

Principles for the delivery of Leeds City Council's First World War Commemoration programme

This statement will form the basis for the communications about our programme and as part of any response made by members and officers on the issues the Commemoration may raise. It will be underpinned by a regular update of activities.

Key facts about Leeds and the First World War:

- By the end of the war 82,000 Leeds men had been recruited
- Almost 10,000 Leeds citizens were killed during the First World War. On the first day of the Battle of the Somme in France in 1916 it is said that every street in Leeds lost one man from the Leeds Pals.
- By the spring of 1915, 10,000 women had joined up to do benevolent work.
- Leeds was one of the major industrial centres of war work, with several munitions factories, including over 16,000 employed at Barnbow, 93% of which were women and girls.

The marking of the centenary of the First World War between 2014 and 2018 will be an opportunity to reflect on the impact this first global war had on the lives of men, women and children around the world and in our city. Through a programme of exhibitions, events and activities, many delivered across a range of partnerships, Leeds City Council aims to deliver a lasting legacy from the Commemoration and support its cultural ambitions of breaking down barriers, involving all communities, telling the story of Leeds, nurturing talents and giving young people a voice. Engaging with young people, both through schools and in their communities will be a very important focus of the programme.

The Council's response to the Commemoration will be to pay tribute to the people of Leeds who gave their lives and served their country both on the home front and abroad. The exhibitions and events led by Leeds Museums and Galleries and Leeds Library and Information Service will cover a range of themes, including hospitals, industries, the armed forces, literature, war and peace, the role of women, the home front and how the War affected young people and their families. Some projects will invite people to share their families' memories.

The Council's programme will have a strong focus on community involvement, inclusion, diversity, intergenerational working, and young people. Activities will be created with sensitivity and in acknowledgement of the very broad range of issues and feelings that will be engendered by the Commemoration.

Many organisations and partnerships around the city are involved in their own activities to mark this unique anniversary. The Council will work with many of these organisations and support them with resources where possible.

Partnership work with two of Leeds's twin cities, Lille and Siegen, will play a key role in reaching an understanding the impact the First World War has had across Europe.

The Council is collaborating strongly with the University of Leeds, which is delivering 'Legacies of War' – a programme of local, regional and national significance including major research projects, which is commemorating and exploring different histories of the First World War and examining its historical, cultural and social legacies. The University's programme and that of the Council are complementary.

Our shared ambition is to create a legacy of knowledge and understanding about the First World War, and to encourage reflection and debate about war and peace. Our aim is to encourage communities and generations across the city to explore the stories of the war and come together to understand and acknowledge its impact on the world as it is today.