



4. Review of the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) Collection and Archive

Joint Statement from the Army Museums Ogilby Trust and National Army Museum (Pages 47 - 64)

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**Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

**Submission by Army Museums Ogilby Trust and National Army Museum**

The Army Museums Ogilby Trust (AMOT) has been involved with the collection of the Durham Light Infantry since our foundation over 70 years ago. Robert Ogilby our founder endowed the original DLI museum and our Trust has supported it with regular grants and acquisition funds. In the last few years leading up to the closure of the Aykley Heads site grants exceeded £20k. We have also supported directly the DLI Trustees in their work including funding their governance reforms to a further £10k.

The National Army Museum (NAM) has given advice, training and a whole range of professional support at no cost to the Local Authority since the early 1970's. It has regularly placed exhibitions from the National Army collection in the former DLI museum site and did so especially over the period of Great War centenaries and Waterloo bicentenary.

Since the closure of the museum at Aykley Heads in 2015/16 we have offered support and partnerships both with Durham County Council and the DLI Trustees. We encouraged both the appropriate conservation and care of the collection and pressed repeatedly for continued public access. We developed and deepened our relationship with Durham County Archives and its DLI holdings. We jointly supported the arrangements on Palace Green and the move to Sevenhills though always insisting these were interim moves.

At every juncture we have worked with Council officers, a committed and experienced curatorial and archive team and the political leadership of the Council, with no regard to political stripe. This led in time to a Memorandum of Understanding agreed in 2017 which allowed AMOT funding and NAM advice for a superb programme of travelling exhibitions. It also opened the way for funded additional curatorial capacity from AMOT.

Over the last 5 years the DLI collection and archives have received over £100k in direct grants and matched funding. In addition we provided over £13k of funding to the Durham Hymns project working with the archives and Northern Bands Trust. We raised the profile of the collection and the opportunities arising from having no permanent home. This included a NAM facilitated and AMOT funded study day in London, held at the NAM, for local authorities.

Significant keynote contributions were given at this event by Durham CC and West Sussex CC who have a similar issue with a Regimental collection.

The costs of regular travel to Durham from our bases in Salisbury and London respectively and the hidden administrative costs and staff resourcing also need to be noted. I estimate overall with grants and support costs committed to the DLI collection AMOT is committed to the tune of over £170k. The NAM costs at this stage must also be significant.

Public funders have already noted the discussions in Durham and not in a positive light. Certainty is needed or a perception of unreliability will grow. AMOT still has resources committed to Durham especially in regard to archives. Like other stakeholders we will be patient for the democratic processes involved but it is safe to say that major changes will take our focus elsewhere. AMOT and NAM work with a network of 144 Regimental and Corps collections and currently are involved in 8 major military museum building projects apart from Durham. This includes major projects in each of the devolved parts of the UK. If our funding is not needed in Durham it will be welcome elsewhere. We will also look to recover our original spend.

AMOT and NAM were delighted when in early 2019 members of Durham CC gave the agreement to the Durham History Centre project. The project has grown and become a well thought through and integrated plan in which stakeholders were regularly consulted, including AMOT and NAM. It has from the outset been a joint effort. In Gillian Kirkbride and her team the collection has imaginative and creative talents. The project will undoubtedly lead to greater and wider public access built on the inspiring links with the local community that have existed for so long. It also takes into account the trajectory of travel in museums across the world who have raised expectations including more technology, as part of the offer to any prospective audience. The recently opened National Army Museum of America relies almost exclusively on virtual technology. The marriage of archives and collection on one site is certainly the way ahead and Durham CC and the people of Durham should be very proud of this project.

It is clearly the case some have felt uneasy with the plans and have been loud and persistent in their views though not always constructively. It is also the case that the communications of the Council has left external organisations like ourselves frequently bemused and frustrated at every stage of this story. It has appeared at time that our contributions have not been fully recognised which

is sad considering our only interest is the preservation and promotion of the extraordinary stories and history of the DLI and the community from which it was hewn.

