

## Management Board

### Parliament's plans for WW1 Commemorations

*Take-note paper by Tom O'Leary*

#### Background

1. The Commemoration of the First World War between 2014 and 2018 is an international event. The UK government is working closely with a range of partners to lead the nation in acts of commemoration. August 2014 will see a range of events to mark the outbreak of war, with other key dates to be marked including the centenaries of the Gallipoli landings, the Battle of Jutland, the first day of the Battle of the Somme, the first day of Passchendaele and, finally, Armistice Day. The Centenary Partnership, led by IWM, is a network of over 1,000 local, regional, national and international non-for-profit groups and organisations with plans to commemorate the centenary.
2. The Houses of Parliament is part of the centenary partnership and has a clear role in terms of the UK's commemorations of the First World War as both an iconic building and focal point during events of national importance. At the same time, the Houses of Parliament also have their own story to tell about the War - an 'institutional' history of the work that took place in the chambers and committees of both Houses during the War, as well as a 'personal' history of the Members, staff and their families who contributed to the War in many different ways.
3. The Board is invited to note progress to date with plans for the 2014-18 Commemorations.

#### Management and funding model

4. The co-ordination is being managed by the Public Engagement and Learning section (led by Tom O'Leary), in the Public Engagement Directorate within DIS. There is no dedicated programme manager. The programme reports into GIP via John Pullinger and Liz Hallam-Smith.

5. A Members Advisory Group on the WW1 Commemorations was formed in October 2013 under the joint chairmanship of Keith Simpson MP and Lord William Wallace (both of whom sit on the Prime Ministers Advisory group for WW1 Commemorations). The group has met twice to date to consider proposals.
6. The existing Parliamentary Officials Group established in December 2012 for the 2015 Anniversaries now also considers the WW1 programme. The group includes stakeholders from across both houses.
7. There is no additional budget for commemoration activity and the programme is being delivered within existing budgets in both Houses.

### **2015: approach and overview**

8. Events and activities are being generated and planned by a range of teams and Members across both Houses. The role of PEaL is to co-ordinate this activity where possible and also consult with Members about the suitability of plans.
9. The stated aims of the parliamentary programme are:
  - Engage young people with the First World War and Parliament's role during this period
  - Host and coordinate appropriate commemoration activity
  - Create a programme of online activity, resources, events and exhibitions for the public and Members about Parliament's role in the First World War as well as the stories of Members, staff and others during that time
  - Support the involvement of Members of both Houses in the commemoration of the First World War
  - Promote the range of resources the Houses of Parliament has available online
  - Highlight the importance of Parliament during the war years, and create links to current information to show how Parliament continues to be central to democratic life in the UK
10. Activity is taking place from July 2014 to November 2018 with peaks of activity based on particular anniversaries within the war and major political and parliamentary moments. This will include changes of government, significant legislation and key debates in Parliament. Proposed activity consists predominantly of ceremonial and educational events/resources

11. Where appropriate existing public engagement events and activities such as the sitting of the UKYP in the House of Commons and the Lords Chamber Event will also be tailored to this theme.
12. As the period of the anniversaries extends from 2014 to 2018, it is anticipated that a number of proposals will come forward during that time so the current programme will evolve as the anniversary period progresses.
13. The period of commemoration includes the De Montfort and Magna Carta Anniversaries alongside the other historic 2015 anniversaries, so due attention is being paid to avoiding clashes between the two programmes.

### **Events and activity planned and currently under way in Parliament**

#### *Parliamentary Choir*

14. Planned joint concert in Westminster Hall on 9th July 2014 with the Parliamentary Choir and the Bundestag Choir. (Co-ordinated by Caroline Spelman MP.)

#### *Education and Outreach*

15. Website: Due for launch in August 2014, an online exhibition in the Living Heritage part of website on Parliament during the war. The hub page will feature contributions from various teams including from the archives and art collection. The site will be updated throughout the commemoration period.
16. 'Acts of War' – short films released throughout the commemoration period, focusing on key legislation passed during 1914-18 featuring contributions from Members and the Archive, giving a perspective on how legislation shaped the events of WW1 and more broadly the 20th Century.
17. Part of Parliamentary Outreach's Open Lectures programme will be focused on the First World War Commemoration during the 2014-2018 period. These will include lectures by Parliamentarians on Parliament and War and Parliament and Peace during 2014.
18. Work with UK Youth Parliament on including a themed debate in the House of Commons chamber in November 2014
19. Education secondary schools source pack. The first 2014 launch pack will focus on the role of Parliament in the outbreak of war. To include:

- Images of the key Parliamentarians from our own archives (paintings and statues);
- An audio recording of a re-enactment of a specific key speech - either Sir Edward Grey's speech on the eve of war (3 August 1914), or British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith's Address to Parliament on 6 August 1914;
- A copy of a relevant Act (e.g. DORA) with supporting information;
- Supporting notes with inquiry-led questions and background information to enable teachers to use the sources flexibly in the classroom.

