Evaluation Report

Epping Forest District Museum

Walter Spradbery,

Artist in War and Peace

OH –17 – 03491

March 2019
## Contents

1. Executive Summary  
   1.1 Authorship  
2. Our project story  
   2.1 Measuring outcomes  
3. What actually happened  
   Analysis of each approved purpose; the short and long term outcomes; what worked well and why; what didn’t work well and why  
4. Review  
   4.1 Successes  
   4.2 Challenges  
   4.3 What difference has the project made  
5. Summary  
   5.1 What is still to be done  
   5.2 Key lessons learned  
6. Appendices
1. Executive Summary

In January 2018 Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey, Essex was awarded £39,950 by the Heritage Lottery Fund, 80% of the total costs of £49,900 for the project, *Walter Spradbery, Artist in War and Peace*.

This report tells the story of the project: it considers what we wanted to happen; what actually happened; and summarises the main short and long term outcomes for heritage, people and communities through the analysis of survey data and other evaluation methods. It also considers what went well and what went less well, the lessons we have learned, and what this means for the legacy of the project.

The project, *Walter Spradbery Artist in War and Peace* came about as a means for Epping Forest District Museum to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War by telling the unique local story of this local artist and his role in it.

Walter Spradbery (1889 – 1969) is best known for the posters he designed for London Transport. However, there are many different important aspects to Spradbery’s life, some of which also illuminate less well-known stories of the First World War.

Through this project we aimed to raise awareness, knowledge and understanding of the whole of Spradbery’s life and his legacy in art through an exhibition and associated events.

We also wanted to give people an opportunity to learn more about the First World War through his role in it. We also wanted to ensure a long-term legacy for the project with information about Spradbery on Wikipedia and HistoryPin.

We worked with volunteers and established partnerships with local schools and community groups to help us deliver the short term outcomes of the project through associated events and activities. We turned these into long term outcomes, forging relationships with groups that we can work with on future projects and events who will also now consider using the museum as a project partner.

Another purpose of the project was to assess the museum’s own collection of Spradbery’s art and improve its storage with the purchase of new plan chests. We had aimed to train volunteers to record oral history from people who still remember Spradbery, and to undertake audio description training to enable those with visual impairment to enjoy and appreciate Spradbery’s art.
This was not possible within the timescales of the project, but the budget that had been allocated to this has now been used to purchase a digital touchscreen for the museum galleries on which Spradbery’s artwork can be displayed. This will be a great long-term legacy of the project both for the heritage and people as one comment most people made about the exhibition was that they wished to see more of Spradbery’s art; the screen will enable them to do this.

Analysis of evaluation undertaken throughout the project indicates that the main intended outcomes for people, heritage and communities were all met.  

- **People** gave very positive feedback about the exhibition and the events, commenting and how much they enjoyed them and had learnt. Many went on to purchase Spradbery’s biography in the shop, resulting in us selling out of our stock.

  *Just keep doing these things – it was very touching, informative and interesting.*

  **Comment from exhibition visitor**

People also learnt new skills, from the volunteers who gained experience working with the collections and researching aspects of Spradbery’s life, to the pupils at St John’s Primary School who performed, danced, created artwork and took responsibility for delivering stalls at the special event.

  *Ability to print has progressed – clearly visible from first and second attempt. Excellent resources and fantastic session, well done.*

  **Comment from Year 5 class teacher**

- **Communities** benefitted from the partnerships we established for the special event, ‘Singing in the Wilderness’ and other events associated with the project. These received a great deal of positive feedback and achieved outcomes for communities by raising awareness of Spradbery and a sense of pride in what important events happened due to his work in Walthamstow and Buckhurst Hill. Solid relationships with these groups have been established which will be of long term benefit both to them and the museum as partners in future projects.
Comment from Buckhurst Hill Resident’s association three hours after news of the HistoryPin page was shared on Facebook. This reflects their pride in Spradbery as their local artist, resulting from their engagement with the project. The museum hadn’t worked with this specific group before, but we have already supported each other on additional events.

Worthwhile. Hadn’t known much about him until a few weeks ago and I live in Buckhurst Hill.

Comment from exhibition visitor

- **Heritage** has benefitted: the stone that marks the place where Spradbery’s house once stood has been refurbished and made more accessible, and the community around it is more aware of what it represents. Spradbery’s artwork in our collection has been completely digitised and stored to museum standards in plan chests. Although the oral history and audio description elements of the project were not possible to achieve in the planned timescales, the budget was reallocated to the purchase of a digital touchscreen; this will enable people to access all the artwork without the risk of damage or fading to the original, often fragile prints and watercolours.

I live next door to the Wilderness and found the stone some 11 years ago. It’s great to know about its history. The message is so beautiful.

Comment from exhibition visitor

---

**Heritage** has benefitted: the stone that marks the place where Spradbery’s house once stood has been refurbished and made more accessible, and the community around it is more aware of what it represents. Spradbery’s artwork in our collection has been completely digitised and stored to museum standards in plan chests. Although the oral history and audio description elements of the project were not possible to achieve in the planned timescales, the budget was reallocated to the purchase of a digital touchscreen; this will enable people to access all the artwork without the risk of damage or fading to the original, often fragile prints and watercolours.

I live next door to the Wilderness and found the stone some 11 years ago. It’s great to know about its history. The message is so beautiful.

Comment from exhibition visitor
Visitors at the special event, Singing in the Wilderness, being shown the plaque and learning and about the history of the site.

The refurbished stone plaque marking the site of Spradbery’s home, The Wilderness.

One of the collection volunteers who has worked to reorganise and relocate over 500 artworks by Spradbery into the new plan chests.
1.1 Authorship of the report

The report has been written by Catherine Hammond, Education and Outreach Officer at the museum and project lead for Walter Spradbery, Artist in War and Peace.

It has been produced in collaboration with other members of the project team including Tony O’Connor, Museums Heritage and Culture Manager; Jill Holmen, Collections Officer; Vanessa Gayton, Assistant Manager Cultural Programmes and Audience Development. Volunteers who were involved in delivering aspects of the project were asked for their feedback on what they thought they had gained, and what had worked well and less well through their experience. Julia Holberry was commissioned as an external consultant to evaluate the comment cards completed by visitors to the exhibition.

The decision to have the project lead write the report with the collaboration of the project team was taken to build on one of the outcomes from our previous HLF funded redevelopment project which was to develop skills and experience within the team to enable them to report and evaluate projects internally.

We still considered the need to be objective in the report and mitigate the potential for bias by commissioning an external consultant to evaluate the feedback. At our own evaluation meetings, we discussed constructively what went well, what went less well, why this happened and what lessons we as a team can take forward from this project.