We strongly feel the Council should take into account in its review our financial commitment both to date and in the future. It should consider the damage to the profile of Durham if it binned another museum plan. How would this be received by external funders? It should reflect on the duty to care for the collection in the long term as its current home is not suitable for this purpose. It should also consider the museum and archive team gathered around this project. Once a skill set is diffused or even dispersed the loss is often irreparable.

The open sore of the Aykley Heads site is clearly an issue the Council feels it should address but this is for another conversation and with greater thought. AMOT and NAM would offer our thoughts on the possibilities but any suggestion that this should return as a museum we roundly reject. The present Director of the Imperial War Museum and a former AMOT Trustee is frequently quoted as stating that a museum is not a memorial.

The honour due to the DLI lives on in the community and the desire to tell its story afresh and anew to future generations. Durham History Centre project is close to making that commitment a reality and so we warmly commend it to the review process. It is worthy of the DLI and the people of this part of England.

Thank you for allowing our submission and our earlier conversations with the Council leadership. We wish you well in your deliberations, the people of Durham in these difficult times and look forward to our future visits and projects together.

Andrew Lloyd MBE  
Director AMOT

Julian Farrance  
Head of Regimental Museums Liaison NAM.

July 2021

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# Memorandum of Understanding between

AMOT and Durham County Council

2017 - 2020

## **AMOT**

The Army Museums Ogilby Trust is a private charity founded in 1954 by the late Colonel Robert Ogilby DSO, DL whose wartime experiences made him a passionate believer in the inspirational power of regimental identity on the British soldier's fighting spirit. His Trust therefore set about the task of honouring the rich heritage of their individual regiments and corps through the medium of museum collections.

As a measure of success, today the Trust is linked with well over one hundred such museums throughout the United Kingdom, all as varied and individual as the regiments they represent. They are a rich source of historical information and they provide unique insights into the inspirational deeds of courage, bravery and good-humoured fortitude that have characterised the British Army through the centuries. In addition to the collections that are so proudly displayed, most of them possess valuable records and other archive material. They have something of interest for all, from Old Comrades to the adventurous young and from the serious student of military history to the casual visitor.

## **The DLI Collection**

The DLI (Durham Light Infantry) collection dates from 1758 – 2011 and includes firearms, uniforms, archive, medals and ceremonial items among many others and is historically significant for the County. The collection is owned by the Trustees of the Former Durham Light Infantry and is curated and cared for on their behalf by Durham County Council.

In 2016, the DLI Trustees and County Council agreed a new sustainable approach to the conservation and display of the collection; the full collection was removed from a standard and aging museum building into a new state of the art collection and storage facility alongside the County's wider collections stores, at Sevenhills. This storage facility would be supported with an ongoing outreach educational programme and a range of exhibitions to showcase the collection.

Sevenhills (the home of the DLI collection) was opened in autumn 2016 and attracts researchers and historians, members of the DLI family and the general public – all of whom feel a local connection to their regiment. The primary focus is to make the collection come to life for a worldwide audience whilst maintaining the memory of heroic local people.

The education offer delivered and coordinated by the County Council curator and education team continues to enable the collection to connect the whole community, engaging primary and secondary schools, those people with disabilities, community groups, reminiscence groups, and history and heritage groups. It now predominantly reaches out to local communities (rather than simply schools) by working with them and is working closer with veteran military organisations, with a growing network of volunteer's veterans supporting the activity; talking to the children and groups.

The past year has demonstrated an increased appetite for outreach activity rather than the previously delivered traditional schools outreach model. Additional publicity, over the last twelve months, has opened up new avenues of communication and an increased desire for the public to request bespoke 1:1 sessions and more detailed enquiries.



In addition, the next five years will see five annual exhibitions to tell the remarkable stories, supported by a semi-permanent exhibition delivered in partnership with Durham University in which a selection of the collection is on show alongside a 'medal on demand' viewing service.

The location of the semi-permanent exhibition on Palace Green, next to the Cathedral and remembrance gardens, enables a greater passing footfall, and resilience through working in partnership, when resources are shrinking.

The County Council and the DLI Trustees have found a new solution to the challenging financial period and are keen to build on this in new ways, further enabling increased conservation of the collections and enabling access in new creative ways.

