

<p>Institution: Keele University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 30 History</p>
<p>a. Context Convinced of the capacity of critical historical research to inform, challenge and entertain broad publics, all Keele historians communicate with a wide variety of non-academic audiences and agencies, as an essential basis for the achievement of impact. We contribute to public understanding and debate through books accessible to a broad readership, public lectures and work with the media. Our research helps sustain the activities of independent researchers, professional groups, voluntary organisations, and public bodies in local, national and international arenas. Our most long-standing partnership is with Staffordshire County Council, who have given generous funding to the University to support local history initiatives since 1994 (more than £250,000 in the assessment period); through this partnership, our research contributes to individual well-being, professional expertise and community cohesion. Within and beyond our immediate region, Keele research has influenced the practice of professionals including archivists, teachers, doctors and those concerned with the prevention of terrorism. Drawing particularly, but not exclusively, on local history and on expertise in complex and troubling aspects of modern history, Keele historians have cooperated with national governments and other public bodies to support wide-ranging, critically focused commemorative and interpretive activities.</p>
<p>b. Approach to impact Our approach to impact is founded on a commitment to communicating our research insights and expertise to broad audiences, and to seizing appropriate opportunities for public engagement. We have established relationships with local heritage and educational organisations, with broad-based disciplinary organisations such as record societies, and the Historical Association, and with policy-makers and governments. The University's sense of its public role promotes flexible working practices that enable staff to undertake public engagement, including rearranging and covering teaching responsibilities. Thus, colleagues lecture regularly to branches of the Historical Association, history societies and schools across the UK; amongst many examples, Hughes gave a community lecture at Thomas Hardy school, Dorchester, on women and the English civil war in April 2011 to an audience of more than 200, while Crook addresses 300 sixth-formers each year, speaking on the French Revolution. Events at Keele, promoted by the University's Directorate of Marketing and Communication, garner equally large audiences. The biennial Earl lecture on local history is consistently attended by 100-200 people; 300 heard Pauline Stafford on Anglo-Saxon Staffordshire in 2013. In May 2013 a 'Joined Up History Teaching Conference' organised by Keele historians and teacher trainers, in conjunction with local MP Tristram Hunt, attracted more than 150 serving and trainee teachers. Our specific research expertise has been used by the media: Cushing's research on papal reform was deployed in Radio 4's <i>In our Time</i> programme on the Concordat of Worms (December 2011), while Hughes' work on seventeenth-century radicalism led to participation in the programme on the Putney Debates (April 2013). Television work includes Tomkins sharing her academic expertise on the poor in the ITV programme <i>Secrets from the Workhouse</i>, and Hunt explaining the significance of the 1913 Suffrage Pilgrimage. Exploitation of newer media to inform the public includes Hunt's Ursula Masson memorial lecture, delivered in Cardiff in March 2013, now available on YouTube, and her lecture in Dublin on the 1913 Lockout available as a podcast; and Bright's 2012 podcast on 'Asian Migration and the British World' for the website of Oxford University History Faculty.</p> <p>Our most sustained and systematic impact is founded on research into local history, particularly of the immediate region, and on research into political conflicts of the twentieth century. The active and independent study of family and local history enhances individual self-worth, and contributes to community cohesion. Keele's Centre for Local History, established in 1979, supports the <i>Victoria County History of Staffordshire</i> (VCH), the fundamental work of reference for the history of the county, and a series of publications that both inform local historians and offer them an opening for their work: <i>Staffordshire Studies</i> (edited by Atherton, with 60% of subscribers not affiliated to an academic institution), <i>Staffordshire Record Society</i> and <i>Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society</i> (both edited by Tringham). The Centre holds a regular seminar that has a predominantly</p>

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non-academic membership, and organises the successful Earl Lecture. The VCH is the major product of the long-standing partnership with Staffordshire and Stoke Archive and Heritage Service; it is the foundation for a wide range of impact. It benefits the archive service and its staff, by informing cataloguing practices and public communication through exhibitions and the service website and contributes to the resilience of local communities in the county through regular village 'road shows' stimulated by current VCH volumes. These promote active participation in research and encourage the formation of local history societies (for example at Gnosall and Clifton Campville). Finally, local history research enriches the lives of the individuals who join the volunteer groups undertaking research for VCH volumes or for particular projects such as the correspondence of the Victorian poor law commissioners.

The work of Charles Townshend and Christoph Dieckmann on the violent conflicts of the twentieth century has been used productively by professional and public bodies. Townshend's detailed research on Irish struggles for independence, and on Britain and Iraq in the early-twentieth century, is the basis for frequent consultations with British and US government agencies on security issues, while his more general work on terrorism has underpinned advice and training for the British police and other professionals concerned with the prevention of terrorism. Dieckmann's research on German occupation policy in the Baltic has involved him in membership of the International Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania, which aims to stimulate the process of historical justice, educate society, inform national decision-making bodies and influence public debate; he has recently addressed the Lithuanian parliament in Vilnius on the German occupation of the early 1940s. The publications of both Dieckmann and Townshend have attracted enthusiastic responses from non-academic bodies: Dieckmann's *German Occupation Policy in Lithuania, 1941-1944* (2011) won the 2012 book prize from the Yad Vashem Institute for Holocaust Research in Israel; Townshend's *Terrorism. A Very Short Introduction* has sold some 30,000 copies and his *When God Made Hell* (2010) was favourably reviewed in British Army publications.

