

<p>Institution: Teesside University</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 30 – History</p>
<p>a. Context Impact activity in the unit has been concentrated on established fields of international research excellence, namely regional and local history, and modern and contemporary political history. These two areas are represented in the unit by the Centre for Regional and Local Historical Research (CRLHR) and the Centre for Fascist, Anti-Fascist and Post-Fascist Studies (CFAPS). Research impact has had two primary non-academic foci: the CRLHR engages with individuals, groups and communities at local level; while concurrently, CFAPS engages broader constituencies at national and international level. Research activity undertaken across both disciplinary areas has occasioned numerous types of impact, including: enhancements to community cohesion; increasing access to heritage and its preservation; enhancing personal and professional development; fostering wider public understanding of issues related to ethnic and religious prejudice; informing media, public and parliamentary debates; and providing expert advice to government, policing authorities, and NGOs.</p> <p>b. Approach to impact A mainstay of the unit’s approach to impact has been community engagement. This commitment to community engagement remains an essential part of the underlying ethos of the CRLHR. During 2008-13 it was the Centre’s distinctive presence within the Tees Valley that formed the foundation for numerous interventions in the region’s cultural and social life. In 2007 Teesside University established a partnership with Teesside Archives to secure the funding to catalogue and conserve the British Steel Collection - an important historical archive relating to the iron and steel industries on Teesside - and to make this resource accessible to the public (as well as to academic researchers). Between 2008 -10 representatives of the CRLHR and the North-East England History Institute (NEEHI) sat on the advisory board of the British Steel Archive Project (BSAP); Chair of the Advisory Group was Teesside historian Dr Tony Nicholson (now retired). On the BSAP advisory board the unit’s historians interacted with, and engaged, project sponsors, user groups, local and family history societies, community groups, heritage centres, and museums. International researchers, extending well beyond the submitting HEI, were represented too (such as Prof Yasumoto from Komazawa University, Japan, author of <i>The Rise of a Victorian Ironopolis: Middlesbrough and Regional Industrialisation</i>, a monograph published in 2011 as part of NEEHI’s <i>Regions and Regionalism in History</i> series). One of the primary objectives of the BSAP was to encourage community cohesion. Needless to say, community cohesion is hard to quantify, but we do recognise that a sense of a shared past, and being able to take pride in that heritage, contributes to more cohesive communities. Through close engagement with the BSAP, the CRLHR/NEEHI raised public awareness of the British Steel Collection and thereby fostered a greater shared understanding of Teesside’s industrial heritage across the Tees Valley region. The project’s small but highly dedicated Community Engagement (CE) team - the intermediary between the unit and the end-users - delivered no fewer than 203 workshops, talks and events to over 5,500 participants. A further 20,000 people were made aware of the project by attending 22 conferences and fairs where the project was represented. Public events were held at 81 different venues, including libraries, children’s centres, museums, hotels and universities across the region and beyond. As many as 80 school workshops were delivered to 37 different schools reaching 1,956 pupils and 118 teachers. Workshops were linked not just the History curriculum but also to Science, Design and Technology, English and Geography. Exhibition materials were developed using images from the British Steel Collection for community events including: Project Launch (2008), Discover Middlesbrough (2008 & 2009) and the Lackenby Beam Mill 50th Anniversary celebration (2008). As one beneficiary of the BSAP’s wide-ranging community intervention described it, ‘It has brought the often hidden world of academia to be relevant to the working class of Teesside, destroyed the fusty image of museums/archives and created a kind of fusion in that the past is suddenly vital to the present.’ (BSAP External Evaluation Report, Nov. 2010: p. 6). A further key element in the CRLHR’s approach to research impact in this period was enabling user groups to benefit from our expertise in a practical sense, above all by making tangible contributions to personal and professional development. The CE team, supported directly by the</p>

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CRLHR's expert oral historian (Dr Margaret Williamson, now retired), organised a training programme for BSAP volunteers to record oral histories from former employees in the iron and steel industry. This contributed to BSAP targets in terms of volunteer numbers, and the inclusion of former industry workers. By September 2010 34 interviews had been carried out and 28 transcribed. These oral histories - original recordings and transcriptions - were then added to the archive holdings at the end of the project. Project volunteers certainly benefited from our interventions: 88.5% of survey respondents said that they had developed new skills as a result of volunteering on the BSAP. At the project end (Dec. 2010), over 20 volunteers elected to join the 'Friends of Teesside Archives', thereby contributing capacity to Teesside Archives and to future heritage preservation.