We have also made full use of audience surveys and evaluation, in particular qualitative data received from partners, visitors and volunteers to balance our own perspectives on what went well and what went less well, and further inform the lessons to be learned from this project.
2. Our project story

The project came about as a means for Epping Forest District Museum to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War by sharing the unique story of local artist, Walter Spradbery (1889 to 1969) and his role as an artist and pacifist in the conflict. We wanted to raise awareness of Spradbery and the importance of the legacy he left the local area, not just through his paintings but also in the number of places and opportunities he created for people to enjoy and engage with art.

Spradbery is best known for the posters he designed for London Transport between 1911 and 1946. He was one of their longest serving and most prolific artists, producing more designs than any other artist. Most of the exhibitions we have previously held on Spradbery have tended to focus on this aspect of his work as it is well documented. This poster, designed in 1913, has recently been used by the Corporation of London on roadside signs for Epping Forest.

However, there are many other important aspects to Spradbery’s life that are less well-known about. These include his service in the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War; his commitment to pacifism; the extent of the teaching he undertook; his tireless work to establish places such as the William Morris Gallery that would give more people an opportunity to enjoy and engage with art; the challenges of his early family life; what he achieved through his marriage to the opera singer Dorothy D’Orsay to bring art and music to the people of Buckhurst Hill throughout the Second World War; and the strength of his principles regarding the importance of art in life that underpinned everything he did.

The key means by which we aimed to raise knowledge and understanding of the full picture of Spradbery’s life through this project was with an exhibition that covered the whole of his life, focussing on his time in the First World War and how this influenced him, and through a special event, ‘Singing in the Wilderness’ in which we would work with St John’s Primary School and other community groups in Buckhurst Hill to recreate one of the events Spradbery had held for the local community at his home, ‘The Wilderness’ in 1938.
There was also a need to ensure the long-term preservation of Spradbery’s artwork in our own collections by purchasing new plan chests and working with volunteers to digitise the collection.

2.1 Measuring outcomes

Just thought I’d let you know that I did get to the exhibition finally, a couple of days before it finished, and was really impressed, lots I didn’t know about Walter and his war service, and also about him and Dorothy – the photos and details of her family were very interesting, and her real name came as a revelation! Also found the photos from the Crystal Palace exhibition intriguing, would love to have seen the real thing...

At the end I was surprised by how moved I was by their story, even though I thought knew a fair bit of it anyway. Congratulations to you and your team for a fascinating and really well-presented exhibition....and I must add that, as this was the first chance I’ve had to have a good look round the Museum as a whole, how impressed I was with the general exhibits too – I’ll definitely try and get along to more exhibitions in the future...

Comment from Buckhurst Hill Community Association Programme Manager

The main evaluation tool we used to measure how successful we had been in raising awareness and understanding of Spradbery and his work was a self-completion survey for visitors to the exhibition. The survey was designed to ask direct questions such as what prior knowledge of Spradbery people had, and if they had learned something new about him through the exhibition. This would help us measure how successfully we had achieved our outcomes for the project.

Results from the survey make it clear that our objectives were achieved: only 7% of visitors had a detailed knowledge of Walter Spradbery, with 49% having no knowledge whatsoever; 98% of respondents said they had learned something new about him from the exhibition.
We invested heavily in promoting this exhibition to the widest audience with new areas of marketing. HLF approved the use of funds to pay for advertising on London Underground, and we also paid for extensive articles and full-page advertisements in local media. The survey was designed to capture if this had been successful in attracting new visitors to the museum who hadn’t been before, as well as raising awareness of Spradbery by presenting his name and an example of his work to a wider audience.

45% of respondents had not been to the Museum before, which is high for a local museum.

Although the breakdown below shows that the more traditional means of promotion prevailed, the new marketing approaches did have an impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signs at the Museum</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passing by</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum brochure</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epping Forest Guardian</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art/history group</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adverts</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising at Epping/Loughton tube stations</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum website</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural venues (libraries, other museums, TIC)</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting the Museum</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum email</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of some of the marketing opportunities undertaken for the Spradbery exhibition
3. What actually happened

The story of the project is told here with reference to the approved purposes, analysing the outcomes of each, how they achieved their short and long-term goals, what went well and what went less well.

3.1 Produce an exhibition at Epping Forest District Museum using loans and reproductions of work, and an interactive replica of Spradbery’s hand cart

Very well laid out/engaging/inviting "draws you" into the era/lighting is good and sets the scene. Not over kill or over loading - kept me engaged for a long time. Nice visit. Thank you.

Comment from exhibition visitor

The exhibition worked very well as a means for engaging a wide range of people with the full story of Spradbery’s life and work. Particular emphasis was given to his childhood and the influences that led him to become an art teacher and graphic designer in Walthamstow, when he became a student teacher at Walthamstow School of Art in 1904.

Spradbery was a committed pacifist but when the First World War broke out he signed up to serve in the Royal Army Medical Corps as a stretcher bearer. He received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his bravery in rescuing officers under intense enemy fire. This element of Spradbery’s story was very useful for challenging people’s perceptions of pacifists as those who did not contribute to the conflict, by showing how they were as much at risk of injury and death.

The strength of Spradbery’s principles was also revealed in his refusal to remove his Red Cross armband, for which he was placed under military arrest. Spradbery also continued to paint while in France in-between bouts of stretcher bearing. After the war he was one of several artists commissioned to create art for the first Imperial War Museum displays at the Crystal Palace. As part of the project, we found this rare sketch Spradbery had made of the exhibition.
Andrew Ashmore in role as Walter Spradbery, with artwork loaned from the Imperial War Museum

Many of Spradbery’s initial sketches for these works are held in Epping Forest District Museum, with the completed works in the collections of the Imperial War Museum and Wellcome Collection. For this exhibition we loaned two original artworks from the Imperial War Museum, and obtained high quality reproductions of works in the Wellcome Collections to display alongside their partner sketches in our museum collections.

[We most enjoyed] The Spradbery Trail - good for me and my 5 year old - and the colour cart.

Comment from exhibition visitor cards

The interactive art cart commissioned for the exhibition was based on the one Spradbery pushed around France with his painting materials on it. His cart survived a hit from an enemy shell on one occasion. Our art cart held pencils, paper and examples of Spradbery’s art to enable people to create their own works inspired by the exhibition. It will remain in use in one of our permanent galleries where Spradbery’s art is on display.
We commissioned professional historical interpreter, Andrew Ashmore to research and re-enact the role of Spradbery at the exhibition opening and associated events, to help people engage first hand with his ideas and principles - well documented in Spradbery’s own writing and correspondence.

