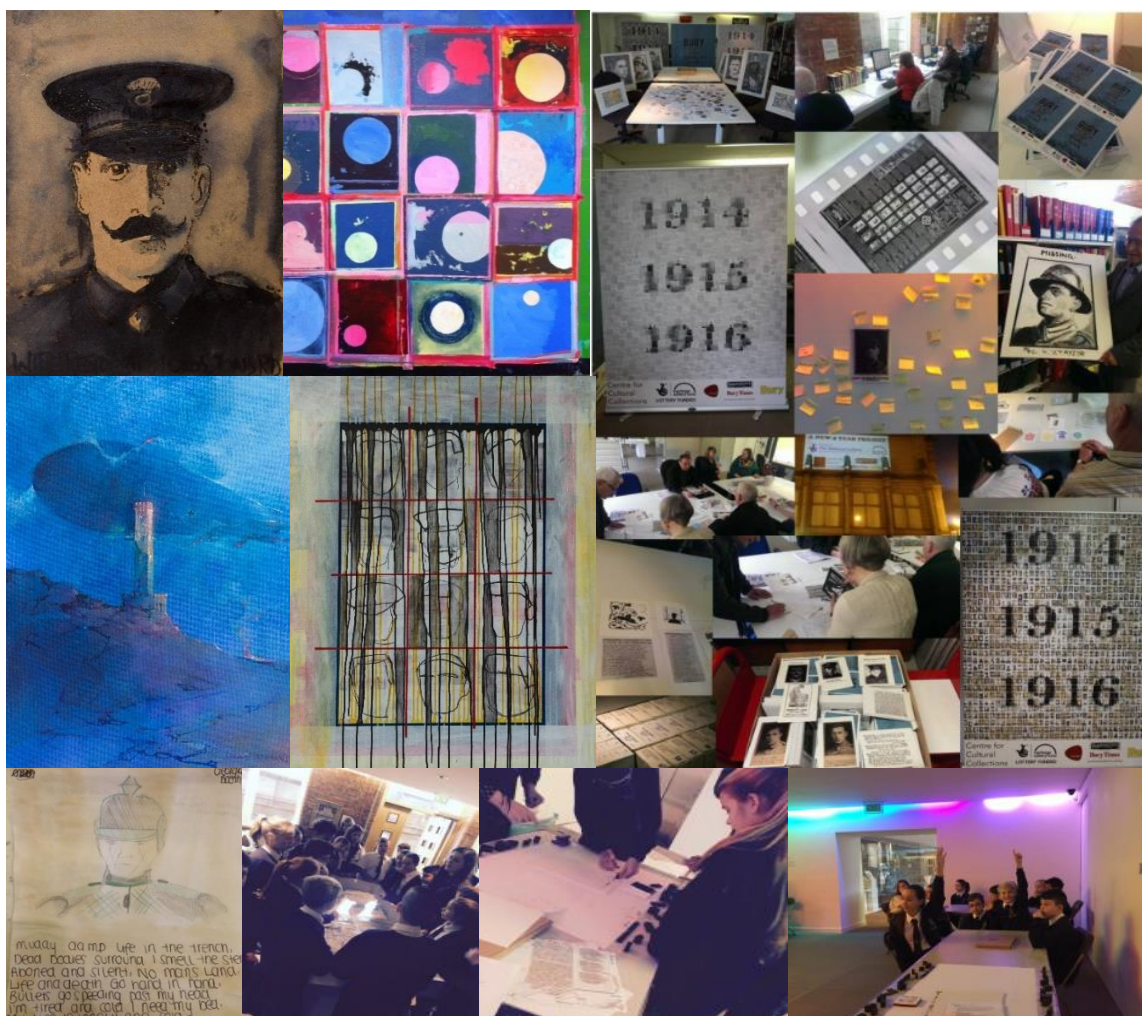


# BURY REMEMBERS THE FIRST WORLD WAR

## Evaluation Report

Project Ref: OH-14-01745



Supported by  
**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



**Bury**  
Libraries+Archives

- 1.0 Executive summary
- 2.0 Project background
- 3.0 Activity Plan
  - 3.1.1 Activity 1 – Staff training and development
  - 3.1.2 Activity 2 – Volunteer recruitment
  - 3.1.3 Activity 3 – Launch project blog
  - 3.1.4 Activity 4 – Digital conversion of WW1 newspaper archive
  - 3.1.5 Activity 5 – Capturing the content
  - 3.1.6 Activity 6 – Project art and exhibitions
  - 3.1.7 Activity 7 – Workshops and other events
  - 3.1.8 Activity 8 – Publicising the project
  - 3.1.9 Activity 9 – Putting the project online
- 4.0 Conclusions
  - 4.1- Achievements & Legacies
  - 4.2 - Lessons Learned

## 1.0 Executive summary

The *Bury Remembers the First World War* project for Bury Libraries & Archives, funded by the Heritage Lottery's Your Heritage programme, has been a great success for everyone involved.

For over three years our team of dedicated volunteers have been digitally extracting a wealth of information from the 5 local newspapers that were in print in and around Bury during the First World War. For years these newspapers have been freely available to view at Bury Archives on microfilm, but the only way to ensure that as many people as possible connect with the fascinating information within this archive was to make it more accessible. To the people of Britain Newspapers were the Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram of today. Newspapers were a way for people to access, escape and later remember the events of the war. The project focused on digitally extracting all local content from these newspapers. Soldiers' obituaries and photographs made up one huge collection but other content such as letters, adverts, poetry, stories etc. were also extracted. As these collections grew we worked with local artists, organisations, and the wider community to get this content seen. Events in and around Bury have given people an opportunity to connect with information many never knew existed. Our work is set to continue into 2018 with the creation of a new website that will give everyone free access to all of this amazing information.

This evaluation outlines what happened over the course of the project. It documents every stage of the project from the initial digitising of the newspapers to the way that this content was used to inspire, educate and inform. The experiences of staff, volunteers, partners and the wider community will show the many successes of the project and also outline some of the challenges we faced. The evaluation will also outline the legacy that this project will leave behind.

## 2.0 Project Background

Bury Archives Service was established in 1985 to collect the records, papers and photographs which are of cultural and historic value relating to the Borough of Bury and make them available free of charge to the public. The collections of records we hold relate all aspects of life in the Borough and are donated by the Council, local businesses, schools, churches, various clubs, societies, organisations and individuals dating from 1675 to the present day.

The Archives are part of the larger Archives & Local Studies Service which is run by Bury libraries and is situated on the bottom floor of Bury Art Museum. One of our most heavily used resources is the local newspaper archive which we hold on microfilm dating back to 1855. This resource has been a consistent source of information and time after time it has proven its importance. Searching through these newspapers can be very time consuming and there are currently only two indexes available:

- **British Newspaper Archive** ([www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)) – This service has indexed The Bury Times for the years 1855-1909. The website allows for paid subscription which will give access to the newspapers digitally or can be used freely as a searchable index giving users the information they need to then visit us to view the local newspaper archive. There is no searchable index or online editions of the other four local newspapers available.
- **Card Catalogue Index** – Over many years Librarians at Bury Library Service have created a card catalogue with references to various articles, photographs etc. in the local newspapers. This index, while very useful, is by no means a complete index. Back in 2012 we indexed this card catalogue and made it available via the Library Catalogue.

People who visit us are encouraged to use these indexes to help with their research but the majority of the time customers have to wade through page after page to find what they are looking for. The Bury Times is the main newspaper that people ask for but our other papers (Bury Guardian, Radcliffe Times, Radcliffe Guardian, and Ramsbottom Observer) are equally as important and currently have no index at all. People who come in to view the microfilms quickly realise what a time consuming task it can be, and many find it very difficult to focus on what they are searching for amongst the crammed pages of these old newspapers.

We are always desperate for people to engage with this fascinating archive but over the years have realised that people:

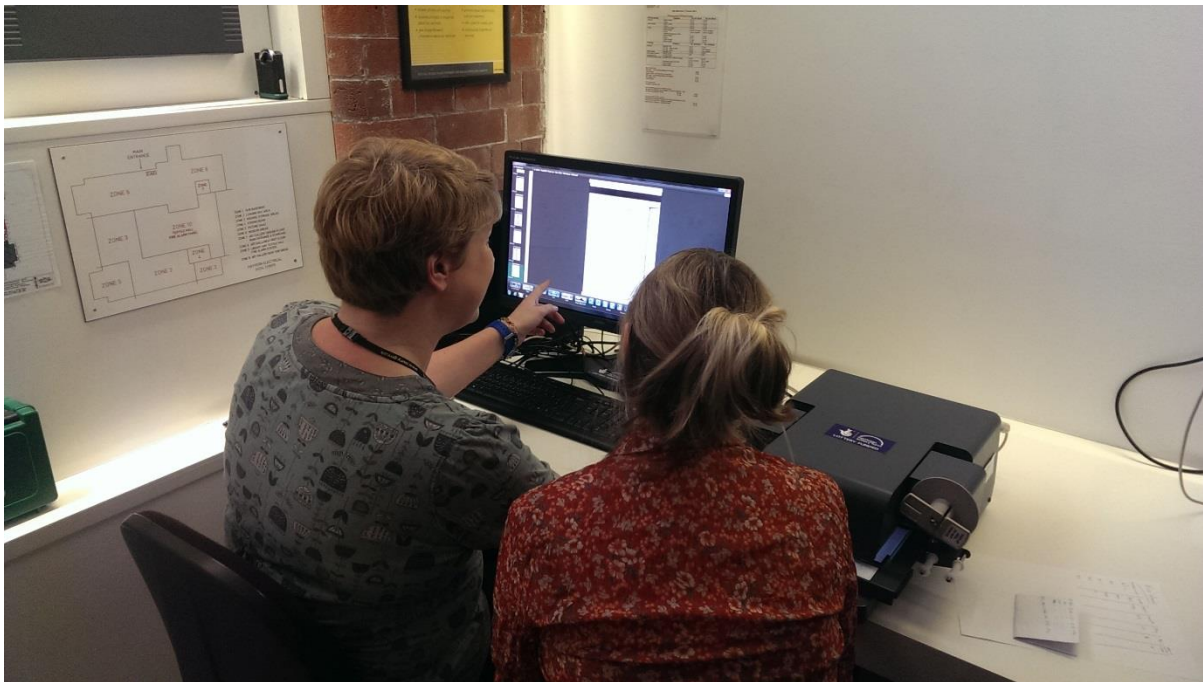
- are not aware that this archive is freely available to them
- feel uncomfortable in the archive setting
- find the process of looking through a microfilm time consuming
- are not aware of the fascinating information held within the archive
- prefer to have access digitally

In order to get people to engage with this archive we decided to use the WW1 Centenary as a focus point and applied for HLF funding for a project focusing on the content of these newspapers during the First World War. This funding has allowed us to make a wealth of information available to the wider community and give access to it in formats that encourage engagement and ensure that the contents of these newspapers is made increasingly accessible to a much wider audience.