Williamson was also a leading facilitator of the Teesside Industrial Memories Project (TIMP), a separate community heritage project supported financially by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Until her retirement in 2011, Williamson played *the* central support role on the TIMP Management Committee (which held its regular meetings at the University and made use of our institutional facilities). Williamson trained numerous TIMP volunteers in oral history; and edited two published volumes of interviewee memoirs: *Life at the ICI: Memories of Working at ICI Billingham* (140 pp.; 2008); and *Life at the Yard: Memories of Working at Smith's Dock* (104 pp., 2012). Former Chair of TIMP, Dennis Carroll recognised 'the enormous contribution that Dr Margaret Williamson of the University of Teesside has made to the project. She ensured that interviewers were trained to a high standard, provided much needed guidance and support as the project developed...' (Acknowledgements, *Life at ICI*, p. xi). Carroll's successor, Julian Philips, acknowledged that the 'central task of editing nearly 100 hours of recording into a manageable 100 page book was again undertaken by Dr Margaret Williamson of Teesside University History Department' (Acknowledgements, *Life at the Yard*, p. ix). Recordings of the interviews and copies of interview transcripts were later deposited with Beamish Museum and Teesside Archives. Williamson also organised a series of oral history training workshops for volunteers of the Heritage Lottery funded Great Ayton Community Archaeology Project (2008-10).

The CRLHR's public engagement activity extended further still with Drs Nicholson and Williamson delivering research-informed public history talks to no fewer than 122 local community groups in this period, an enriching experience for hundreds of individuals in the region. Yet a degree of the CRLHR's approach to research impact remained responsive. On the basis of research esteem, the CRLHR receive regular invitations to participate in public history events. And our response has been invariably enthusiastic, recognising the opportunities that such events might present in terms of engaging with, and impacting upon, our local communities. In 2011, for example, Dr **Newton** was invited by Prior Pursglove College (Guisborough, North Yorks.) to deliver one of a series of free public lectures, together with Emeritus Professor A. J. Pollard, and former Secretary of State for Education, Estelle Morris. This lecture series, to celebrate 450 years of the original Guisborough Grammar School, was part of a programme of events designed to enrich the town's cultural life. **Newton's** research-informed lecture located the grammar school's founder in the history of North Yorkshire in the sixteenth century; it was attended by over a hundred members of the school, its alumni, and members of the public.

Beyond the CRLHR, the unit's approach to impact has been to encourage engagement with a broad variety of media outlets in order to enable our research to reach the widest possible public, including potential policy-makers. A range of pathways to impact have been followed, from activities in national print through to broadcast and online media. These activities have been supported by the unit (in terms of the provision of funding, time, and advice), the Graduate Research School's Research Development and Impact Officer (in terms of identifying potential beneficiaries), and the University's pro-active communications team (in terms of eliciting media interest). Selected examples of such activity undertaken in the period 2008-13 include: Dr Matthew Grant's (now Essex) appearance on BBC Radio Four's *Document* (14.3.11), BBC One's *The One Show* (10.2.12); History Television (Canada), *Museum Secrets* (29.3.12), and commentary in *The Times* (4.7.11); Dr **Feldman's** interviews on the Breivik verdict with BBC One *Breakfast*, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio 4 *World at One* (24.8.12) as well as online commentary for the BBC World News website; and Dr **Gillen's** collaboration with *Imagine Media Productions* (Belfast), which secured development funding to produce a TV treatment for a documentary linked to **Gillen's** research on Wolfe Tone. TG4 (Irish-language TV channel based in the Republic) and Northern Ireland Screen funded the development of the script to the tune of £3,000 each.