The exhibition also enabled people to find out more about Spradbery’s commitment to art and how hard he worked throughout his life to create opportunities for people to enjoy and engage with art. He taught art classes at Walthamstow Educational Settlement, for the National Association of Boys Clubs, and art therapy classes at Wanstead Hospital. Spradbery was instrumental in setting up the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow and Buckhurst Hill Community Association at Bedford House, as well as serving as one of the most active chairs and presidents of Essex Art Club. These organisations are still active today and became partners in this project, contributing archive resources, displays, information and personal support to the events that took place as part of the project.

The exhibition has had a significant long term legacy for the museum, as through it we have made contact with many relatives and friends of Spradbery whose stories and recollections have increased our knowledge and understanding of him, as well as forming links and connections that will benefit the museum and Spradbery’s legacy in the future.

Spradbery’s Distinguished Conduct Medal was found at his daughter-in-law’s house and has now been donated to the museum – a significant additional to our collections and one which perfectly illustrates the level of danger faced and bravery required of pacifists who served as stretcher bearers at the front line.
The museum is also now working with a friend of the Spradbery family on a book of the artist’s work, and has contributed the introduction and text to this based on the research done for the exhibition.

3.1.1 What worked well and why

Public response to the exhibition was very positive. On a scale of 1 to 10, 91% of the survey respondents rated their enjoyment of the exhibition to be 8 and above.

Absolutely everything! Excellent paintings, photographs and information.

Although quite a few people wished to have seen more of his transport posters, our aim was to focus on other aspects of his life and work and many people did comment that they had learnt something new about him.

I enjoyed learning more about Walter Spradbery and seeing examples of his work I have not seen before.

Learning about his wartime medical work and the Wilderness where my mother attended concerts.

His writing, letters, philosophy – all new information.

The conflict between duty and his personal beliefs.

Many people also reported a deep level of engagement, often commenting they had found Spradbery’s story very moving.

The range of artefacts and how they were linked together to present the human story and experience of war and life. Very moving, very informative.

Enjoy? Very much more moved, reminded of the brutality [of World War I].

Feeling emotional reading about his time in the War, refusing to remove his armband; the letter home at the end of the War; his life with Dorothy and her death.

Put his art and his war work into context. My great uncle was in the RAMC and Spradbery’s experience helped me relate to this.

Helped me understand what my father experience in the trenches in France before his head wound with shrapnel put him in hospital there.

Comments from exhibition visitor cards
We also sold out of our stock of Spradbery’s biography, ‘Dear Jim’. Previously these books had not sold very often; that so many sold during the exhibition is an indication that people were interested to develop their knowledge of Spradbery even more by reading the book. Three people commented that they had visited the exhibition more than once.

We purchased freestanding walls with the funding for this exhibition and these now make the exhibition gallery a much better space for displays. The walls were used in this exhibition to create an introductory, scene-setting area that was visible as soon as people came into the gallery. Going beyond the wall revealed some spectacular examples of art by Spradbery and his best friend, fellow artist Haydn Mackey. The walls were also used to create different areas to help theme and break up the story of Spradbery’s life. These will have a long term benefit for the museum in helping create different layouts for future exhibitions.

The survey respondents commented favourably on the layout of the exhibition:

Good, clear info, design of the exhibition and an interesting person to hear about.

Wide variety of artwork, informative panels, right amount of information easily digestible.

Comments from exhibition visitor cards
With funding from the project, we were able to loan two original Spradbery artworks from the Imperial War Museum, and obtain high-quality reproductions of items in the Wellcome Collection. These gave a very important boost to the exhibition as they were on a much larger scale, and more finished than the preliminary sketches in our collections. Being able to display our works alongside these revealed Spradbery’s working processes creating art for the Great War exhibition at the Crystal Palace, and also his skill as an artist that was recognised at a national level. 46 people in the survey commented specifically about the quality of the paintings:

Seeing the sketches made in WWI and the paintings together.

Comment from exhibition visitor

Thanks for the update on the exhibition, I’m glad our images have proved so useful – the print looks fabulous. If I get a chance I’d love to see it, I’ll pass on the exhibition details to colleagues in the Collection. I hope it generates lots of visitors for you.

Comment from staff at the Wellcome Collection

We were also able to purchase large scale graphics for the exhibition – the first time we had tried this. We chose key quotes from Spradbery’s writing to add emphasis to the key themes and give a more professional look to the exhibition. One person commented they had most enjoyed ‘the personal details and quotes on the wall’. This also resulted in some unexpected publicity as the firm that installed the graphics featured this project on their blog.
Visitor numbers to the museum increased on what they had been during the same period the previous year, with 10363 visitors coming to the museum during the 5 full months the exhibition was on display compared to 7333 for that period in 2017, an increase of 3030.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visits in person</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visits in person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug-18</td>
<td>2528</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aug-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep-18</td>
<td>2733</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct-18</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-18</td>
<td>2142</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nov-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec-18</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>10363</td>
<td></td>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2 What worked less well and why

People mainly commented that they would have liked to see more of Spradbery’s art, especially his transport posters. The only way of accommodating this in the exhibition would have been a digital display screen, but the timescales of the project meant that the work required to digitise the collections could only take place at the end.

Apart from the drawing activity and a simple trail on the art cart, there wasn’t much to engage younger visitors with the content of the exhibition. The students on Takeover Day developed a young person’s trail that remained as part of the exhibition. Although some called for more quizzes and items to touch, others praised the child-friendliness of the exhibition:

Well laid out, good mixture of adult and child height, explanations and excellent educational journey.

My six year old granddaughter enjoyed the explorer things and the soldiers too.

Comments from exhibition visitor cards
Light levels were an issue; so many items in the exhibition were watercolours so the light levels had to remain quite low which proved difficult for some people to see. Many people commented on this while also appreciating why, with so many watercolours on display, low light levels were also necessary. We need to revisit the lighting system in the exhibition gallery to ensure we don’t have this problem in future exhibitions. For this exhibition, large print labels were used throughout to make sure written information was clear, and a large print book which included all the artwork on display was available.

3.2 Engage Buckhurst Hill Community Association in delivering a programme of workshops and a talk at the First World War Conference

We at Buckhurst Hill Community Association are delighted to be working with you and your colleagues on events around EFDM’s Walter Spradbery Exhibition! As you are aware, Spradbery was one of the founders of BHCA in 1946, so it is a wonderful opportunity for BHCA to be associated with the exhibition and celebrate his life.

We very much hope that we can, between us, develop a Spradbery Festival around the exhibition. We’re very excited at your plans for an event at The Wilderness, the site of Spradbery’s former home. I’m sure BHCA’s members will be very interested.

We will shortly be seeking ideas from our Tutors for the possible courses and/or workshops they may wish to run in the Autumn term of 2018 (and perhaps during the summer).