### 3.1 Activity Plan

- Deliver IT and digital capture training to existing and new volunteers who will co-ordinate microfilm digitisation supervised by archives and libraries staff.
- Develop and maintain a blog promoting the project to wider audiences and encouraging community engagement.
- Undertake a programme of digital conversion of data from newspaper reels to be followed by editing, sorting, manipulating and contextualising.
- Create new artworks inspired by the content of the digitised collection. Pieces will be made local artists from The Bury Collective (30+ members).
- Run family history themed workshops in local libraries using the newspaper information as source material.
- Run poetry and creative writing workshops for children in local libraries inspired by newspaper content.
- Deliver a series of themed talks throughout the project.
- Produce themed publications, a schools pack and promotional materials to promote the project to a wide range of audiences.
- Deliver an exhibition at The Met theatre venue in Bury showcasing collections and workshop outputs and exhibiting the art pieces produced.
- Deliver sessions in 13 local secondary schools using the schools pack and incorporating First World War collections object handling.
- Develop an online exhibition of project outputs to reach wider audiences and establish capacity for a future interactive database.
- Develop a family friendly app enabling further online engagement opportunities.

### 3.1.1 Activity 1 – Staff training and development



#### Background

The microfilm machines that Bury Archives and Library Service had access to previous to this project were mostly non-digital. Only one of these machines allowed for digital conversion from Microfilm to JPEG/PDF format but the end result was very low quality and the process time-consuming. The other machines only allowed for digital photographs to be taken of the physical microfilm screen but again the quality was very low. In order to digitally scan 5 local newspapers for the years 1914-1918 quickly and to the quality we needed a new machine was the only option. Before we could let volunteers work on this we had to ensure that all staff involved in the project had the appropriate training. This training would also give us an insight into the processes involved in digitising the newspapers and highlight any issues that volunteers may have when the time came for them to use the new machine. Training on the new microfilm machine would also only be the first step. This would be followed by training on how best to extract the individual pieces of information and also work together to decide on the best way to store and index the data. This second stage would also have to then be rolled out to our volunteers which could only be done if staff were fully trained and confident in the processes involved.

## **What did we say we would do?**

Professional archive and library staff (Borough Archivist, Reference & Information Librarian and two Collections Assistants) will be coordinating the project from Bury Archives. We will be training library staff in the branches in Bury, Ramsbottom, Radcliffe and Tottington in how to facilitate the project at the various locations and how to manage the volunteer's needs and work flow.

## **What did we do and how did we do it?**

Throughout November staff based at Bury Archives looked through the microfilms that we have for the five newspapers from the year 1914-1918. Our initial task was to make sure that the microfilm reels were intact and that none were missing. Some of the reels were of questionable quality so we identified some that would require us to use the negative reels that we have stored in the Archives. We used one of our old machines which allows for digital copies to be taken but this process took such a long time that it was clear that we would need the new microfilm machine. Whilst awaiting delivery of our new Microfilm machine we ran several test processes for how the individual extracts would be captured, indexed and stored. This process allowed us to identify what software would be needed on our public access computers and laptops that volunteers would be using. Due to limitations on the software available to us we decided on 4 possible ways of extracting the data once the newspapers had been scanned.

When the new machine arrived we were given a training session by the supplier which all Archives staff attended. Archive staff then scanned the Bury Times reel (Jan 1914 – Dec 1915) and produced a step-by-step guide that would be available to the volunteers that would be undertaking this part of the project. Several issues were identified during this process such as the auto-scan function of the new machine not working as expected due to the differing quality and layout of the microfilm newspapers. It became clear very early on that whilst this initial process of scanning the newspapers with the auto-scan function would be extremely quick, volunteers would be needed to oversee the entire process and make alterations to the scan settings where necessary.

With the initial digital scans (Bury Times Jan 1914 – Dec 1915) staff identified that PDF output was better quality than JPEG, and whilst the new machine gave us the functionality to scan many pages into one file this sometimes led to prolonged processing so it was decided that each page of the newspapers would be output to an individual PDF. This resulted in around 1000 files for The Bury Times Jan 1914- Dec 1915 reel. Some staff raised questions as to whether it was necessary to scan all the newspapers as there was bound to be duplicated date. This resulted in a test process which showed some soldiers information being reported in The Bury Times but not in The Bury Guardian and vice versa so justified our decision to scan all newspapers available to us.



Staff at Bury Archives then worked through the various PDF files and tested several processes for extracting the data. These processes took into account various experiences that we have had with previous volunteers working on digital extraction projects. The process by which the volunteers would extract the data would have to be uniform to ensure consistency. Once we were all happy with the processes that had been worked out we invited several members of library staff from the other branches to visit Bury Archives and trained them in both using the new machine and also in the several processes that were identified for data extraction.

Every member of staff felt comfortable after their training sessions and were keen to get volunteers in their area working on the project as well as working on the project themselves. Staff at all other branch libraries were briefed on the process of recruiting volunteers as well as how they would be monitored and supported throughout the project.

**“I have never used a microfilm machine before and was a bit sceptical about the technical side of the project. After my training this completely changed and I now feel confident that I can be a part of this project”**

**Marisha Wierbun (Radcliffe Library)**

### **Why did we do it that way?**

We always knew that the digital scanning of the newspapers would be the quickest and easiest part of the project due to the capability of the new machine and testimonies that we received from other library services that have the same model. The data extraction methods were quickly identified as something that would require more attention. Making sure that staff were comfortable with both these processes was very important, and having as many people as possible running through test methods was the only way to ensure that we were making the process as easy and efficient as possible. Volunteers would be the people doing the majority of data extraction so it was key that as many members of staff were available to them to help, support and guide then throughout the project.

### **What were the outputs?**

Staff at other libraries do not always get to delve into the archive world so this training and development has changed to way that library staff view archives and also how archive staff view libraries. As well as training the core 4 members of Bury Archives we were also able to run training and development sessions for 10 library assistants would work at the other Bury Libraries. These training sessions covered the following:

- Tour of Bury Archives physical space
- Review of Archive records and how we manage those records

- Brief talk on the service Bury Archives offers
- A look at the limitations of the old microfilm machines
- Talk on the project and what we hope to accomplish as well as the legacy
- In depth training session on digital scanning of newspapers
- In depth training and discussion on the extraction process

To support staff who would be working on this project at their local libraries we also produced the following:

- Step-by-step Guide to the extraction of data from WW1 newspaper digital files
- A guide to Bury Archives to give them a better idea of what we do and what our vision for the future is. Staff at other libraries were also encouraged to contact us and work with us as much as possible to ensure that the project works for them and their customers.

### **How did we know that we were successful?**

All staff who took part in the training and development sessions were asked to email us with their feedback. This was done to ensure any future training would identify gaps or issues in the training already given.

Before the training took place 80% of the selected staff at Bury Libraries did not feel confident operating microfilm machinery of any kind and 70% were not aware of the records and collections held by Bury Archive Service. After the training sessions 100% of the selected staff felt that they could use the new microfilm machine with 90% feeling confident about the extraction process and their part in helping volunteers at their libraries. Every member of selected library staff felt that they were now aware of the kinds of records and collections that Bury Archives hold and many expressed an interest in having an archives presence in their library. Staff that were still not confident about the extraction process were given access to the step-by-step guide and every member of staff was confident that they would receive the support and guidance the needed from the core Archives team.

### **What will we do in future?**

It became very clear early on in the training and development programme that there is a divide between Bury Libraries and Bury Archives. We are both part of Bury Library Service but work very separately and have very different views on the progress and legacy of our service. Because of this we are currently developing several training sessions on all aspects of Bury Archives Service that will be available to all Library staff. We are also actively looking at ways for the Archives and the records and collections we hold to be visible and available at these other libraries. A big part of this is ensuring that we keep lines of communication open and active between Archives and Library staff.

### 3.1.2 Activity 2 – Volunteer recruitment and training



#### Background

Bury Archives service already had several volunteers that we identified to be part of this project. After the initial staff training and development it became clear that there would be two initial stages the volunteers would be needed for:

- Digital scanning of the newspapers – This would require several volunteers to be trained in the use of the new microfilm machine. They would work alongside staff at Bury Archives to digitise all newspapers from 1914-1918.
- Extraction, editing, manipulation, and sorting of newspaper content – This part of the project would require the most training for volunteers.


Because of the sheer amount of work involved in extracting the content we knew that we would need lots of new volunteers. We also knew that the training had to ensure that every volunteer felt capable of doing what we wanted them to do.