## **Rationale**

Throughout this challenging change, AMOT has supported and guided both the DLI Trustees and the Local Authority. This Memorandum of understanding between the Local Authority and AMOT seeks to formalise our working relationship to ensure that the best future possible is provided for this important military collection.

## **Vision**

AMOT will work with The DLI Collection and Durham County Council to deliver a programme of increased collection accessibility, preservation, and community engagement as part of AMOT's Arts Council England funded programme *Army Museums into the Future*. The aim will be to deliver a programme of events and activities to support the preservation, cataloguing and public access to the collections and to do so in a manner which enhance the wider development of knowledge, skills, and understanding within the army museums sector.

## **Background**

AMOT, Durham County Council and the Trustees of the Regimental Chattels of the Former DLI, already have strong links in developing and supporting the reshaping of the DLI Collection offer.

This MoU underpins this existing activity and formalises the relationship between the two primary organisations. AMOT, is already committed to supporting the DLI Trustees to modernise and standardise their governance arrangements to enable the Board to be reskilled to provide a strong basis for the future. This MoU will further develop the relationship to support vital curatorial collections and development work to open up records to the public and enliven the DLI offer in a sustainable tangible way.

## **Action Planning**

The collection moving to Sevenhills has enabled an audit of 'where we are' to be established, and to some extent engaged increased interest in the potential of the collection from a wide range of stakeholders.

The action plan, (appendix 1) identifies the stages the collection needs to progress through to move to a modern contemporary approach in preservation, access, display and engagement. This work is in line with our Collections Accredited Status and SPECTRUM standards. Clearly this list of tasks is beyond the resources and capacity of the County Council support.

In summary the action plan seeks to develop an accessible and simple way for local people to access the DLI Collection, in one cohesive and image laden website. This will be the primary outcome and core duty of the funded DLI Collection Project Manager. This task will be supported by the further development of an outreach programme, specialist training, engagement and upskilling of heritage and collections volunteers, involvement of Veterans of the regiment and communities across the county from which the DLI recruited.

It is hoped that working with AMOT a number of actions will be jointly agreed for funding.

- At present, only 40% of the collection (medals) have been completely audited. engagement of a dedicated project curator will enable us to expedite this process for the whole collection and enable information to be accessible to the public.
- Significant treasures will also feature 3D imagery – protecting vulnerable and fragile objects from handling and helping us safeguard the integrity of all objects in the collection for future generations.
- Moving to a single Collections Management System will vastly improve access in a much shorter period. The approach will be to release the online records with enhanced object images in stages throughout the funding period, engaging audiences locally, nationally and internationally.

## **AMOT**

Recent research identified that there is a need to support those working in army museums, both heritage professionals, and heritage volunteers, across a range of different subject areas including:

- **To better understand and develop army museum collections**
- **Develop a programme of support for army archives**

## **How we will work together**

Our partnership will build on knowledge and experience from our previous successful working relationships and shared organisational learning. Together we will seek to establish a programme of training which supports those working on the collection, researching it and developing programmes which draw on the key skills of each organisation.

Regular dialogue will be held between AMOT and Durham County Council to ensure shared understanding, delivery of the action plan to time and to budget, and evaluation of both the partnership and the needs of the sector for future development.

## **Guiding principles**

Both partners commit to:

1. **Shared insight, skills and knowledge:** we will use our shared understanding of the military sector to formulate successful and required training days.
2. **Legacy:** We will establish an easily accessible and searchable database to enable public interested in the DLI to search the collection and aid their study.

3. **Evaluation:** we will monitor the events and activities and conduct a survey with the sector annually to understand the effectiveness of our programming and the changing needs of the sector and respond accordingly
4. **Planning:** we will work together to plan for the future – both in this area of work and other relevant activities which may benefit from shared partnership working.

### **Resourcing the Plan**

Durham County Council, led through its Culture and Sport services, will continue to commit its current expertise to care for the Council's collections, including the DLI collection and our advice to the Trustees, and the provision of a vibrant programme of education and exhibitions, as best as possible within its current resource. The Council currently commits approximately £150k per year, in fulfilling its responsibilities towards the DLI collections. In addition to this resource the Council retains its support to the archive written collection, much of which is accessed by enthusiasts and also used in supporting a range of the exhibitions and outreach work. A clear joint working arrangement exists between the services ensuring a positive experience exists and single customer offer.