We are delighted to forge this link with EFDM and very much look forward to working with you!

Comment from Buckhurst Hill Community Association Programme Manager

As Buckhurst Hill Community Association was originally founded by Spradbery as a place where neighbours and friends could get together to socialise and engage in art and craft activities, they were an obvious partner to engage with to help deliver events connected with the project. One of the calligraphy tutors delivered a workshop on lettering to pupils at St John’s Primary School; the project lead
delivered a talk to members of the association to raise awareness of the connection with Spradbery to new members; tutors assisted with delivering stalls and activities at the special event, ‘Singing in the Wilderness’. Through this project we have shared more information and archive resources about Spradbery, and some members of the association who remember Spradbery have come forward to contribute their memories to the oral history project.

This outcome of the project has certainly achieved both short and long term legacies – from the talks and workshops that Buckhurst Hill Community Association engaged with that made the events associated with this project a success, to the long term benefits this has brought us through the connections we have made with artists and tutors here who can support future projects at the museum. This relationship has given the museum a strong link back in to the community of Buckhurst Hill.

3.2.1 What went well and why

As well as re-establishing our links with Buckhurst Hill Community Association, opportunities to take part in additional events and establish new links with other community groups and organisations occurred during the project. A mini pop-up version of the exhibition was created on four panels and this was taken to a First World War anniversary event in Waltham Forest organised by the East London branch of the Western Front Association.

Just wanted to say thanks for your help in putting on the event – Walter really added an extra dimension to the whole affair. We can’t make it to the Museum at Night event but we hope to get to the Singing in the Wilderness, so may see you there – otherwise, looking forward to your talk at the WFA Branch in the New Year.

Comment from secretary of East London Branch of the Western Front Association

The project officer organised a film screening in partnership with local not-for-profit community cinema, Epping at the Movies, to show the film ‘Testament of Youth’ alongside the mini exhibition and a short talk on Spradbery, accompanied by a display of documents connected with Vera Brittain. Buckhurst Hill Residents Society
were very important partners through this project; they contributed a great deal of time and resources to support the ‘Singing in the Wilderness’ event, and the mini exhibition went on display at their Christmas Fayre in Buckhurst Hill. Talks have been given to a range of groups including Harlow Heritage Society, Buckhurst Hill Young Wives, Buckhurst Hill U3A, Wanstead House Art Class, and Epping Probus.

I just wanted to say “thank you” for an excellent talk, which presented a well-realised overview into Walter’s life, placing him into the context of the contemporary events. I knew a little about him, or rather his work, mainly through his art for London Underground, but it was a thrill to have a much better view from your display.

Anyone not knowing about his life and work cannot fail to get something out of your presentation; it really is first rate.

Enjoying historic research as I do I found the quality of information was perfect and the chat we had about the man and his family was a real treat.

So, just to say it again, thanks for a great show!

Comments from attendee at museum talk on Spradbery

3.2.2 What went less well and why

The First World War conference which was due to take place in the neighbouring Borough of Broxbourne was cancelled so this talk did not take place. However, the project officer delivered a talk on Spradbery to 20 people at the museum, and had also delivered the talk to several external groups and societies, with more bookings coming up later this year.

The time taken to take advantage of all the additional opportunities that arose to link with other groups and deliver talks had an impact on the project officer’s ability to deliver all the original approved outcomes of the project. A key lesson learned here is allow scope for a project to develop once underway and to allow time to take advantage of new opportunities that arise.
3.3 Work with pupils from St John’s School to undertake research visits to the museum and work with Flux Dance Collective to choreograph a dance based on Spradbery’s productions

Thank you so much for today Catherine. The children are really excited and looking forward to starting the project. What a great start!

Feedback from teacher of year 5 class

In preparation for the special event, ‘Singing in the Wilderness’, pupils from both year 5 classes at St John’s Primary School spent a term working with Flux to choreograph and perform two dances interpreting Spradbery’s life with his family at the Wilderness. This school was chosen for the project as it is situated right next door to the site of Spradbery’s home, The Wilderness. Spradbery’s own children were pupils here.

Pupils also created costumes, props and organised stalls and side-shows based on those run by Spradbery at the original social events he held at his home. Resources relating to Spradbery and the exhibition were taken into school to help the pupils learn about Spradbery and his work.

When possible, original items were taken in to show the pupils each week, including the Distinguished Conduct Medal and examples of Spradbery’s art and calligraphy; all were very much appreciated by the pupils who asked lots of questions to develop their own understanding.

Pupils clearly took pride in their performance and their stalls, and in their newfound knowledge of Spradbery and his importance to the local area. The long-term legacy for the school will be that the museum will continue to offer year 5 pupils the opportunity to undertake a workshop on Walter Spradbery each year, and link this to the site of his house with a visit to see the stone plaque in the forest next door to maintain that knowledge and interest in him.

The whole school and local community were invited to the event to see the results of the year 5 classes’ work. The school PTA also became very important partners on the event day. All of these people have a much greater awareness of the importance of Spradbery in their local community, and will help us to ensure the site of his home, the stone plaque and this part of the forest are maintained as part of the long-term legacy of the project.
3.3.1 What went well and why

[I've learnt that Spradbery] was a pacifist and was in the war as a medical person. He had a dog and two children and hosted little festivals like the one we are doing. He lived next to the school. I have really enjoyed [the project] and can’t wait for the final day.

Feedback from pupil in year 5 class

Working with pupils over the whole of a term, delivering 8 workshops with each class enabled us to build up strong relationships with the pupils and for them to really engage with Spradbery, taking ownership of the project and of him as their local artist.

At the start of the project, most pupils had never heard of Spradbery - only 3 out of 28 surveyed had some knowledge because they had found the stone plaque when attempting to retrieve a lost football. By the end of the project they were talking confidently about him and how they felt about having such an important person connected with their school.

The dance pupils really benefitted from the opportunity to work with professional dance artists over an 8 week period to develop their skills and confidence to perform a complex piece to a public audience. The class who worked on the stalls, props and costumes benefitted from working with a wide range of art specialists, including calligraphers and print makers to learn new skills and use these to create more professional resources for the event. Pupils were asked to complete an evaluation sheet at the end of the workshops; all recalled key facts to show their learning objectives were met including that he was a pacifist as well as an artist, and served in a medical role in the war. They also focussed on the fact he had lived next to their school and held events for the community there.

3.3.2 What went less well and why

The school were unable to take up the opportunity to visit the museum to see the full exhibition, but the funding for the coach was used to enable another local school to visit the exhibition on Takeover Day, where they took part in tours of the exhibition and other activities related to Spradbery and the First World War developed by
students from King Harold School who had taken over the running of the museum on this day.