## What did we say we would do?

We will be using existing volunteers and recruiting new ones. Invitations to become involved will be published on the Bury Archives website, the blog, Facebook, global council emails, via local heritage and family history groups and in a newspaper article in the Bury Times. All volunteers will be inducted according to the standard regulations and procedures of the council. The volunteers will be trained in group sessions at the library locations and at the main Bury Archives site by professional centre staff. They will be given specific tasks and time periods to work on and they will be monitored on their progress for quality control, timely progress, their own development and understanding and to highlight any interesting discoveries they make.

## What did we do and how did we do it?

We initially contacted our existing volunteers with details on the project and invited them to visit us to discuss it further. We then set about recruiting via various methods using the recruitment posters shown below.

 Centre for Cultural Collections | Bury Remembers The First World War

The Centre for Cultural Collections, formerly Bury Archive and Family History Service, has received **£60,800** from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for an exciting project, **Bury Remembers The First World War**.

# VOLUNTEER TODAY

Centre for Cultural Collections  
Moss Street, Bury  
BL9 0DR  
0161 253 6782  
[Culture@Bury.gov.uk](mailto:Culture@Bury.gov.uk)  
[Twitter.com/buryculture](https://twitter.com/buryculture)  
[www.buryremembers.co.uk/blog/](http://www.buryremembers.co.uk/blog/)

“I have been obsessed with the history of my town for a long time. When I saw the recruitment posters on Facebook I was instantly drawn to this project as WW1 fascinates me. When I visited Bury Archives for the first time my fascination grew and I am very excited to help make the amazing information held within my home town’s local newspapers available to the whole world”

Ann Marsh – Elton (Facebook)

We had a press release in The Bury Times about the successful HLF bid and the recruitment poster was also included in this article. We then posted the poster to Facebook, Twitter, Bury Archives website and blog, Bury Local History Society,



Lancashire Local and Family History Society, and various other online forums. We printed hundreds of posters in various sizes and distributed them to all Bury Libraries as well as via the following friends of Bury Archives:

- Lancashire Fusilier Museum
- Delicious Café @ The Fusiliers Museum (leaflets we put into people's take away bags and also in leaflet rack)
- Bury Transport Museum
- East Lancashire Railway
- Bury Market
- The Met Theatre
- Bury Art Gallery and Museum

We also projected onto the side of Bury Art Gallery from The Fusiliers Museum every night for a few weeks to ensure that people visiting Bury after dark would be aware of the project and opportunity to volunteer.

After this initial recruitment drive we received 40+ volunteering enquiries about the project. We continued to recruit throughout the project at various stages using the various content collected as a way to entice people, but the initial response we had made sure that we had enough volunteers to start work on this project.



We started out by selecting 3 of our existing volunteers to digitally scan the microfilm reels. Volunteers were selected by archive staff and given a training session in the digitisation on the new microfilm machine at Bury Archives. The volunteers that were selected for this task had a mix of IT literacy and at the end of the training they all felt comfortable in using the new machine. They were also encouraged to train other volunteers throughout the project be them new recruits or volunteers who did not get chance to work on this particular part of the project. At the end of the project 80% of our volunteers felt capable of scanning microfilm reels to a digital format with the remaining 20% confident that staff were

available to help them if needed. The team of volunteers that performed this task used the step-by-step instructions provided and also relied on archive staff to help them when they had any issues.

Once the newspapers had been digitally scanned Bury Archives staff had a full day training session with the three volunteers who scanned the newspapers and 10 volunteers that had joined up. It was here that it became apparent that each volunteer had different levels of IT competency. We all discussed the best way to extract the data and staff went through the various procedures that were identified in the staff training and development. Once we outlined our proposed method over 60% of the volunteers who attended this initial session felt that they could not extract the content in the way we wanted. After many attempts we came up with a solution that would ensure the majority of volunteers could start work on the digital extraction. The method that we all agreed on was a much more basic version of one suggested by staff and our initial hope of volunteers extracting and indexing at the same time was scrapped due to volunteer feedback. We held additional sessions with other volunteers using this agreed method of data extraction and 90% of all volunteers were comfortable and confident that they could do it this way. The other 10% were to be trained and oversee other volunteers on the project and help with the indexing part of the project.

As the project progressed the volunteers became more confident with the extraction process and volunteers who were not confident with the IT side of the project were given other tasks to work on within the project with relevant training given depending on the task assigned. As we gathered an increasing amount of content there were more parts of the project that volunteers could become involved in. No matter what the task we ensured that every volunteer had the necessary training to allow them to contribute to the success of this project.

### **Why did we do it that way?**

When it came to recruiting new volunteers for this project we decided that we had to take advantage of the increased tourist numbers in and around Bury. The Archive Service in Bury has historically been very insular and relied heavily on internal publicity with very little money available for external publicity. The response that we received by recruiting via the friends of Bury Archives Service was overwhelming. With the content being so local in its nature the best way for us to recruit volunteers was to let them see examples of the amazing content that they would have access to with the possibility of working on a project that would make the content available on a worldwide level.

Before this project even started we knew that the biggest job would be the extraction of the actual content. Because of this we decided that the initial scanning of the newspapers was not something that every single volunteer would need to do. This is why we selected a

small team of volunteers for the scanning and then opened up the extraction task to all volunteers we had recruited. Just because staff identified a particular way of doing the extraction we were not small minded enough to assume that volunteers would do it in the same way. Because of this we decided to be extremely malleable and take the feedback received in the initial volunteer training sessions seriously. Although it resulted in a completely new way of extracting the data, we were more concerned with the volunteers being comfortable with the process to ensure that we gathered all the content we needed in the time we had.

### **What were the outputs?**

Over the course of this project we have enrolled 45 volunteers. 90% of these volunteers have taken part in the digitisation and data extraction process and received training on our project Microfilm machine. They all took part in several training sessions which resulted in a method for data extraction that 90% of all volunteers were comfortable with. The 10% of volunteers who were not comfortable with data extraction and scanning were able to take part in other parts of the project as follows:

- Indexing already extracted newspaper data
- Showing local artists through the digitised content
- Photographing soldiers images direct from the microfilm screen (volunteer suggestion) – resulting in very high quality images
- Open days assistance
- Exhibition assistance
- Poetry reading at Bury Light Night
- Archives themed talks at Enlighted festival
- Production of School Packs
- Helping with production of promotional material

“I was very upset when it became clear that I could not grasp the data extraction part of the project as I was desperate to be involved. The archives team sat down with me and between us we came up with a plan to take advantage of my photography background. Wendy who works in the archives gave me a crash course in using their digital camera and I set about taking images directly from the microfilm screen. This resulted in crisp and clear images of Bury soldiers that have been a big part of this project. Very proud to be part of a project so close to my heart”

Jesse Riley – Volunteer

### How did we know that we were successful?

We recruited 45 volunteers over the course of The project. 90% of these volunteers were able to work on the digitisation and data capture tasks that were given to them. The consistency of the extracted data is testament to the success of the training they received. We did a volunteer survey at the end of the project with the following results:

“Volunteering on this project has been a blast. I am a Bury lass with a keen interest in WW1 but working with content so local to me has made it so much more personal”

Vicky Munroe - Volunteer

All statements were scored from 1 – 5

(1=Strongly Agree/2=Agree/3=Neutral/4=Disagree/5=Strongly disagree)

Questions	Average Score
The project volunteer recruitment process was easy to understand and made me feel comfortable about signing up	4.5
Throughout the project I feel that I was given all the training and support I needed to complete the tasks given to me	4.5
I felt comfortable asking members of staff for help	4.5
I felt that there were a variety of tasks available on this project and was given options when it came to the tasks I worked on	4
The project was important to me because of the local nature of the content	5
I have seen the results of the work I have done in the various events/workshops/publications etc.	5
I am confident that the project will have a lasting legacy	5
I would be happy to volunteer on further archives projects	5



### **What will we do in future?**

We aim to keep all our volunteers on record and have several projects planned for the future which we will keep them informed of in the hope that they can be involved. All volunteers who have worked on this project are updated on the progress of the new website which will require their assistance once it has been built. There is still a lot of data that needs to be indexed and in order to make sure that the information held on our new website is fully searchable we will be recruiting from our current volunteer list and also having another recruitment drive.

We are also in the process of developing volunteer job descriptions before any future projects so that it is clear from the start exactly what will be expected from our volunteers. We have also learned that even if a project has a majority of technical tasks that volunteers who are not computer literate can still play a huge part in the success of the project.

### 3.1.3 Activity 3 – Launch project blog



#### Background

Bury Archives Service has blogged since August 2010. Due to the nature of this project it was always going to take time to gather content from the newspapers so we initially started blogging about the setting up of the project and the recruitment of volunteers. Once new content started to be saved we were then able to get the content out via the blog. It became clear very early on that the blog was a great way to show people the progress that was being made, but other channels such as Facebook and twitter had a much further reach. Because of this we decided to use the blog solely to report on the project progress and filter all actual project content via social media.

We had some issues with the original Bury Remembers Blog when the previous Archivist left the service in December 2015. The domain name [www.buryremembers.co.uk](http://www.buryremembers.co.uk) which was set up by this Archivist was shut down and we were forced to reproduce all blogs and give access to them via the Archives blog pages.

As more and more content was being created we were constantly posting to Facebook, in particular already established groups such as Bury Olden Days (14,000+ members) and Grew

up in Radcliffe (8,000+ members) and their members quickly engaged with the content. We have continued this throughout the project and will continue to do so using this project's content and any future Archive projects.