In partnership with national and international organisations, we have responded to opportunities to inform commemorative practices. The research of Atherton and Morgan on medieval and early modern battle commemoration has contributed to the work of the National Memorial Arboretum, including improvement of its information services and the organisation of a seminar series with the Royal British Legion. Kauders' research into the Jewish experience in twentieth-century Germany contributed to a history of the synagogue at Worms, and he spoke at an official ceremony in 2011 to mark the 50th anniversary of its reconstruction. Anniversaries are a productive means of prompting critical reflection on the past. Both Townshend and Hunt have participated in the Irish Decade of Commemoration surrounding the centenary of Independence. Townshend is a member of the Academic Advisory Committee overseeing release of the vast Military Service Pensions archive, while Hunt lectured on the 1913 Dublin Lockout at a conference on '1912-1923: Reflecting on a decade of War and Revolution – the Cause of Labour', drawing on her research on the suffragist and socialist Dora Montefiore. The President of Ireland gave the keynote lecture at this event. Hunt is also heavily involved in plans for commemoration of the First World War; her rich research on women's activism and the politics of food is encouraging a move away from the familiar 'mud and blood' narrative towards a sophisticated exploration of the Home Front. She has already assisted Staffordshire Archives with an Arts Council-funded project to identify resources for a series of workshops and exhibitions on the impact of the war in the county and represents Keele on a local network planning the county's commemoration activities.

The University enables us to achieve impact in a variety of ways. Venues and administrative support are provided for outreach events such as public lectures, or workshops with practitioners, such as the 'Experiencing Madness: How the Humanities Can Enhance Understanding of Mental Illness' workshop Dr Tomkins co-convened in May 2009, drawing on her research into mental illness amongst doctors themselves in the nineteenth century. The Faculty Research and Enterprise Officers provide advice on collaborative grant opportunities such as the application for a collaborative doctorate with Staffordshire Archives on the First World War. Contracts with external bodies and other legal advice are provided by the University's Research and Enterprise Services, while the recently appointed Arts Officer and the Press Office, located within the recently-formed Marketing and Communications Directorate, provide invaluable publicity for events. The

University's press officer, and the external PR consultancy McCann, are available to academic staff to provide media training and specialist advice.

c. Strategy and plans

For Keele historians, impact and public engagement will continue to be a high priority in the future. Our own traditions have been reinforced in the assessment period by the 'impact agenda' itself, by the strategic commitment of the University 'to contribute positively to the society, economy, culture and health of the communities we serve through our research' and by the attitudes of external funders (*Keele University strategic plan, 2010-2015*). Research in local history and into modern political conflicts, and contributions to public memory and commemoration will continue to be the basis for important partnerships and broad impact, while other concerns, for example in medical history, will become more significant. Specific plans are already in place: volunteers are working with Tringham, the county editor, on the next volume of the *Victoria County History*; community road-shows are planned in connection with its production and a trust is being established to secure the future of the wider *Victoria County History* project. The University's contribution to commemoration of the First World War will be led by Hunt, who is one of the researchers funded by the AHRC to work with the BBC in the West Midlands on the 'World War One at Home' project. An application is currently with the AHRC for a collaborative doctorate with Staffordshire Archives to work on the impact of the War in the county. We also expect to be involved in other forthcoming anniversaries; in 2015, for example, Crook's research on Napoleon will contribute to public understanding of the significance of the battle of Waterloo.

A strong commitment to impact is explicitly embedded in our systematic research management and planning procedures. Colleagues are required to report on public engagement and impact activities as part of the annual review of research plans, and to maintain a portfolio of impact evidence. Work with non-academic groups is recognised in allocations of time for research. Hence impact and public engagement is expected as an outcome of research leave, and is an element in the criteria for promotion. The Research Institutes for Humanities and Social Sciences hold an annual impact 'showcase' to share best practice; Tringham presented at this year's event. The future will see a more systematic approach to training postgraduate researchers and to processes of review and evaluation. History students benefited from a recent student-led, AHRC-funded training programme, 'Crossing the Bar', initiated by colleagues in English in collaboration with Liverpool University. The external partners who contributed to these workshops on public engagement included Staffordshire Archives and a local Methodist museum, Englesea Brook, that works with history on student placements. Public engagement and involvement with heritage and creative industries are key priorities in the training envisaged in the AHRC Northwest Doctoral Training Partnership where again the Archive Service is a major partner. With the support of the University's Arts Officer and Marketing Analyst from the Marketing and Communications Directorate, we are improving the evaluation of the effectiveness of our outreach and partnership activities through more systematic analysis of the composition and reactions of our audiences.

d. Relationship to case studies

The two case studies describe the impact of focused and long-established research strengths in history at Keele. Local history, in partnership with Staffordshire and Stoke Archive and Heritage Service, has a sustained and wide-ranging impact on individuals and communities within the region, as described here, while the case-study illuminated the particular contribution of the *Victoria County History* to professional practice, the endeavours of independent researchers, and the resilience of local communities. The importance of mutually beneficial partnerships and of sustaining relationships over time will continue to illuminate our impact strategies. Charles Townshend's research on modern political violence, transmitted to very large audiences through his more general work on Terrorism, reflects the international ambitions of our engagement with non-academic audiences. His concerns are shared by other colleagues (notably Dieckmann, Hunt, and Kauders) who also work with governments and other public bodies to share critical perspectives on challenging events of the last hundred years. Townshend's commitment to writing books that are both academically rigorous and widely accessible, a commitment shared by colleagues, also informs our aspirations for impact.