As the special event took place on a Saturday, some of the pupils were unable to attend to take part in the dance performance, despite having had several months’ notice. This presented some challenges for the choreography but these were overcome by Flux Dance Collective. As the event took place in September, most of the work had to be done the term before the summer holidays as there wouldn’t be enough time when the pupils returned. This presented some challenges with teacher and class changes, and continuity of resources, but these were overcome by the flexibility and understanding of the project team and staff.

3.4 Hold a ‘Singing in the Wilderness’ event with a performance by St John’s pupils, a historical interpreter playing the role of Spradbery, mini-displays and a souvenir programme

Just a note to say thank you for involving me in the superb Spradbery day on Saturday. I thoroughly enjoyed it and was pleased it went so well. The dancing was excellent and I am sure everyone had a good time and the weather was perfect too! The Corporation certainly did a good job on the clearance. The lighting was very good and so touching given John Spradbery’s background. I had a particularly lovely experience at the very end of the day. I walked down Palmerston Road just behind ‘Walter’ and when I got to the platform at Buckhurst Hill station I spoke to him. He went immediately back into character and complimented me on my Spradbery scarf. He then bid us farewell!

Comments from Buckhurst Hill resident and volunteer at ‘Singing in the Wilderness’

When Spradbery married, he came to live with his wife, opera singer Dorothy D’Orsay at a house known as ‘The Wilderness’, surrounded by Epping Forest in Buckhurst Hill. Here, they held many community social events, musical and operatic performances in their gardens for all the community to enjoy. Many local people still remember these events, which continued throughout the Second World War, giving people an opportunity to engage with art and music in these difficult times. As part
of the project we also planned to recreate one of these events at the site of Spradbery’s home, now just marked by a stone plaque as the house was demolished in 1970.

This event, ‘Singing in the Wilderness’ took place on the 29 September 2018. Project partners included Buckhurst Hill Community Association which had been founded by Spradbery; St John’s Primary School and PTA, situated next door to the Wilderness.; Buckhurst Hill Residents Society; the Corporation of London, Flux Dance Collective and Impropera. The event was held in the grounds of St John’s School, which overlooks the site of Spradbery’s home.

As part of the event visitors were taken on a tour back in time, going through to the forest to the site of Spradbery’s home. Here, they were met by the historical interpreter, Andrew Ashmore in the role of Walter Spradbery who talked about his life and the events that had taken place at the Wilderness; Flux Dance performed a dance that interpreted one of the operas, Acis and Galatea, that was originally held there; then visitors were taken to see the stone that marks where the house, ‘The Wilderness’ once stood.

To conclude the day, Impropera – the world’s only improvised Opera Company, performed in the school grounds encouraging everyone to enjoy and engage with opera as Spradbery and Dorothy’s events had over 70 years ago.

This event will have a substantial long term legacy, as the audience of over 300 people who attended on the day was made up of many people from the local area and beyond, not just the pupils and parents of the school. The opportunity for them to visit the Wilderness, meet with Andrew in the role of Spradbery, see the dance performances recreating what happened here, and visit the stone will have made many more people in the local area aware of, and take pride in this important element of their local history. The souvenir programme with more detailed information about Spradbery and photographs from our collection showing the original performances ensured everyone had an opportunity to find out more historical background about the events we recreated that day.
3.4.1 What went well and why

Commissioning a production company, a professional dance company and Andrew Ashmore with funding from the project was essential in helping such a large scale outdoor event, with many different elements run smoothly. These professionals are well known to us and went above and beyond in making sure the day was a tribute both to Spradbery and the pupils and groups who had worked so hard with us to make it happen.

The additional help we had from large numbers of volunteers on the day including Epping Forest Youth Councillors was also crucial in helping the event run smoothly.

Thank you for that lovely email. It was a pleasure helping you guys out on Saturday. I enjoyed it very much! Please can you forward my thanks on to Cath and Vanessa for allowing me to volunteer! And thank you for inviting me to the Christmas party, I'll be delighted to attend! See you guys soon!

Comments from Youth Councillor volunteer at ‘Singing in the Wilderness’

Andrew’s performance as Spradbery in particular was singled out by many people as the highlight of the day – he spoke to everyone who went on the tour ‘back in time’ to visit the site of the Wilderness, and helped people form a deeper connection and understanding of the significance of this place for Spradbery through his first-hand interpretation. Many members of Spradbery’s family and his friends took part in this tour and all paid tribute to Andrew’s interpretation of him as the feedback Andrew himself received shows;

Hope you didn't get away too late last night - what a wonderful day it was, really magical and moving. As promised I wrote down a few of the stories I was told by people who remembered Sprad thus:

One gentleman said he walked through the forest a lot, and once saw Spradbery at his easel, painting. He noticed that the leaves were green but that Sprad was painting them brown, and when he asked why Spradbery replied: "I am an artist. I paint what I see."

One gentleman said to me "you were my first art teacher."
Another said that Spradbery had taught his mother and that his mother was very cross with him for painting over her paintings – the gentleman said that if only they knew the bits Sprad did perhaps they could be worth something!

And one lady congratulated me on my performance, thus; "very good, but he was taller."

Comments made to Andrew Ashmore in role as Spradbery by visitors to the event

One of the most successful aspects of the event was the opportunity it gave us to make contact with and establish good working relationships with many additional community groups who came on board to help support the project. These included; Buckhurst Hill Residents Society who we went on to support with a display and stall at their Christmas Fayre;

Hello Cath, Just getting everything back to normal - ish now! We loved having you come to the event and really hope you’ll be able to join any community events of the future. It really was so lovely to have our museum there. Obviously this year had the significant link because of Walter but I do think the more often locals hear and see the fact that we have the museum the more they will want to visit. A parent from the school spoke about taking his children to the museum when I spoke with him at the fair & his son had danced in the performance over at St Johns - ‘it’s not that far really is it and they do good stuff with kids’.

Comment from chairperson of Buckhurst Hill Residents Society

The Essex Art Club had a display at the event. We have also helped them recover their archive and gave advice on what to do to ensure its future safety;

Thanks for your email, it was a good day and, yes, the weather was very kind. I am glad it all turned out well after all the hard work you and your team put in. It was touching to see how Walter’s memory was celebrated, he was a man of enormous integrity and dedication. The Essex Art Club are proud to have been associated with him and with the commemoration.

I am once again indebted to you for the trouble you are taking on our behalf to find a home for our archives, especially now you have revealed your earlier training as an archivist! I guessed the Essex Record Office would think
Comment from chairperson of the Essex Art Club

our club a little too parochial to be considered relevant to the whole county, but I will share their example spreadsheet with my colleagues and come back to you about it.