### **What did we say we would do?**

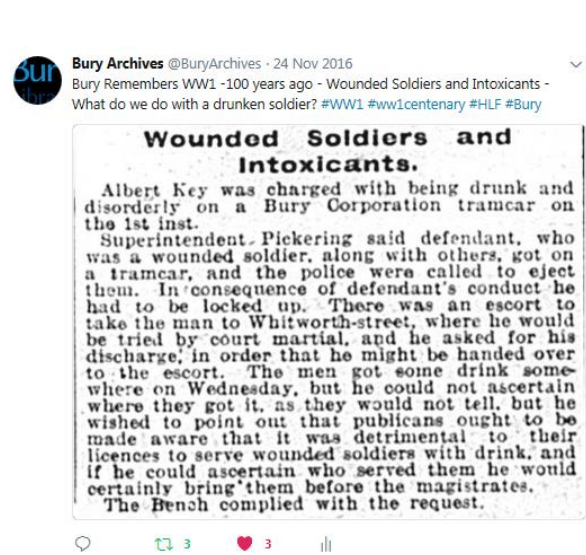
Introduce the project to the public. Teach staff & volunteers who haven't blogged before about the techniques & skills involved so that they can all contribute to telling the story of what the project is doing and how they feel about their contribution/discoveries etc. Get some initial feedback for the project.

### **What did we do and how did we do it?**

We initially set up a stand-alone blog dedicated to the project ([www.buryremembers.co.uk](http://www.buryremembers.co.uk)). This blog was used from the very start of the project and reported on every stage we were at. Once we started to gather content from the newspapers and had it saved and easily accessible we then decided to post the content via this new blog. It became apparent early on that the blog was not reaching as many people as we wanted it to and despite advertising the blog on our various leaflets, banners, postcards etc. we were desperate to show the people of Bury and beyond the amazing things that our volunteers were digitally digging up. We decided that posting the content to Facebook and Twitter would reach much more people and also give people the opportunity to engage with the content. Many members of staff and volunteers were not au fait with how to use social media so we held a training session at Bury Archives to bring everyone up-to-date on how best to use social media for this project.

It was decided in this session that it would be best if only members of staff had access to the social media element of the project but all volunteers were encouraged to post some of their findings via their own social media as long as they referenced where it had come from and what project it was a part of. We also encouraged our volunteers to suggest content they had found for particular blogs, tweets or Facebook posting.

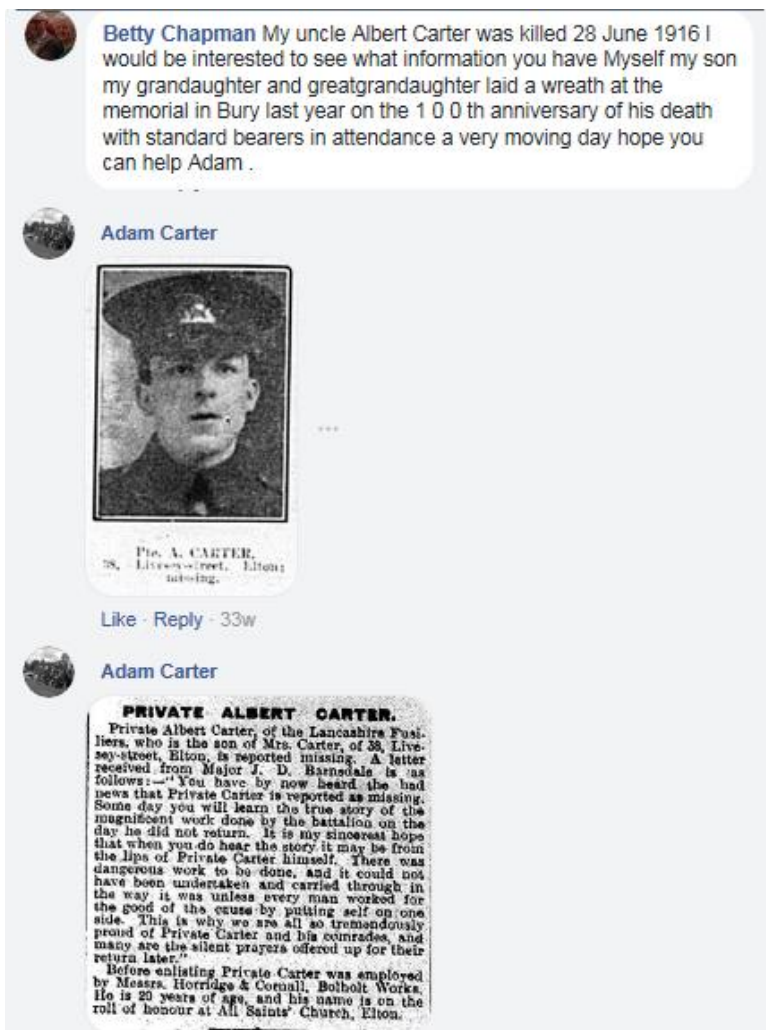
**Twitter (@buryarchives)** – Because the content we were extracting was in date order we were very easily able to start a twitter stream of “100 Years ago in Bury” which posted content from 1915 in 2015, 1916 in 2016 and so on. Doing it this way really caught people's attention and also turned our twitter account into a temporary gallery where we could give people access to a sample of the project's findings. As the project progressed we also posted random articles that volunteers had suggested and linked them with current events or popular hashtags to try and get our tweets seen by as many people as possible. This will continue in 2018 with all of the 1918 content that we have.



All media that has been posted to our Twitter account is easily accessible and is providing people with a sample of what we have done till our new website will give them access to it all.

**Facebook** – We initially attempted to set up an Archives Facebook page but were denied access due to Bury Libraries already having an active page. We tried to post a few things via this library page but found that the content was not reaching the numbers of people we wanted it to. Because of this we started posting via already established groups such as Bury Olden Days (14,000+ members) and Grew up in Radcliffe (8,000+ members) and the response we had was fantastic. This part of the project really connected with people and we quickly started getting requests for soldier's images and obituaries and also lots of interest in the poetry and other articles that were being posted. All of these posts can be viewed on the various Facebook group pages but here are a few examples of how posting our content to Facebook engaged with the wider community:

- Betty Chapman – Betty contacted me via Facebook after picking up a leaflet about one of our open days. She requested any information we had on Albert Carter and due to the progress that our volunteers were making I was able to provide her with the relevant information very quickly.



Further discussions with Betty resulted in her being selected for a photography session that we decided to do to show people the connection that these soldiers have with people still living today. Betty and her family visited Bury Archives and the results of that day can be viewed on our blog

<https://buryculture.wordpress.com/2017/10/12/ancestor-project-albert-carter/>

<https://buryculture.wordpress.com/2018/02/03/ancestral-photo-shoot-ww1-soldier-with-descendants/>

We crossed paths with Betty Chapman once again this year when a member of the Bury Olden Days Facebook group posted a picture of a brooch she had found in the charity shop she works at in Ramsbottom. This brooch had an image of an unknown soldier with no other information. It was not known if this soldier was a Bury Lad or if he had even died in the First World War but it was identified as being a WW1 soldier. Betty recommended Bury Archives as being someone who could help and again due to the Soldiers images our volunteers had extracted it did not take long to pick out this soldier from the line-up. When we identified him as Private John Nation with his image and obituary we were then surprised to learn that he had a cousin fighting who was Private Albert Carter. Betty and the lady who posted originally met up and agreed to display the brooch with Albert's display after which it would be given to Betty to keep. This story appeared in The Bury Times and was also featured on BBC Radio Manchester.



### **Why did we do it that way?**

We initially wanted to blog as we did not have much experience using social media in Bury Archives. Once it was decided that we would use the blog, Facebook and Twitter we thought that the best approach would be to train as many staff and volunteers as possible. It soon became apparent that too many people can be a bad thing when it comes to making the best use of social media. Because of this it was decided that dedicated staff would be in control of the social media and volunteers would be trained and encouraged to do their own posts, tweets etc.

The local nature of the content resulted in us realising that we needed to make it available to local people. Because of this Facebook and twitter were alternative options that we did not necessary consider before the project.

### **What were the outputs?**

Because we were using the blog, Facebook and twitter to get the content out into the public domain we were able to engage with people who would otherwise been unaware of Bury Archives, our project or the content and collections that we have. The response to the content that has been put online has seen our visitor figures rise and lots of new visitors to Bury Archives who had no idea we were there despite living in Bury all their lives. Volunteers have really enjoyed being able to use their own social media accounts to post content from the project and the fact that no-one else in their online community has access to this content it has resulted in them getting lots of positive responses.

Increased access to the content of the newspapers has resulted in more people wanting to view old copies from other years and several have enquired as to why money is not available to digitise them all. This increase in local knowledge of our collections is also raising questions as to what else can be done with such an amazing resource. The website that is currently under construction will give access to all the WW1 content for this project but the increased public engagement will help us when we work on making all the other years of the newspapers more available to the people who demand it digitally.

There are discussions starting as a direct result of this project and it is hoped that this project will be the powder keg for a digital future where this particular resource is concerned.

