How have communities been marking the First World War Centenary?

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As the Centenary of the First World War draws to a close, our new film explores how the National Lottery has helped communities across the UK take part in this national event.

Since 2014, millions of people all over the UK have taken part in the First World War Centenary with the help of funding from the National Lottery. We've invested in more than 2,200 Centenary projects, large and small, that have explored and shared thousands of diverse stories.

From Pals battalions, soldiers from Commonwealth nations and conscientious objectors through to women's work, food shortages and the impact of the war on children, the stories have been varied and illustrate the First World War beyond the frontlines.

We're incredibly proud of what we've helped communities to achieve. Our funding has enabled people, from all backgrounds and communities, to explore and share the First World War stories most important to them.

Since August, we've been sharing some of these projects and stories through our social media channels using #OneCentenary100Stories. Today we've welcomed people who took part in just a handful of those projects to the Houses of Parliament to showcase what they've been finding out and how they've marked the Centenary.

Community projects in Parliament

Barns Green - A local history of the Great War.

People have been exploring the impact of the war on the small Sussex village of Barns Green, which sent over 150 men to war. With the exception of a small number of names on a war memorial little is known of them. The project researched the story of the men and their families and the impact of a global event on a small rural community.

WW1 - Who cared for kids?

Based in the North East, this project enabled young people with experiences in care, the criminal justice systems or struggles in school and communities, to research what happened to children who lost parents or who needed to be cared for because they were unsafe or unwell during the war. They were able to compare the lives of children today with the lives of their predecessors.

Remember Us – Muslim Communities and the First World War.

Based in Scotland, this project increased public awareness of the little-known contribution of Muslim communities to the First World War.

Discovering Lincolnshire's aviation World War I Stories: The Country's Bastion in the Air

This project captured the hidden stories of First World War aircraft development & production and formation of the Royal Air Force (RAF).

A national Centenary

National Lottery funding has also been central to the success of the UK's cornerstone Centenary projects. The Imperial War Museum London's new First World War Galleries; the restoration of the First World War light cruiser HMS Caroline in Belfast; 14-18 Now, the UK's First World War cultural programme including the UK tour of the Tower of London poppies and We're Here Because We're Here – all funded by the National Lottery.

Find out more about HLF's investment in the First World War Centenary.



The National Lottery-funded We're Here Because We're Here 1418NOW



Anna Jarvis, HLF's First World War Centenary and Anniversaries Advisor

Uncovering hidden stories of the First World War