3.4.2 What went less well and why

We were extremely fortunate with such a large scale outdoor event that we didn’t experience any major problems on the day – even the weather was spectacular. Possibly the only thing we would have changed would have been to begin the day earlier to fit more people on the tours – everyone was able to go on one, but some groups were very big. We could also have ended the day with the pupil’s performance as many of the children and their families left when this was over rather than stay for Impropera’s closing performance.

Comment from Head of Visitor Services, Epping Forest, Corporation of London

3.5 Restore and clear the path to the stone plaque at The Wilderness site

What a lovely event – I’m really pleased that little bit of Forest has been opened up and its history recognised- I shall have to ensure it stays cleared now. I’d be really happy to do more joint work in future especially around Spradbery so let’s both keep the ideas brewing. I was really amused to overhear various branches of the Spradbery family meeting up for the first time!

Comment from Head of Visitor Services, Epping Forest, Corporation of London
As part of the project we also worked with the Corporation of London to clear the path to the stone plaque in the Wilderness and with Bakers of Danbury to clean the stone. The area had become very overgrown but can now be accessed from a wide forest path, making it accessible to all. Through work with the primary school and local community on this project, and through the special event many more local people are aware of the heritage and importance of what happened on this site. In addition, the Corporation of London will undertake an annual programme of maintenance to keep the path clear.

In the short term, this outcome ensured everyone could safely access and see the stone plaque on the day, and it looked very smart and much easier to read after it had been cleaned. The long-term legacy of this element is that more people in Buckhurst Hill are aware of the plaque’s existence, so will visit it and care for it. The Corporation of London have also said they will maintain an annual programme of clearance now on the path, to ensure it can be appreciated for many years to come.

3.5.1 What went well and why

This aspect of the project was achieved very straightforwardly with the co-operation of two very professional organisations; the Corporation of London who went above and beyond in clearing a very large area around the stone that also revealed the mulberry tree from Spradbery’s garden, and Bakers of Danbury who did a very professional job on the stone itself. Everything was completed in plenty of time for the day of the opening event.
People are appreciating the access they have to an important part of their heritage; just after work started to clear the path, this photo was posted on the Epping Forest Forum Facebook page with the message, ‘Thank you to whoever cut back the undergrowth in the Wilderness … so we can access the Walter Spradbery Tablet again. A piece of Buckhurst Hill History.’

3.5.2 What went less well and why

The only thing we would change about this aspect of the project would be getting advice from Bakers of Danbury earlier on in the process. We budgeted for the work required on the stone based on what they’d done on a previous project. However, this stone couldn’t be recut, only cleaned so the work required was much less than had been budgeted for. The under-spend was used to purchase more Secol to protect some of Spradbery’s artwork so still had a benefit to the heritage.

3.6 Recruit 15 volunteers to help digitize, catalogue and record Spradbery’s works in the museum collection, and to receive training in oral history and audio description.

By the time the first progress report for the Spradbery project was submitted it had become clear that it would not be possible to deliver all aspects of this approved purpose within the remaining timescales of the project. HLF agreed a change to the approved purpose which reduced the number of volunteers to 7 and enabled us to change the funding allocated to the oral history and audio description elements to be used to purchase an interactive touchscreen and digital photography of the Spradbery collection.
This project has been the first opportunity to unpack all of the Spradbery art work to assess the full extent of our collections as most of it was still in packaging since the relocation of the art stores during the HLF funded refurbishment project. The amount of Spradbery artwork uncovered far exceeded our expectations as the previous database records didn’t fully reflect the full extent of what we have.

The long-term legacy of this aspect of the project is that we now have a full digital record of every piece of artwork in the Spradbery collection which will make future access to it for research and for display purposes much easier, and pose less risk to the originals.

It will assist the volunteers as they begin to update details in the new collections database as they will be able to do this without too much reference to the originals. The museum can also share its collections more easily, and as Spradbery’s art and designs are so popular, they can support long term income generation for the museum as the copyright has been assigned to us to use them for commercial purposes.

The volunteers who worked on this aspect of the project have also gained a great deal of skill and experience at managing a digitisation project, as well as aspects of collection management which will equip them to be of more assistance working on similar projects and potentially managing other teams of volunteers in the future.

### 3.6.1 What went well and why

Over 500 works of art have now been digitised, giving us a much fuller picture of the extent of Spradbery’s work; this can also now be shared with the public through the interactive touchscreen and made permanently available in the museum gallery where Spradbery’s work is on display.

A team of volunteers has worked extremely hard to manage the transfer of all Spradbery’s art – over 500 pieces - from temporary storage to this new permanent location. They have updated records of the art for the new collections database and assisted in a big project to digitise the art work. As the comments show, they have enjoyed the challenges and gained new skills that will be of long term benefit to them and to future volunteer projects they engage with at the museum.
This last project on Spradbery has been brilliant as we have seen his artwork expand & seen his commitment to improving all things that he does. Keith has been excellent on the photographic side. Apart from that seeing the amount of work needed to collate & describe the collections has been an education in itself from day 1.

I see the Spradbery project as part of my general experience and learning about the collection and the collection’s use for exhibitions and education. From Katy onwards, I have valued the training, advice and guidance on how to work with the collection and the projects I have been asked to work on. Using the Spradbery project processes will help the new recording system to provide a method for the other art works and will help with the development for recording the other areas of the collection. Perhaps the most important comment is that I look forward to coming in to the Museum each week to find what the new challenge is. The Spradbery project is the longest specific activity I have been involved in so far.

Comments from volunteers working on collection relocation and digitisation

3.6.2 What went less well and why

Two of the original outcomes of the project – audio description and oral history training for volunteers were not possible to achieve within the timescales. One of the key lessons learned from this project was not to be too over ambitious when planning the project to allow time to take advantage of opportunities that arise as the project develops. However, both of these elements we plan to deliver from our own resources in the future; we have already made contact with Waltham Forest Oral History Project about taking forward the oral history recordings.

3.7 Create a Wikipedia entry for Spradbery and add information to HistoryPin FWW Centenary website

The work done by the research volunteer to check the details of Spradbery’s life and work, and find examples of his art in other collections has proved invaluable in filling in many gaps in his story, and correcting some mistakes in his biography. This information will enable us to create a much fuller and more accurate picture of his
life on Wikipedia, and will inform future exhibitions and writing about him. HistoryPin has proved to be a very useful means for making Spradbery’s art available to a much wider audience. A collection of his First World War sketches has been created and these have been to the locations where he painted them in France. In two instances, a direct comparison can be made between the scene Spradbery sketched in 1918 and the same scene as it appears today, thanks to HistoryPin’s facility to merge two images.