### **How did we know that we were successful?**

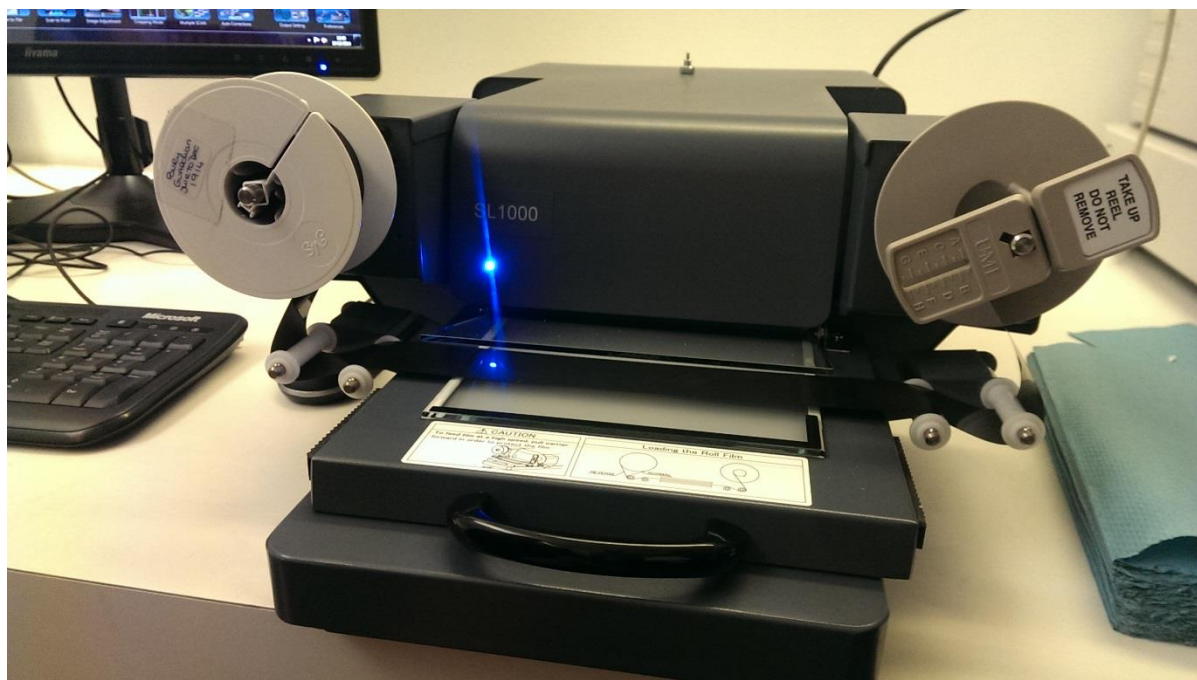
Feedback from Facebook and Twitter showed that people really engaged with the content and making a huge subject like WW1 be so local has had a huge effect on people. The online demand for content is evidence that we have been successful in introducing the project to the public and the increase in visitor numbers is a direct result of this. There have been lots of visitors to Bury Archives who have come solely based on what they have seen on the various online platforms. This success is only based on a relatively small percentage of the project content being made available so it is hoped that when all the content is available interest in the Archives and what we have will increase.

All feedback from Facebook is available on the Bury Olden Days group and Twitter lets you access all previous Tweets and media postings.

### **What will we do in future?**

We will continue to use the blog for in-depth stories and projects but this part of the project has shown us the importance of Facebook and twitter and how content like ours is best made as accessible as possible to ensure that anyone has access to it. In future we will be making all project content available via our new website and will also work a lot harder at advertising what we have to as big an audience as possible. We are also extremely keen to improve our online presence when it comes to the education side of things as learning about WW1 is one thing but learning about WW1 and the effect it had on your home town and its people is another.

### 3.1.4 Activity 4 – Digital conversion of WW1 newspaper archive



#### Background

All of our newspaper microfilm reels are stored safely in Bury Archives store facility. We have reels that are for public use and back-up negative copies. The public usage of this resource has always been an issue as the more the reels are used the more susceptible they are to damage. Because of this it was always hoped that we would be able to have the facility to digitise the newspaper to cut down on our reliance on the microfilm reels.

The machines that we have in our service are not capable of such a task. There is one machine that has the ability to digitise but the process is extremely time consuming and the quality is terrible. Because of this a new machine was needed. Bury Archives has 5 newspapers in its archive:

- The Bury Times
- The Bury Guardian
- The Radcliffe Times
- The Radcliffe Guardian
- The Ramsbottom Observer

Out of these 5 newspapers it is only The Bury Times that is currently being digitised by the British Library (currently digitised 1855-1909) and there is no indication as to when they will digitise more. The other 4 newspapers are not available digitally anywhere else so it is of great importance that we have the capability of digitising these papers ourselves.



## **What did we say we would do?**

Using the specialist IT equipment purchased for the project, the volunteers will convert the initial data from the newspaper reels from the 5 local newspapers and store it in a digital format in the designated, secure project space created on the Council's digital storage SAN.

## **What did we do and how did we do it?**

Bury Archives and Library Staff were initially trained in the usage of the new Microfilm machine and given the opportunity of starting the process with The Bury Times papers from Jan 1914 – Dec 1914. From here we then selected a group of existing Bury Archives volunteers to complete the process for all the WW1 newspapers. Training was given throughout the project to all volunteers so that they could see the entire process of digitisation and several of them have gone on to use the machine for personal research purposes and even train new volunteers in its operation.

Volunteers then scanned all available newspaper reels from 1914-1918. The scanning process is very quick and has an auto-scan function but due to the quality of the reels it was necessary to have volunteers available to make sure that the machine was capturing the content in the way we wanted. Each page scanned resulted in a separate PDF file which was then placed in an appropriate folder by the volunteers. This process took a while but in comparison to our older machine was extremely quick. Once the process was complete volunteers then went through every page to check for obvious scanning errors and where necessary re-scan specific parts of the papers.

There were instances where the original microfilm reel was badly damaged and when this was the case we had to train volunteers in the handling of the negative reels. Once all the scanning had been done we then sat down with our volunteers and discussed the best way to give them access to the scanned files. It was not possible for them to have access to the files on our council computer due to restrictions on our side so it was decided that they would have access on designated memory sticks.

All digitised newspapers were split between various memory sticks that volunteers would work on and any extracted images would be partially indexed and then placed in a separate file on that memory stick. Back up was then made daily to the council hard drive and again to an external hard drive that was stored away from Bury Archives to ensure that no data was lost.

It was initially hoped to purchase specific space on the council's digital storage SAN but this did not happen. This way of storing the data has resulted in us having access to it at various Library locations but has made the back up of data a bit more complicated than we would have liked.

## **Why did we do it that way?**

The only way to scan all the newspapers and get them into a format that could then be used by volunteers was with this new machine. It was decided that a dedicated team of volunteers would complete this process as we needed the digital copies in order to start the extraction process. Once the digitisation was complete we then offered the training to all the volunteers so that when they worked on the extraction process they were fully aware of the journey the newspaper had been on from microfilm to screen.

The aim of this project has always been to get what is in the newspapers out into the world. If we had more staff and money we would have loved to have purchased a more expensive machine with OCR capabilities so that we could make the entire WW1 newspaper collection searchable but this project was also about more than just making the content searchable, it was about making it accessible and making it easier for us to engage the wider community with the content.

Storage was an issue that we had to deal with and the method we ended up using was not our ideal solution. This was due to issues we had with our IT department. Despite these issues we were able to safely and securely store the full digital version of the WW1 Bury Newspapers.

## **What were the outputs?**

Once the initial digitisation process was complete we had digital copies of the following:

- The Bury Times (1914- 1918) – 4232 digitised pages
- The Bury Guardian (1914- 1918) – 4123 digitised pages
- The Radcliffe Times (1914- 1918) – 4489 digitised pages
- The Radcliffe Guardian (1914- 1918) – 3959 digitised pages
- The Ramsbottom Observer(1914- 1918) – 4329 digitised pages

This collection has had a great impact on the service as a whole because all libraries in Bury now have access to the WW1 newspapers without having to send people to Bury Archives to view them on Microfilm. It has also had a marked effect on the WW1 reels we hold here at Bury Archives because we can now let customers scan through the digital copies without using the original microfilms.

## How did we know that we were successful?

Before this project Bury Archives has no digital versions of the local newspapers. We had the capability to produce digital copies on a machine that produced questionable versions but before “Bury Remembers” we were primarily using the microfilm reels and printing the content. The response that we have gathered from people who have been given access to this content shows that people prefer accessing the content digitally. Even though this is a relatively small chunk of the total newspaper archive it is still a vast improvement on what we had before.

I have been a long time user of Bury Archives and in particular the newspaper collection. I have always enjoyed using the microfilm machines but think that having access to all this amazing information digitally will finally get more children interested in what has happened in their home town.

Stephen Green – Archive Customer

I have always had to send customers over to Bury Archives when they ask about the newspaper archive but now have the ability to give them access in their home library. Hopefully we will be able to get the same done for other years

Anna Jones – Ramsbottom Library

## What will we do in future?

We hope to use this process to scan as much of our newspaper archive as possible. We will then be able to run other projects for particular periods (eg. WW2/1920s/1960s) with the end goal being to make all this fascinating information more accessible to the public. It is hoped that all digital content will be made available on our new website but we have also seen the amazing things that can be done when we work with the community, businesses, organisations, attractions in and around Bury to make the best use out of this resource.

Finally I can look through The Bury Times without straining my eyes! It makes things so much easier when you can just click from page to page and the zoom function is very useful

Charles Walker  
Archive Customer

### 3.1.5 Activity 5 – Capturing the content



#### Background

Accessing the WW1 newspapers on our microfilm machines has always been a time consuming task. Initially we always have to give the customer an induction into how to use the machine and this is not as easy as people think. Once they are comfortable in the use of the machine they can begin their search. Having little to no index for the newspaper during WW1 means that the time spent looking through them is dependent on how much information the customer has. There is then also the issue of which paper to look in. Some soldiers lived in Bury but appear only in the Radcliffe Papers and others have an obituary in one paper and face image only in another. Digitising the newspapers was not enough for this project. In order to make the information within as accessible as possible we have to extract it piece by piece.

We could have scanned all the newspapers and then simply had volunteers indexing the individual pages but this would still result in people having to access the page and then look for and extract the individual soldiers' image or obituary etc. To make the most use out of the fascinating content within these newspapers we had to look at a way of extracting individual extracts.