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The approach to impact undertaken by the History UoA is also aligned with, and supported by, institutional priorities. Impact is integral to Teesside University's research strategy, which seeks to contribute to the economic, social and cultural well-being of the communities it serves, and to demonstrate a real and continuing commitment to social inclusion. All researchers are encouraged to engage actively with potential beneficiaries of research from the outset. Impact potential is assessed within the individual research plans that History researchers produce for continued membership of the Research Institute (IDCA). The University's research communications strategy employs networks, and print and digital media to promote research with impact potential; its research publication strategy recognises the importance of popular media and professional publications in fostering impact. The University's digital research repository, *TeesRep*, facilitates open (and global) access to research. Impact in History is further supported by the University Research Fund, which has funded historians in the development of partnerships with relevant organisations outside academia, enabling delivery of activities designed to bring research to non-academic audiences, such as providing £5,000 of matched-funding for a recent CFAPS project on anti-Muslim hate crime.

c. Strategy and plans

Teesside's historians have a strong tradition of committed public engagement. Two elements underpin our strategy for consolidating and extending this tradition: the first has been to invest in staff with outstanding impact potential, possessing demonstrable track-records of sustained and effective public engagement. The second has been to invest in staff that will further enhance the unit's continuing external engagement across the key strategic areas of regional and local history (CRLHR); and modern and contemporary political history (CFAPS). **Higgins**, appointed in 2013, is a recognised expert on commemoration. She has discussed her work with public audiences at the National Library of Ireland (2011), the National Museum of Ireland (2012), and at local museums and libraries across Ireland. As part of her work on sporting heritage **Higgins** has designed educational projects for use in schools. She has made 40-50 radio contributions and is a regular guest on RTÉ Radio One's *History Show*, discussing aspects of history and heritage. **Higgins** is currently developing a major public history programme which explores the memory of the First World War in the Tees Valley region. Building links with museums, National Trust properties, and local communities, she will contribute to the CRLHR, raise awareness of the importance of heritage to local community identity, and provide additional expertise on the history and meaning of commemorative practices. **Darcy**, another recent appointee, co-curated an exhibition in 2009 at Trinity College Dublin on the 1641 depositions (visited by 120,528 people). Alongside Prof Jane Ohlmeyer (Trinity College Dublin), he secured £24,000 from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs to produce school packs for Year 9 students in Northern Ireland. **Feldman**, who has given more than 200 interviews for print, online and radio outlets since 2008, will promote existing research expertise in historic and contemporary right-wing extremism, informing and influencing public understanding and practitioner policy around the threats posed by the far right. His public-facing work extends to 'grey literature' of some 50,000 words for: All-Party Parliamentary Groups on Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia; Ministry of Justice; policing and *Prevent* bodies; the CPS; and intelligence services. In 2013 he delivered *Prevent* presentations to Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside police and gave testimony to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Islamophobia. He is currently working on participation in the EU's pan-European "Improving Security by Democratic Participation" network. **Feldman** sits on the advisory board of the NGO Faith Matters where he responds to issues around anti-Muslim hate. Our plans foresee collaboration between CFAPS and third sector organisations as critical to the sustainability of future research impact in an area that continues to pose significant challenges to social cohesion.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case study "**Engaging with British Regional and Urban Culture**" exemplifies research impact in relation to our continuing commitment to regional and local constituencies. It should be approached as indicative of a unit that has established a distinctive local and regional presence through the committed public engagement activities of the Centre for Regional and Local Historical Research. The case study "**Responding to Far-Right Extremism: The British National Party and the English Defence League**" exemplifies research impact in an area that has been formally earmarked for engagement with organisations, communities and individuals at broader national and international levels. Recognition of the impact potential of this research area resulted in the launch, late in the census period, of the Centre for Fascist, Anti-Fascist and Post-Fascist Studies.