The long-term legacy of this aspect of the project will be to ensure that people will now have an easily accessible and accurate source of information on Spradbery’s life, that will allow him to be linked to other places connected with him such as the William Morris Gallery and London Transport Museum. This will ensure his importance as an artist and as someone who worked hard to establish so many opportunities to enjoy art we still benefit from today is fully recognised. More material can be added to the HistoryPin site covering different aspects of his work. This will be especially appropriate as Spradbery travelled so extensively around the country, creating art for travel posters, to be able to pin these to the locations where he painted them will help raise awareness of his work among a national and international audience.

3.7.1 What went well and why

I certainly learnt a lot more on the Military side whilst researching for the Warner project and again with Spradbery. With both Warner and Spradbery until I got involved with the two projects, must admit I had never heard of them (though had seen some of the old London Transport posters that Spradbery had done). They both served in the RAMC as did one of my ancestors, so that certainly sparked some interest.

Certainly I think there are always things to learn on the research side also ... I am sure there are many other things I have learned or still doing so.

Comment from volunteer working on researching for Wikipedia entry

The work of the volunteer researcher who created an index to Spradbery’s biography and a timeline, as well finding more information online has been of key importance in creating a much fuller picture of Spradbery’s life. The success of this element of the project was due to the volunteer involved being an experienced
family historian. The HistoryPin site is very simple and straightforward to use, so this will also be a useful ongoing volunteer project to continue to show the extent and range of Spradbery’s work.

3.7.2 What went less well and why

We didn’t realise that to publish an entry on Wikipedia, it was necessary to build up credentials by editing other articles first. We have a draft of our article ready, and will now either seek to edit the required number of articles if we can find enough appropriate ones, or see if we can engage an experienced Wikipedian who can work with us to publish it.

The volunteer also highlighted the importance of project planning and timescales, which will certainly be taken on board for future projects.

As for working with museums this of course I am very new to, but I am well used to working on projects in my past career where deadlines were very important. So was used to seeing or preparing project plans with agreed dates for each set of work etc. So museum work seems quite different to me.

Comment from volunteer working on researching for Wikipedia entry

3.8 Store the museum’s collection in new plan chests

Four new plan chests were purchased with the project funding, and thanks to the work of the volunteers, they are now filled with Spradbery’s artwork, stored in a way that will ensure their long term preservation, as well as making them more accessible for research purposes. In addition, underspend in other areas of the project has been used to purchase specialist Secol storage pockets for additional protection of individual items as some of the larger posters were in a very fragile state.

The long term benefit will be that Spradbery’s art is now appropriately stored and much more accessible to assist in the long term management and preservation of the collection. The storage area is included in behind the scenes tours of the museum; the artwork in the drawers has been stored in a way that allows for each drawer to be opened and reveal an aspect of Spradbery’s art so people will always have an opportunity to appreciate his original artwork in a way that will minimise any risk of damage by long term display.
The volunteers who led on delivering this aspect of the project took full advantage of the opportunity this gave them to develop their skills and experience. While they found managing such a big and complex project challenging, they have enjoyed it and it has increased their confidence which will be of benefit for future projects.

3.8.1 What went well and why

Due to the hard work and planning abilities of the volunteer team, this aspect of the project was completed to time and budget. A great deal of hard work was involved in preparing for the move; several existing plan chests which were no longer fit for purpose and full of miscellaneous material had to be sorted and moved in order to clear space for the new ones to be installed. The project lead was able to hand this whole element of the project over to the volunteers who managed both the physical move and the intellectual process of keeping track of all the collection movements without any problem. The volunteers who undertook this work are an extremely strong team who work well together, and are competent problem solvers.

3.8.2 What went less well and why

Owing to the timescales of the projects and the timing required for different aspects of it, some elements of the relocation artwork didn’t happen in the most efficient order. For example, some of the artwork was digitised at the start for exhibition purposes and merchandise, but it was hard to keep track of what had been done once the collections started being moved and the rest was prepared for photography. The volunteers would have preferred to get the artwork stored in Secol pockets as part of the process of getting it out for photography, but the speed at which the photographer worked to get the most images done in a day meant this wasn’t possible. There were many inconsistencies in how the artwork had been accessioned before, so this caused additional work for the volunteers, trying to keep track of items although they did come up with a practical system of temporary numbering that helped them manage the process.
4. Review

The successes of the project identified in the previous sections are summarised here in terms of how they relate to HLF’s objectives for people, heritage and communities. The challenges are summarised more generally as these tended to apply to all aspects of the project.

4.1 Successes

4.1.1 Successful outcomes for people

There was a great deal of enthusiasm for this project as the story of Spradbery and captured people’s imaginations. Visitors to the exhibition not only reported how much they had learned from it and enjoyed it, but also that the story had touched them on a personal level, with some people reporting being moved to tears. There was evidence of increased understanding of what it meant to be a pacifist in the war, as people commented on Spradbery’s bravery in standing up for his principles and in his actions which earned him the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Spradbery was certainly an interesting chap and certainly with reading about him I came to understand the difference between pacifists such as Spradbery and conscientious objectors. Certainly had a hard start to life with the death of his father and supporting his mother whilst attending college both as a student and a teacher in a role which was not the best paying to say the least. He certainly seemed to be a man of strong principles which he stuck to over the years.

Comment from volunteer working on researching for Wikipedia entry

Volunteers on the project all reported learning new skills in relation to historical research, collections management and event management, with opportunities to engage in new experiences and make new friends. They also commented how much they enjoyed the opportunity to engage more with Spradbery’s work and learn more about him.

Pupils from St John’s Primary School who took part in the Wilderness Event, and King Harold Academy who took part in Takeover Day all learnt new skills and gained experience, delivering events and activities connected with Spradbery or taking part in performances.
The associated events and activities gave a much wider range of people the opportunity to engage with this project and learn about Spradbery. The information now available about him online will also enable a wider range of people to find out about his story.

The family members and friends of Spradbery who we have got to know through this project have all been very grateful at the recognition he has received through this, and have been fully supportive of everything we have done in relation to him. The information provided by them has revealed even more about his character and personality.

4.1.2 Successful outcomes for heritage

While undertaking research for the exhibition, Spradbery’s First World War medals, including the Distinguished Conduct Medal were found by his daughter in law and have now been donated to the museum. They will be kept on display here as a permanent record of this aspect of Spradbery’s life, and to reflect that pacifists serving in non-combative roles were just as much at risk of losing their life at the Front Line.

The purchase of new plan chests has been one of the unexpected highlights of the project. It has ensured the heritage of Spradbery’s art work will now be better managed and stored in much better conditions. It will also now be better recorded as it would not have been possible to properly research and assess the items we have in our collection without having somewhere to sort the artwork into as it was
unpacked that would serve as a permanent home. To have Spradbery’s art properly stored and more accessible for research will to support further work on him and appreciation of his skills and legacy.