## **What did we say we would do?**

The volunteers will start to extract the WWI data from the digitally scanned newspapers from 1914-1918 by manual selection and organisation. Despite digital manipulation & improvement by the volunteers at this stage, some articles and photographs are of a poor quality and can be difficult to print out legibly. As the only copies of the newspapers which exist at the moment are on our microfilm, some copies are of a very poor quality and so the volunteers will be manipulating the digital data and enhancing the quality. This will be complemented and further improved for customers in the Bury Archives & the libraries by printing out via a good quality printer. Access will be improved for the collection and copies can be provided for researchers. Digital copies can also be sent to overseas customers. This will further increase the accessibility of the collection.

## **What did we do and how did we do it?**

Once the initial batch of 21,000+ PDF pages was complete and backed up we separately split them into sections and put them on project memory sticks. These memory sticks were then given to the volunteers when they visited Bury Archives and the other locations and using the step-by-step guide that was developed in the training session they set about extracting the content of the newspapers. Volunteers had staff available to assist them and Bury Archive staff were always available to help.

Each volunteer was told to work through the contents of the memory sticks a page at a time. For each page they would digitally extract any soldiers' images and obituaries, poetry, letters, adverts or any information that they felt gave insight into what life was like for the people of Bury during WW1. Each extract was then saved to a specific folder on the memory stick and the PDF page was then deleted to keep track of where we were up to.

- Soldiers images were indexed with just the name of the soldier
- Soldiers obituaries were indexed with just the name of the soldier
- All other extracted articles were indexed in date order for indexing and tagging to be done at a later date

This was the only way to ensure that our volunteers could extract and save the files at the pace we needed to gather the content we required to carry on with the other parts of the project. At the end of every day the content that had been extracted by the volunteers would be backed up on the council drive and further backed up on our external hard drives.

This process was a lot trickier at the other library locations and it became clear that all extraction would have to be done at Bury Archives as the data was too vulnerable to corruption and loss at the other library locations. This was not as much of an issue as we thought as all volunteers who were working on the project at other library locations were happy to come to Bury as long as the finished content would be on display and available later at their local library.

### **Why did we do it that way?**

It was initially hoped that every extracted piece of information would be indexed thoroughly on a separate spreadsheet so that each image would have a unique ID and with it as much information as possible. In our initial training sessions it became obvious that this was not going to happen. There were limitations from an IT perspective but the volunteer capabilities was the major issue. Because of this we had to make the process as simple as possible whilst still making sure that the extracted information was indexed and categorised to an extent that could be worked on separately.

There is so much information within these newspapers and the process of extracting that content can be arduous and monotonous. Because of this we had to make sure that all volunteers were completely comfortable with the process.

### **What were the outputs?**

- 21,000+ PDF pages (All Newspapers 1914-1918)
- 3,000+ Soldier images (Black and White) - Indexed
- 3,000+ Soldier Obituaries (Black and White) – Indexed
- 3,000+ Soldier Images (High Quality Photographs taken from microfilm screen) - Indexed
- 40,000+ newspaper articles consisting of adverts, Poems, letters, photographs etc.

All of this content has been made available on the council hard drive so that staff can access it for customers who come in requesting information on fallen relatives.

### **How did we know that we were successful?**

The sheer amount of information that has been extracted is something that has been a major success in this project. The amount of content has always been increasing so as the project progressed we had more and more content to work with. Throughout the course of the project we have tried to keep a log of every time an extracted piece of content has been given out to a member of the public and in what format. It proved difficult to keep track of the content that was provided to members of the public at other libraries but the below gives an idea of how the extracted data was distributed.

Collection	Printed	Emailed	Facebook	Twitter
Soldiers' Images (B&W)	480	398	287	567
Soldiers' Obituaries (B&W)	599	432	187	323
Soldiers' Images (Colour)	658	266	94	25
Other newspaper articles	389	277	88	478
Full pages of WW1 Papers	267	64	48	67

These numbers represent everytime a particular extract was produced either physically using the project printer or digitally via social media or our own email system. When people see that information that we have available their immediate response is "Can I access this online?". We are confident that when all the content is made available online the success of this extraction process will be shown in full.

### **What will we do in future?**

Our project website is set to be finished in May 2018. When the website is complete we will give the entire world access to all the content that we have gathered in this project. There are still 1000's of extracts that need to be fully tagged and index but we already have a team of volunteers selected from the project who will work on this into 2018. The hope is that the website will become increasingly searchable and grow as more and more people access and engage with the content.

### 3.1.6 Activity 6 – Project art and exhibitions



#### Background

Bury Archives is located in Bury Art Museum so we have always worked very closely with local artists who use the Art Gallery above us. As a service we were waiting for an opportunity to link heritage and art and this project gave us that opportunity. The newspapers during WW1 were not exactly visually striking. The general rule seemed to be to cram as much information into their pages as possible. Going through all the amazing content we thought that it would be great to use the content to inspire a group of local artist and see what the content meant to them. The results were amazing.

#### What did we say we would do?

We will work with The Bury Collective which is a group local artists who will create illustrated responses to the poems, letters and articles as inspiration for artworks which will go on exhibition at the local theatre venue, The Met. Without the project, again, the artists would find it difficult and time consuming to find suitable images without spending time looking at each page on the microfilm. Again, this all puts a lot of pressure on our single copy whereas the digital version and the arrangement made possible by this project will enable multiple users and be much quicker.



## **What did we do and how did we do it?**

We invited the members of a local Art Group (Bury Collective) into Bury Archives to discuss the idea behind the project. They were all extremely enthusiastic but the majority of them wanted to have something physical to work with. Because of this we offered them several options:

- Content could be made available to them via email although this would be random content
- We could print content and they could take what they wanted
- They could look through the content at Bury Archives or Local Library that had been produced so far and take it away digitally or physically
- They could have digital or hard copy prints of the full pages to work with

Overall we produced hundreds of physical and digital extracts that the artists took away to work on. Several of them revisited the Archives on a regular basis to see what new content had been extracted. The artists then set about creating their own works inspired by the content they had been given access to. These works were in multiple formats and a member of the Archives team attended regular Bury Collective meetings to keep up-to-date with their progress and assess their needs when it came to exhibiting their work.

Our volunteers mixed well with the artists and it gave both groups the opportunity to see how each worked with the content. Once all the art had been produced we had an exhibition at The Met theatre which ran from November 2015 – March 2016. These pieces were then deposited by the artists at Bury Archives for use in future exhibitions. Every piece was digitised by a member of archive staff and was used in additional publicity.

## **Why did we do it that way?**

Working with artist can be difficult and when you have over 30 to work with things can get even more difficult. Because of this we set out from the start that we would supply the content in various formats and all artist would have to either visit us in person or specify that they wished to have content emailed to them. Once they had the content they were very dedicated to using what they had as inspiration. Artists who worked using soldiers' images found it difficult to pick specific soldiers so had to be given a random selection as not to deliberately miss any soldiers out.

We were very lucky to work with a group that worked very well as individuals. They found the content fascinating and the volunteers and staff found what they produced equally as fascinating.

## What were the outputs?

To date there have been over 100 pieces of art produced by The Bury Collective and a NHS choices group that joined the project later. These pieces have all been digitised and have since been digitally exhibited at all other Bury Libraries. The digitised work has also been used in the very popular school packs that were produced. With the end of the centenary fast approaching we are also getting requests from our various partners to have the artwork displayed at various tourist hotspots throughout Bury.

## How did we know that we were successful?

The exhibition at the Met was originally meant to run for 2 months so when that was extended to 5 months it had a great effect on our visitor numbers. We received lots of complimentary and positive feedback at the exhibition and have also received lots of feedback from the digital exhibitions at other libraries.

On the day of the exhibition we had 245 visitors including the mayor of Bury and various Bury Councillors. In the 5 months that it was open to the public after that we had a further 2400 people passing through it. As a result we also had a surge in our visitor numbers whilst the exhibition was on with a 15% increase in people visiting Bury Archives in the months the exhibition was on show.

This exhibition was amazing. My granddad was a Bury soldier and it is great to see that they will not be forgotten. Thank you!

Dean - Tottington

I have never been so proud to be from Bury. At school we only learnt about international events and when it came to the home front it was never this personal. One of the soldiers who is on canvas lived on my street.... Amazing!

Jane - Elton

## What will we do in future?

Due to the success of the exhibition we will definitely work with artists in future. There is such value in linking heritage and art and it is something that we hope to be able to pursue. The collections that we have sometimes have a stigma attached to them which make people see them as old dusty and inaccessible but when art is linked with them it opens up what we have to a much wider audience.

### 3.1.7 Activity 7 – Workshops and other events



#### Background

With the main focus of the project being the extraction of a large amount of data we felt that whilst this process was taking place we needed to constantly show people what fascinating information we were finding. Initially the best way to do this was to get people into Bury Archives but as the project developed it became possible to do this in other ways. We were very interested in getting our project content into schools but as we have not worked that closely with schools before we were not sure of the best way to do this. The sheer amount of content that we would be gathering meant that we would have all that we needed to hold various sessions in and around Bury. The process of ensuring that as many people as possible engaged and interacted with the content constantly evolved throughout the project. The content that we have collected will ensure that people will get the opportunity to see all project outputs in a variety of formats.

### **What did we say we would do?**

We will provide various workshops/events using the newspaper information for family historians run by Bury Archives staff. Workshops on poetry and creative writing inspired by the information found in the local newspapers will be led by a specifically recruited facilitator.

We will provide Literary/writing events held for children with a school facilitator made available to go into schools and work with the school pack using the information found in the newspapers and other WWI archive material.