However, the capacity to make some of the sustainable planned improvements for the future of the DLI collection is challenged, particularly the detailed work around the collection and cataloguing/digitalisation.

In order to complete the additional work articulated in the attached plan and significantly move forward the DLI Collection, a funding request of £85,000 is requested from AMOTs funds across a 2 year period.

It is our intention that this would cover the initial two year period of the additional curator cost to specifically develop and deliver the programme of works. A funding schedule is appended as **Appendix 2**. The funding would provide a much needed boost to the DLI collection management.

### **Good partners agreement**

AMOT and Durham County Council will each inform the other partner prior to any sensitive messages emerging that might impact on the other organisation. Both partners will share information with each other about any agreements with third parties as appropriate. Both organisations will observe confidentiality as required in relation to shared information that is not in the public domain.

**Terms of the Memorandum of Understanding**


This Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect from the date of signature by both parties and continue, in the first instance, for two years. It will be reviewed after the first nine months and annually thereafter by both organisations' lead officers. It is not intended to – and shall not – create any legal obligation between the parties.

**This Memorandum of Understanding is made on:**

**Date:**

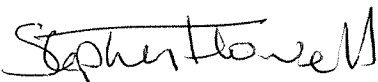
**Between:**

Name: Andrew Lloyd

Signature: 

For and on behalf of: The Army Museums Ogilby Trust, 58, The Close, Salisbury SP1 2EX

Name: STEPHEN HOWELL

Signature: 

For and on behalf of: The DLI Collection (Durham County Council)

Appendix 1

Overarching Collection Action Plan 2017 -20

This is the basis of our three year programme of work across collections owned or cared for by DCC, Culture and Sport. It merges new activities and events funded through the AMOT programme with existing activity based on Oral history, Collections management, Volunteering, increasing diversity, Education development, digitisation, training and public engagement. The collection plan is separated into core collections work, projects and DLI development work. **Actions in bold are those to which AMOT funds will be used to support.**

Recently completed tasks from previous action plan – updated July 2018

Core Collections work plan		Work leads	Start date	End date	
DLI Sevenhills, Killhope	Development of initial volunteer roles and student placements	Principle Heritage Manager / Volunteer Manager	March 2017	December 2017 COMPLETED	DCC
DLI Sevenhills, Killhope	Development of initial volunteer roles and student placements	Principle Heritage Manager / Volunteer Manager	March 2017	December 2017 completed	DCC
DLI Sevenhills	Completion of audit and checking of locations after collection relocated to Sevenhills	Principle Heritage Manager	June 2016	September 2017 completed	DCC

<b>Collection projects</b>	<b>Description of associated tasks</b>	<b>Project lead</b>	<b>Target completion date</b>	<b>Project completion date</b>	<b>Engagement with</b>	<b>Funding by</b>
Frontline	External Hardwick Hall event , potentially annual – deliver a new DLI trail in the grounds	Principle Manager	Heritage	June 2017 – completed	HP, Friends	DCC
Mining Art Gallery	Facilitate loan to ACT of initial items on list provided	Principle Manager	Heritage	July 2017 – completed	ACT, Gemini Trust, DLR, International Office	DCC
Archaeology storage	Development of archaeology collection storage options and way forward	Principle Manager	Heritage	July 2017 – completed	ACT, DCC Archaeology,	DCC
Hackworth Collection	Relocation from Locomotion stores to Sevenhills stores	Principle Manager	Heritage	August 2017 – completed	SMG, Locomotion	DCC
Bookstore and Library	Establish a fully functioning supporting bookstore collection and review the research library function and holdings	Principle Manager	Heritage	September 2017 – completed	Friends	DCC
VC Paving Stones	Liaison with external groups and AAP's to commemorate the centenary of the each VC Winner	Principle Manager	Heritage	December 2018 – completed	AAP's, DCRO, families	DCC
Education offer	Develop new thematic packages in line with curriculum – medicine and trenches; soldier in time;	Principle Manager	Heritage	August 2017 – completed		DCC