Permission to change the approved purposes of the project to allow for the purchase of a digital touchscreen and photography of the complete collection has led to a very important outcome for the project. The work the volunteers have done to sort and assist with the photography will have a very positive outcome, one that will also enable visitors to see the full range of Spradbery’s artwork in a more accessible way, without risk of damage to the collections through the interactive touchscreen that will be permanently available in the galleries.

Family and friends also now regard the museum as a safe repository for Spradbery’s works if they should choose to donate their personal items connected with him here at a future date.

Thank you so much for the photos. I was so glad I managed to get down and see the exhibition. It was a pleasure meeting you and your team. Thank you and your team for doing such a fantastic job on the whole project. It makes me so proud when I see the work of my grandfather exhibited and I am overwhelmed sometimes by people’s passion for his work.

Comment from Spradbery’s granddaughter

4.1.3 Successful outcomes for communities

Strong relationships have been established with many community groups as part of this project, especially Buckhurst Hill Community Association and Buckhurst Hill Residents Society. These will continue to be of long term benefit to the museum as they are keen to support the museum and engage with us on future projects due to the success of this one, and they are also keen to keep the legacy and memory of Spradbery alive in the community where he lived.

There is an increased sense of pride in local community about the artist who lived there and the difference he made through establishing places such as Buckhurst Hill Community Association.

Because of the newspaper and underground station advertisements, the exhibition came to the attention of more groups, including the East London Branch of the
Western Front Association who invited us to attend their special event to commemorate the end of the First World War, and also to deliver a talk to their group.

4.2 Challenges

Managing all the different elements of the project within the timescales was the biggest challenge of the project. The project officer took on this role in addition to her regular duties; this was a conscious choice as she had worked on Spradbery before and was interested in developing her knowledge of him. She also wanted to build on her experience gained in supporting previous HLF projects by taking responsibility for managing and delivering this one. There was also a concern to ensure all the knowledge and research gained through the exhibition and events, and the contacts made through the project, would continue to be of long term benefit to the museum by keeping the expertise behind it in-house.

The exhibition and events were all delivered on time and managed alongside other duties with planning and support of other team members. Other elements of the project such as the oral history and audio description elements proved too ambitious to fit in the project timescales.

4.3 What difference did the project make – what would have been achieved anyway?

There is no doubt that without the contribution of HLF funding to this project, it would not have taken place on the same scale, had the same impact, or the same long-term outcomes for the heritage and the museum.

This project was one of the biggest undertaken since the museum reopened after its major refurbishment, also funded by HLF. Without funding, we would have had a much simpler display that only included our artwork. Without the temporary walls to create zones, it would have been harder to create a sense of progression through the story. The level of professionalism we were able to achieve with the exhibition fittings enabled us to present Spradbery’s story in a way that had much more impact. Many visitors commented on the clarity of the information and the displays;

*Very well documented and laid out. Excellent displays.*
Really engaging and exciting exhibition to visit.

Comments from exhibition visitor cards

The associated event programme that brought so many benefits to communities by enabling us to take the Spradbery project out of the museum to engage with people in the places he was connected with would not have happened without the funding.

They helped us to raise the profile of the museum, respect for our team, and what we can deliver which has helped to reinforce our position as force for positive social engagement within the community.

The exhibition and events also raised the profile of HLF and how players of the National Lottery are contributing to events such as this. Logos and verbal credits of HLF support in funding the project were included on every piece of information and marketing material, and credited verbally at each event.

I just want to echo what [has been] said about both Spradbery and Warner - two brilliant exhibitions that have exceeded what could normally be achieved - down to fantastic leadership ... and important HLF funding ... this really shows the importance of external funding as without it we wouldn’t be able to put on such fantastic shows - to the standard they should be, for such significant events as this.

Comment from Assistant Manager, Collections and Exhibitions

The important outcomes for heritage would not have been achieved as we would not have been able to purchase the plan chests, complete the digitisation of the collection and purchase a digital touchscreen from our existing budgets. This is very significant for the long-term impact of the project; to have done so much work to promote Spradbery’s story without making provision for the long term preservation of, and access to, his art would have been a significant opportunity missed.
HLF funding has also enabled us to promote the project on a wider platform through the First World War Centenary Partnership and other associated events. It was a great privilege for the project team to attend the National Memorial Service at Westminster Abbey, and share this experience with everyone who had been involved in this project.

5. Summary

5.1 What is still to be done?

The main elements of the project are all completed. All that remains to be done is identify someone to help publish the Wikipedia article.

We have also engaged Waltham Forest Oral History Workshop to undertake oral history interviews for us. The interviews will be held as part of their collection as Spradbery’s story has great relevance to the area they cover. The interviews will be made accessible to us on a partnership basis.

We will be in contact with VocalEyes who have previously done training on audio description for us to take forward this element of the project.

One of the legacies is the project is that many elements have now been put in place that can continue to be worked on, either by volunteers or as part of future projects to continue to explore Spradbery’s story and build his legacy: more collections can be added to HistoryPin; information on Wikipedia can be updated; future exhibitions can be planned exploring more aspects of his life and art, and
relationships can continue to be built with other museums and galleries who hold his work in their collections.

While the main elements of the project are completed, it has in many ways also been a starting point, establishing many strong foundations that we can continue to build on raise awareness of Spradbery and his legacy.

5.2 What key lessons have been learned and how are these lessons being addressed to do things differently next time?

The key lesson learned from this project is that while it can make sense for an existing member of the project team to be involved in a project to ensure a long term legacy for the museum, it is essential to include a project assistant post that could have managed these elements and supported the project officer by managing volunteers and helping to deliver additional events and activities.

At the start of planning a project, before submitting a bid, it will also be essential to take a step back and consider again if it is viable to fit all the proposed outcomes in. Even if volunteers are involved, time will need to be spent managing and supporting them. It is also useful to allow space for a project to grow, as this one did with new contacts and opportunities arising as the project begins to develop.

We have also learned we need to factor in much higher marketing costs for the budget. The cost of advertising on London Underground was far higher than we anticipated, and the cost of such extensive advertising in local media was also more than expected. For an exhibition such as this we felt it worth the investment and it did pay dividends in engaging a key audience for us.

While it is a useful process for us to undertake our own evaluation as part of the process of reflecting on a project, we would also seek to engage a professional evaluator from the start of the project in future. This will help us to keep a track of the project throughout and ensure the final reporting process is done in a timely manner.

These lessons have been discussed with the project team and will be used to inform future project plans.
6. Appendices

6.1 Surveys

Separate PDF reports have been attached relating to:

- The results of the analysis of data in the visitor comment cards to the exhibition
- A list of all personal responses on the comment cards