### **What did we do and how did we do it?**

Once the project had been running for a while we were able to use the extracted data to produce lots of learning materials. We developed a school pack with the help of our schools and literary facilitators which quickly became the focus of a lot of our outreach sessions. We initially wanted to get our facilitators to go out into schools around Bury but due to the struggle we had contacting them we were only able to hold multiple sessions in two local secondary schools in Bury in 2015. We tried to set up further sessions but it quickly became clear that we were spending a lot of time trying to contact the schools that could be spent producing the school packs and other resources which could then be sent out to them. The schools that we held sessions in were very positive with their feedback and we decided that the best way to get our project content into school was to produce specialised school packs with suggested lesson plans as well as other learning materials that would be made freely available to them throughout the project and after.

Throughout the project we have had an open door policy at Bury Archives for anyone wanting to look through any of our WW1 content. We have constantly been producing postcards and posters that are displayed throughout Bury inviting people to visit us. With the massive amount of learning resources that our facilitators were producing we were able to hold several poetry/creative writing workshops at various locations as well as have themed talks at Bury Archives which were advertised throughout Bury using the newspaper articles as postcards to entice people to visit us. We also had a strong project presence at Bury Light Night 2015 and Enlighten Festival in 2017 as well as a stall at Ramsbottom Festival and chocolate festival with free postcards and school packs available to festival goers. We have also held several open days at Bury Archives and various Library Locations where all project content was on display with volunteers and staff helping visitors with their military history research and members of The Bury collective giving talks on their artwork and how the content inspired it.

We had initially hoped to hold a lot more sessions at the other libraries but staffing issues meant that the majority of workshops etc. were held at Bury Archives. We have however

made all project content available to staff at other libraries who have used it to help with requests they get from customers about their local soldier ancestors.

### **Why did we do it that way?**

We always knew that as the project progressed the amount of data we had to work with would increase. We initially wanted to go out to a lot of Bury Schools to showcase what we were extracting from the newspapers but it became clear very early on that this was not a simple task. Our initial outreach sessions in two Bury Secondary Schools were very popular and resulted in those two schools having multiple sessions and requesting a much higher quantity of school packs and learning resources than initially predicted.

This made us confident that putting more time and effort into producing the school packs and other learning resources was a much better way to get the information gathered by the project out into the community. We decided to produce 1000's of postcards with various newspaper content to advertise the projects various workshops/open days/talks/events and also took advantage of various other Bury events to advertise and showcase our project.

With us also using Facebook and twitter as a way to get the content out to people we also had various unscheduled talks that took place when people came to visit Bury Archives after seeing the exhibition or various content on various platforms. The more content that our volunteers gathered the more information we could make available to people and the themes of the various workshops and events changed depending on the content that had been gathered up to that point.

With the new website due to be completed in May 2018 we used these events and workshops as a way to make as many people as possible aware of the amazing content that could be found in these local newspaper archives. Each session was met with very positive feedback and excitement that the full content would soon be made available online.

I loved the workshop that we did at Bury Archives. I had no idea that even in times of war the people of Bury still had the hope to produce such touching poetry.

Pupil – St Monica's

Fantastic open day. I was able to find my granddad and his brother who I never knew existed. Have now booked a session with the Archive staff to delve deeper into this brother I never knew existed.

Laura Cook - Tottington

## What were the outputs?

These are the workshops and events that have taken place since the start of the project.

### School visits

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Attendees</u>
<b>2015</b>	Castlebrook High School	52
<b>2015</b>	St Monica's	68

### Open Days

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Visitor Numbers</u>
6 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Bury Archives	35
20 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Bury Archives	17
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Bury Archives	42
29 <sup>th</sup> July 2017	Bury Archives	48
5 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	Bury Archives	69
19 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	Radcliffe Library	55
2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2017	Ramsbottom Library	59
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Bury Archives	17
14 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Bury Archives	27
28 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Prestwich Library	44

### Themed Talks

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Visitor Numbers</u>
June 6 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	8
July 18 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	5
August 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	12
October 2015	Light Night	15
November 7 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	17
November 14 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	16
December 5 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	14
December 19 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	18
January 13 <sup>th</sup> 2015	Bury Archives	13
September 17 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	9
October 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	12
November 11 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Market	45
8 <sup>th</sup> & 9 <sup>th</sup> April 2017	Ramsbottom Chocolate Festival	55

June 17 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Ramsbottom Library	17
July 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2017	Unsworth Library	16
August 26 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Radcliffe Library	8
September 15 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Ramsbottom Festival	47
20-21 <sup>st</sup> October 2017	Enlighten Festival	12
November 11 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Bury Archives	13
December 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2017	Bury Archives	17
December 16 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Bury Art Gallery	19

### **Poetry/ Creating Writing Workshops**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>	<b><u>Visitor Numbers</u></b>
July 7 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	9
July 21 <sup>st</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	11
July 28 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	15
August 5 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	7
August 12 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Radcliffe Library	13
August 19 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Ramsbottom Library	8
August 26 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	12
November 4 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	13
November 11 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Bury Archives	17
January 19 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Bury Archives	20
February 14 <sup>th</sup> 2017	Bury Archives	14

### **School Packs**

<b><u>School pack recipient</u></b>	<b><u>Recipient type</u></b>	<b><u>Number of packs</u></b>
The Derby High	Secondary School	20
Holy Cross College	College	30
Bury College	College	25
Woodhey High School	Secondary School	15
St. Gabriel's	Secondary School	25
Prestwich Arts College	College	30
Parrenthorn Secondary School	Secondary School	35
Manchester Mesivta (Jewish Secondary School)	Secondary School	40
Bury Church of England	Secondary School	40
St Monica's	Secondary School	40
Broadoak Sports College	Secondary School	45
Philips High School	Secondary School	30

Cloughside	Secondary School	30
Tottington High School	Secondary School	20
Castlebrook High School	Secondary School	30
The Elton High School	Secondary School	40
The Fusiliers Museum	Museum	50
East Lancashire Railway	Historical Railway	50
Transport Museum	Museum	50
Bury Market	Local Market	50
Bury Parish Church	C of E	30
St Thomas's Parish Church, Radcliffe	C of E	30
Bury Library	Public Library	300
Radcliffe Library	Public Library	150
Prestwich Library	Public Library	150
Ramsbottom Library	Public Library	150
Whitefield Library	Public Library	150
Unsworth Library	Public Library	150
Tottington Library	Public Library	150

### **How did we know that we were successful?**

Throughout the project we have had extremely positive feedback from all of the events/workshops that have taken place. Out of all the participants 85% said that they would visit the Archives on a regular basis after their event. Whilst it was difficult to get out into all the schools in Bury we have had a constant demand for the school packs from all Bury Schools once word got around about them. We have also been contacted by several schools to work with them using the content of the project for various projects they are undertaking for the end of the centenary in 2018.

### **What will we do in future?**

We had had so much success with the school packs and other learning resources that have been produced that we will continue to produce these and send them to all interested parties throughout Bury and beyond. We are also developing lesson plans to go with the content so that when the website is up and running teachers will not only get access to the content but also a well thought out plan on how to educate and inform their pupils. We will also continue to hold themed talks and open days as they proved very popular and have resulted in many participants visiting Bury Archives repeatedly for other archive related research.



### 3.1.8 Activity 8 – Publicising the project



#### Background

The information held within the pages of the WW1 newspapers is fascinating. The problem has always been that the only way to view this content has been to sit at a microfilm machine and wade through page after page with no index available to aid your search. This project has changed all that. Due to the way that we have extracted the content we had an increasing digital archive that we could harness and use to show people in many formats just what the newspapers contain.

#### What did we say we would do?

Produce themed publications, a schools pack and promotional materials to promote the project to a wide range of audiences.

## What did we do and how did we do it?

From the very moment our team of volunteers started to extract content we set about using it to promote the project. The more content we extracted the more we had to draw on. We started by posting the content on our blog and then Facebook and Twitter. This is something that has been done throughout the project and has proved very successful in giving people access to this amazing content with the end objective of making it all available online.

We regularly created postcards with various articles, soldiers' images, adverts, poetry etc. taken from the newspapers and sent them all around Bury to various places as a way to advertise the project. We advertised our various events/workshops and the project in general in various ways:

- Bury Libraries EZine
- Bury council email system
- Leaflets and Postcards distributed throughout Bury
- Banners on display in local libraries and various partners throughout Bury such as St Thomas's Church, Radcliffe, Fusiliers Museum, Bury Art Gallery & Museum.
- Projection onto side of Archives building promoting the project and recruiting volunteers
- School Packs
- Articles in Bury Times
- Radio publicity via BBC Radio Manchester
- Reproductions of newspapers passed out for free at various project and non-project events around Bury.
- Digital exhibitions of art work and extracts at various venues
- 5 Month exhibition at The Met theatre venue where various project publicity was constantly available
- A2 Poster portfolios with a selection of 250 articles made available in local libraries and at our various events/workshops
- Poetry book – Consisting of a selection of the artwork and the content that inspired the pieces. Made freely available at all events and on digital display.

The promotion of the project has always been approached as a continuous task as the content we collected was always increasing and changing. We have publicised the project throughout Bury in as many different ways as we could think of. Having so much content it was not possible to use it all but it is hoped that the lasting and increasing interest in the project will result in the online facility, which will give access to everything, being a great success and will continue to publicise the project even after 2018.

## **Why did we do it that way?**

When the project started we initially publicised the project using information about what we were hoping to do. This was done mainly to recruit volunteers and also let the people of Bury know what we were planning to do. As more and more content was extracted the publicity evolved and we found various ways of advertising and publicising the project using this amazing content. As the project progressed we realised that the best way to promote the project was to get the content out in the public arena as much as possible. Because of this we produced a huge amount of publicity material and constantly distributed it throughout Bury and surrounding areas.

The entire project team came up with various ways of using the newspaper content to publicise the project and it was agreed by everyone that the best way to do this was to use as much of the content as possible to give people a better idea of what is held within this amazing archive.