On target – in progress

Collection – DLI Development	Description of associated tasks	Work lead/s	Start date	Release date target	Funding by
Drums	Match biographies, update 4,000 records – work on reconciliation – add to MODES	NEW	December 2017	September 2018	DCC, AMOT
Biographies	Data cleanse, field matching, importation of 18,000+ records, – add to MODES	NEW	December 2017	December 2018	DCC, AMOT
DLI Collection	Reaccreditaion	Principle Manager	September 2018	Trustees	DCC
Collateral commercial	Develop outline specification for DLI collection guide	Principle Manager / AS	August 2017		DCC, Arts Council (bid)

Core Collections work plan		Work lead/s	Start date	End date	
DLI Sevenhills	Collection backlog and accessions	Principle Manager	April 2017	Ongoing	DCC
DLI Sevenhills	Consideration and development of apprenticeships to support collection care	Principle Manager/Volunteer Manager	March 2018	December 2018	DCC
DLI Sevenhills	Housekeeping and environmental monitoring	Principle Manager	May 2016	Ongoing	DCC
DLI Sevenhills, Killhope, DCC wider collections	Loans in / out documentation – historic and current	Principle Manager / NEW	2016	2020	DCC
			2016	Ongoing	

	<b>Enquiries, media releases and specialist outreach activity with partners when each phase completed and released</b>	<b>NEW</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2020 and beyond</b>	<b>DCC / AMOT</b>
<b>Collection projects</b>	<b>Description of associated tasks</b>	<b>Project lead</b>	<b>Target Project completion date</b>	<b>Engagement with</b>	<b>Funding by</b>
Lambton Cap	Establish rotation plan to safeguard collection on display and create replica cap	Principle Manager	August 2017	PGL, Trustees	DCC
Killhope	Reaccreditaion	Principle Manager	March 2019	Friends of Killhope	DCC
Silver Chattels	Chattels of the DLI – project to select items for thwe collection before disposal by Trustees	Principle Manager	December 2020	Hartlepool	DCC
DCC Legacy Collections	Project to establish collections principles for the dispersed DCC owned collections and their future care and display.	Principle Manager	December 2020	DCC staff	DCC
DCC Archives – replacement venue	Contribution to the incorporation of Local Studies reference books into project scope and plans	Principle Manager	December 2020	DCRO	DCC
DCC Archives Relationship	Clear approach to liaison and use of DLI collection and written records together, ensuring engagement and communications with wider external partners eg Trustees, AMOT, University	Principle Manager	December 2020	DCRO	DCC



Collection – DLI Development	Description of associated tasks		Release date target	Funding by
Swords	130 records to be reconciled – add to MODES	NEW	December 2017	DCC, AMOT
Firearms - DLI Collection	Collate 160 records, markings research, object files, police inspections, MOD exemptions– add to MODES	NEW	March 2018	DCC, AMOT
Colours / Textiles	40 objects – add to MODES	NEW	December 2018	DCC, AMOT
Framed items / memorials / presentations	100+ – add to MODES	NEW	December 2018	DCC, AMOT
Drums	15 items – add to MODES	NEW	December 2018	DCC, AMOT
Photographs / film / music	– add to MODES	NEW	By 2019	DCC, AMOT
Boxed collection	1,000 boxes of various contents - this would be one of the final aspects, slow release over years after the end of initial project, quarterly – silverware, etc – add to MODES	NEW	2019 onwards	DCC
Archive / Transfer to DCRO	30 boxes – review of collection, create object files, – add to MODES	NEW	2019 onwards	DCC
Badges and Insignia	1,500 objects, significant ID needed to complete task. Opportunity to use in guide creation - – add to MODES	NEW	2019 in stages	DCC, AMOT
Costume – DLI Collection	Investigation and research into 600 items of costume, photography of objects, data	NEW	December 2020	DCC

				input – training session for professional – add to MODES	
Existing Archive at DCRO				Create object files, verify location, – add to MODES	DCC

## Appendix 2

### **Funding Schedule**

- Funding for one specialist DLI Collections Project Manager / curator to oversee all aspects of the programme at a total cost of £85,000 for a two year fixed period post. Being £42,500 in year one and £42,500 in year two.

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