#### *Works of Art*

20. Planned interpretation around the painting in Committee Room 10 - *The Burial of the Unknown Warrior, Westminster Abbey 1920*. The picture is too big to move so this will be web-based interpretation.
21. A display – *The Art of Remembrance: Sir Edgar Bertram Mackennal's The Recording Angel* – is proposed for July 2014. Along with accompanying events and features, the display will mark 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War by exploring the history of the Parliamentary War Memorial in Westminster Hall. Deliverables will include:
  - A display that will consecutively hang in the House of Lords and the House of Commons;
  - Two 'pop-up' display banners that can be used in front of the memorial itself and for associated WWI events (outreach, lectures etc.) during the 2014-18 period;
  - A website feature based on the display;
  - A lecture on the history of the memorial and/or talks in front of the memorial itself.
  - A temporary display of WW1 medals in the Medals Corridor;
  - Web-based interpretation of relevant items in the Parliamentary Art Collection.

#### *Parliamentary Archives*

22. In 2012 the Parliamentary Archives began a research project on Parliament's 15 war memorials with the following aim: To research and compile a definitive list of all names (Members, staff etc) on Parliament's war memorials, with as much supporting information as possible as to their identification, dates of birth and death, constituencies/peerage details, regiment, squadron or ship, place of death, and cross-referencing between the memorials. The basic research on the First World War memorials was completed last year, with a separate list of names and details for each individual First World War memorial mounted on the Parliament website via [www.parliament.uk/memorials](http://www.parliament.uk/memorials)

23. Additional work is now in progress in order to combine all of the First World War data into one list, removing duplicates between the memorials and standardising information. We will then have one definitive list of Parliament's First World War dead, which can also be put on the website and will also be available for other uses.
24. The digitisation of Parliament's six Books of Remembrance is in progress. The images are now available on the website via the Parliamentary Archives' digital repository.

*Lives of the First World War (Imperial War Museum national project)*

25. This innovative, interactive platform will bring material from museums, libraries, archives and family collections from across the world together in one place, inspiring people of all ages to explore, reveal and share the life stories of those who served in uniform and worked on the home front.
26. Parliament is working with IWM to ensure the opportunity is advertised to Members and staff to encourage them to upload their information into the project.
27. The project will enable individuals who had connections with each other to be grouped together into 'communities' e.g. those who served or worked in Parliament. There is also potential for Members to advertise the project to constituents.

*House of Lords specific content*

28. The House of Lords Information Office (HLIO) is proposing to make a series of short videos (8-10, lasting approx. 3 mins) that highlight individual stories from members about WW1, and which consider the Great War's legacy from a number of different perspectives. They will be posted on the House of Lords YouTube Channel
29. To sit alongside these personal stories HLIO hope to produce a video summary of the impact of WW1 on the House – remembering those who lost their lives, but also identifying any lasting effects on the culture or practices of the House. This content would draw upon the Archives' research into the lives of members and staff in 1914-18. This content would be linked to from the WW1 online hub.

## Partnership Work

### *History of Parliament Trust*

30. The History of Parliament hold a set of records relating to MP's service during the First World War that were collected as part of the Col Josiah Wedgwood Questionnaire. The records were requested from the war office by Col. Josiah Wedgwood, who sent questionnaires to his fellow MPs regarding their political beliefs, motivations and experiences. Some of these questionnaires were later used to produce biographies by Wedgwood and his staff. The WWI lists were compiled by the War Office themselves, searching their records for each individual MP using lists in Dod's and elsewhere

31. An initial survey of the questionnaires reveals the following;

- A full list of 251 MPs who served during the Great War in the army.
- About 200 service records, detailing the units in which the MPs served, rank and other relevant information. There are about 50 missing records.
- Additional lists/records of MPs who served in the navy
- A list of MPs awarded medals
- A list of MPs with service records but not in WWI
- A list of MPs believed not to have served in any of the forces at any point

32. Parliamentary staff are discussing with HoPT how to use this material. HoPT are currently planning to create a special section of their website to present the material, including the service records, (e.g. as scanned pdfs) alongside the questionnaires and biographies, which have been digitised.

### *Imperial War Museum*

33. Parliament is a partner of the consortium being led by IWM to commemorate WW1. As per 25-27 above, Parliament is creating and advertng opportunities for Members and staff to contribute to the Lives of the First World War project.

### *The National Archives*

34. Meetings have been held with staff at TNA on how we might collaborate. Proposals so far include inviting staff from TNA to present to Members on how to make use of the records to trace individuals who served in WW1.

*The National Theatre*

35. A proposal was made by the Members Advisory Group to work with the War Horse production to stage an event in Westminster Hall. Discussions have been held with The National Theatre and they are very positive and proposed Michael Morpurgo to run a school event which included one of the horse puppets from the show. Permission is currently being sought to hold the event in hall.

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8/4/14