## **What were the outputs?**

To publicise and promote the project we have produced the following:

- Poetry books – Consisting of a selection of the artwork and the content that inspired the pieces. Made freely available at all events and on digital display.
- Banners – These banners use thousands of soldiers images, obituaries, and other extracted content to give people something that not only informs them of the project but allows them to see up close what we are extracting
- A2 Portfolios – Selection of 250 articles used at all events and workshops and made available to other groups and schools. These are only a small selection of articles but having them printed in such a large format increased accessibility.
- 1000s of postcards/bookmarks using extracted content and distributed around Bury
- School Packs – We have produced 1000s of these packs and they have proved to be the most successful resource we have created. They contain various content from the project and the packs that were sent into school has specially created lesson plans for teachers to follow.
- Digital Content – All content from the project has been on display digitally at various Bury Libraries using out project equipment.
- 5 Month exhibition at The Met Theatre. The exhibition was a one day event but we continued to have project publicity and content freely available in the 5 months that the exhibition was open to the public.

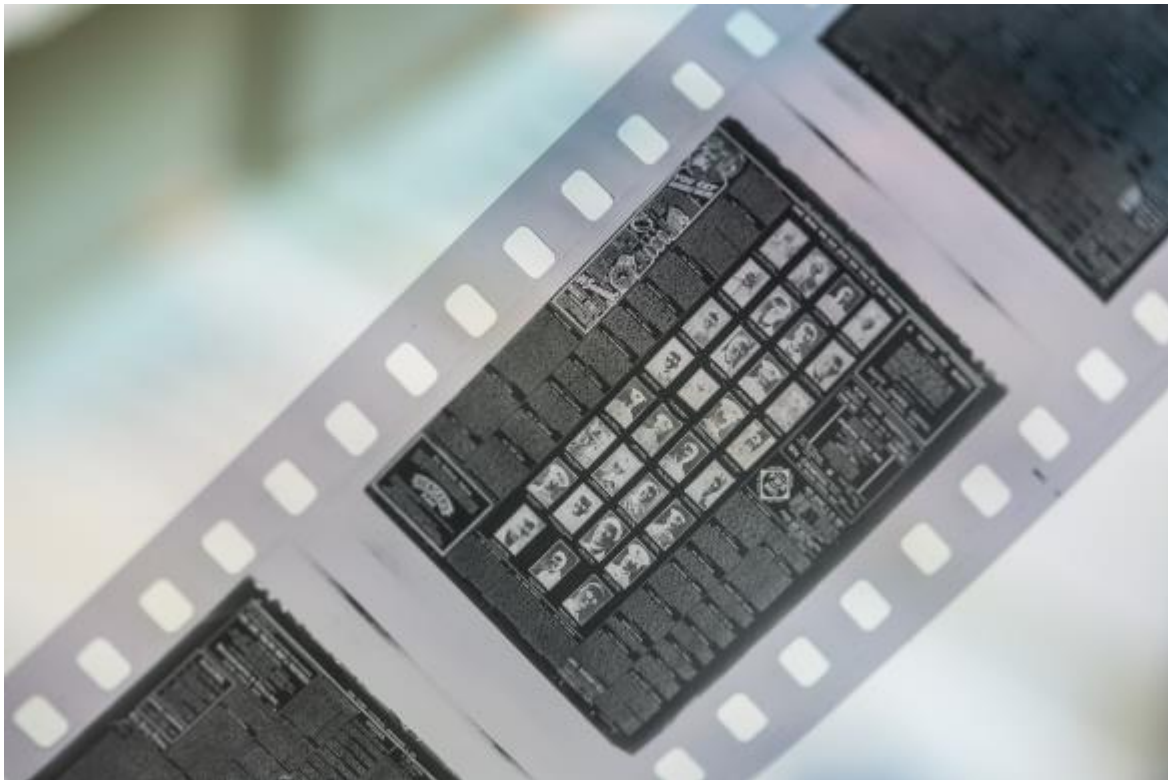
### **How did we know that we were successful?**

The feedback that we have received from members of the public over the course of the project has been very positive. 70% of people who came to Bury Archives to enquire about the project did so as a direct result of the promotion and publicity.

### **What will we do in future?**

We will continue to publicise and promote the project in various ways using the extracted articles as a way to give people an idea of the wealth of information we now have access too. The website is due to be completed in May 2018 so all project content and already produced learning materials and publicity will be used to advertise the website and the access it will give to all project content.

#### 4.1.10 Activity 9 – Putting the project online



#### **Background**

Before this project even started we were always aware that the newspaper archive is one of our greatest resources. Our service has always made access to this resource a priority but had become very set in our ways when it came to the way this resource was accessible. Our focus had always been on making sure that the microfilm machines were in working order and that the microfilm itself was looked after. More recently it had become clear that whilst we were providing access to this resource for the people of Bury and beyond, we were not working to ensure that a younger and increasingly digital generation would be aware of what was available to them. Various attempts to get different groups of people interested in the newspaper archive had mixed outcomes but feedback suggested that the only way to get people interested would be to make the resource available online.

Our newspaper archive ranges from 1855 to present day so without the resources available to us to digitise and index the entire paper we set our sights on the WW1 editions of the local newspapers.

#### **What did we say we would do?**

Develop an online exhibition of project outputs to reach wider audiences and establish capacity for a future interactive database.

Develop a family friendly app enabling further online engagement opportunities

### **What did we do and how did we do it?**

We initially looked into developing a family-friendly app and online database but it soon became apparent that this was not going to be the best way to get the project content available online. Because of this we decided at a later date to pool money from our HLF funds to create a website to house all project content.

In order to do this we had to go through the council procurement process which delayed the entire process. We ended up with 17 bids which all had to be scored in order to pick a successful company. Once this process was completed we picked a local Manchester based company called D2 Digital by Design. The website is still under construction with an expected completion date of 31/5/18. We have already had several meetings with the company to hand over content from the project and they are very excited about getting all the amazing WW1 content online for all to see.

The finished website will give people free access to all the WW1 content gathered by the project and over time all of this content will be indexed, tagged and made increasingly more accessible. Every Soldier will have an address linked to a present day map so that people will be able to see where the soldier came from. We will also use the website to give access to much more Bury Archive records which we have been unable to do in the past because of the lack of functionality in our current council website.

### **Why did we do it that way?**

We put a lot of time into researching the logistics of creating an App but it was decided that we were only looking down that avenue because it sounded modern and up-to-date. After many meetings it was decided that a regular website would be better suited to our needs. We had to go through a very long procurement process but this enabled us to pick the company best suited to the job.

### **What were the outputs?**

The website is currently under construction but once complete it will give access to the following:

- 3,000 Soldier Images – Indexed and searchable via a database. Soldiers images will also be linked to obituaries and any other articles/content that is relevant.
- 3,000 Soldier Obituaries – Indexed and searchable via a database. Obituaries will be linked to images and any other articles/content that is relevant
- 40,000+ articles – these articles will be initially available in date order but we already have a team of volunteers ready to tag these so that they will become searchable.
- 15,000+ Archive Images – these are partially indexed and have not been publicly available for over 3 years. This website will allow to get them online.

We will also digitised various other archive materials over the next three years so that the website will evolve and grow.

**How did we know that we were successful?**

Once the website goes live we will rely on feedback via the website to rate the success. The success we have already had by putting the content online via social media is very positive and hopefully this website will be even more successful.

**What will we do in future?**

We will have a continuous programme of tagging, indexing, and data manipulation to ensure that all WW1 content on the new website is as accessible as possible. We will continue to publicise the project and advertise the website to as many people as we can. We will also have a programme of digitisation to ensure that over time an increasing amount of the records held in Bury Archives become available online.

## 4.0 Conclusions

### 4.1 Achievements & Legacies

Judging on the outputs this project has produced and is still producing along with the feedback from the various events/workshops we have held it is believed that this project has been a great success. The project was always dependent on the content from the newspapers and the process of extracting this has been extremely time consuming and had its problems. Despite this we have managed to gather an amazing collection which has a far reaching legacy which will continue well after the centenary of WW1 has passed.

We have met all of our approved purposes and the project has evolved and changed in ways that were not planned for. The most important thing about the project has always been to make the content of these local underused newspapers out into the public domain. Throughout the project this has been done successfully via various means but it is the website which will finally allow us to give access to all that we have found. Everyone at Bury Libraries and Archives is immensely proud of what has been achieved so far and look at the project as a stepping stone to greater things.

The Library Service in Bury has gone through two library reviews, mass redundancies, the closing of 10 libraries and the loss of our Archivist whilst this project was live. Despite this it has not affected the quality of what we are producing it just delayed us a little. It is hoped that once the website is live that it will give people access to amazing WW1 and Bury Archive content that they never knew existed. The website will be publicised as much as possible and it is hoped that it will quickly become a great resource for schools in and around Bury and beyond.

### 4.2 Lessons Learned

Throughout the project we have learned several valuable lessons. The main lesson we learnt was time-management. We wanted to do so much with the content that was being gathered that there were many times that we over reached, giving ourselves a huge amount of work to do with no time to do it. The school packs that we produced were initially going to be a minor part of the project but proved so popular that we ploughed a lot of time into producing them. Each pack was individually stamped and this process, whilst making the boxes look great, ate into our time. We have learned throughout this project that sticking to set goals and targets is very important and although we were happy to evolve new ideas as the project progressed this did have a knock on effect for other parts of the project.

Whilst we were working on gathering all the content from the newspapers we had also given ourselves unrealistic targets as far as the contact with schools went. Any future projects will take this lesson and ensure that we do not make the same mistakes again. We have also learned the value of volunteers. Without them this project would have been a non-starter and their dedication and persistence has really been inspiring to all the staff here at Bury Libraries and Archives.