

17,000 Reasons to Remember: Commemorating the contribution of Polish Aircrew during WWII

Aik Saath's Heritage Lottery Fund Young Roots Project

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Evaluation Report, October 2015

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mapisproject



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1. Executive Summary

This evaluation report describes the findings from Aik Saath's Young Roots Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) project, '17,000 Reasons to Remember' which took place from January to October 2015. It explores the project impact for both the participants and the project partners, and the wider community in Slough.

The project commemorates and celebrates the contribution of 17,000 airmen and women who served in the Polish Air Force in Great Britain during the Second World War. It was led by Aik Saath, a charitable organisation based in Slough who work with and train local young people from all backgrounds to work together to challenge racism, prevent violence and encourage community cohesion through events and exhibitions.

18 young people were recruited as well as 6 peer leaders (more experienced young people who supported the group throughout the project). Of these, 17 were new to Aik Saath and were recruited through the local Polish Saturday School, St Joseph's Catholic School and a local advertisement.

Participants took part in training workshops, meetings, explored museums and heritage sites and engaged with Polish veterans who fought in World War II. They learned how to interview people through learning about oral histories, undertook historical research and developed an exhibition from their work.

The report draws together learning and reflection from mainly quantitative data collected between March and October 2015, and demonstrates how much the young people enjoyed participating with the project and what they took away from it. It also assesses Aik Saath's role in managing the project, and the many partners involved to give a rounded evaluation of the project as a whole.

The outcomes of the project were both specific and measurable and the project has certainly achieved what it set out to do in the short period. There were some interesting and unexpected outcomes as a result of the project, which are discussed at the end of this document.

Overwhelmingly, participants reported that they not only enjoyed taking part in the project, they made new friends and understood much more about the sacrifices of their forbears during World War Two. Their exhibition is a product of their practical learning, hard work and 'can do' attitude.



The '17,000 Reasons to Remember' has highlighted an appetite for more projects not only with the Polish community but with communities working together in Slough to explore and enjoy heritage.

Figure 1: Proud participants show family members their exhibition at the Celebratory Event which took place at the Polish Saturday School, 10th October 2015.

2. Background

2.1 Slough¹

Slough is a predominantly urban area situated in the east of Berkshire which developed as a result of the Old London Road (now the A4), connecting Bath to London. The town covers an area of just over 12½ square miles. It is an important commercial centre and includes large industrial as well as residential areas.

The town is estimated to have a total population of just over 143,000 and is one of the most ethnically diverse towns in the UK. The 2011 Census figures reveal that Slough, at 34.5%, has the lowest percentage of residents defining themselves as ‘White British’ outside of London. Nearly 10% of residents define themselves as ‘White Other’, with the two other largest ethnic groups being Asian/Asian British: Pakistani (17.7%) and Asian/Asian British: Indian (15.6%). More than 75 languages are also spoken in Slough.

The town is also religiously diverse and has the lowest number of people declaring they have ‘no religion’ (at 12.1%). 41.2% of residents are Christian, 23.3% of residents are Muslim, 10.6% are Sikh and 6.2% are Hindu, 0.5% are Buddhists and 0.1% of Slough residents are Jewish. Slough’s growing population also includes a large number of new arrivals.

In recent years there has been significant immigration from Poland, the EU Accession States, as well as some parts of Africa (including Somalia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Africa) and the Indian subcontinent (including Hong Kong, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan).

The borough has a younger than average population, with the highest proportion of 0-4 year olds (9.1%), 5-9 year olds (7.1%), 30-34 and 35-39 year olds (10.1% and 8.3% respectively) amongst any of the south east local authorities. Official population projections predict a further growth in both the numbers of children and young people, and the proportion of the total number of residents accounted for in these age. These projections predict a further 38,600 0-19 year olds by 2020, growing to 41,400 (27.1%) by 2030.

2.2 AIK SAATH

Aik Saath’s Mission Statement:

‘The words ‘Aik Saath’ mean ‘together as one’ in Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. They also embody the ethos of our Queens award-winning charity – we believe in working together to challenge racism, prevent violence and encourage community cohesion. We train young people from all backgrounds in conflict resolution and anti-racism skills in schools and youth centres and organise exhibitions and events.’

The organisation was established in 1998 in response to gang violence between young people from Asian backgrounds in Slough at the time. They have evolved from a response to violent conflict into a charity promoting a safer, more cohesive Slough, primarily through training, youth provision and projects led by young people for young people.

Aik Saath’s projects are led by the peer training team; a group of young volunteers aged 11-25 that give their time to the training, events and initiatives that contribute towards making the local community a safer, more cohesive place. Over 50 young people joined the peer training team

¹ Information taken from ‘The Slough Story, 2014’ and ‘Living Together: Community Cohesion Strategy for Slough, 2013-2015.

during the last financial year, volunteering their time in a wide range of ways. The team has been trained on a weekly basis by Aik Saath staff and each other, strengthening the peer-led ethos of the organisation.

Aik Saath has a strong reputation for working in partnership with local organisations to deliver meaningful, outcome-led projects. They recently worked in partnership with Slough Museum to deliver a Heritage Lottery Funded 'MYgration' project, building a better understanding between communities by sharing stories of people coming to Slough and settling there. In 2006, Aik Saath was successfully awarded a HLF Young Roots grant for their '1947 Partition Project', where young people interviewed older British Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs about their experiences of the Partition of India and created an exhibition and workshops for schools and community groups.

3. '17,000 Reasons to Remember' Project: an overview

This project focussed on commemorating the contribution of 17,000 airmen and women who served in the Polish Air Force in Great Britain during the 2nd World War.



Figure 1: The young participants interview Eugeniusz Borysiuk, who was deported with his family to Siberia, then after being released, he and his family travelled (via the Middle East) to England. He was one of thousands of young boys who joined the Polish Air Force.

Aik Saath were awarded £49,900 by the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'Young Roots' programme which helps provide new opportunities for a wide range of young people aged 11 to 25, to shape and deliver engaging heritage projects; bring heritage and youth organisations together to combine knowledge and experience; and create opportunities to celebrate young people's achievements in the project and share their learning with the wider community.

The project was scheduled to take place from January to the end of October 2015. The timing of the project coincided with the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain which provided a valuable opportunity to share, record and preserve the stories of the few remaining Polish aircrews who served during the Second World War.

It was essential that young people from the Polish community were central to delivering this project for the following reasons:

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Polish community views itself on the periphery of the community, rather than as stakeholders with a past, present and future in the town. There was a need to re-invigorate the community's sense of pride.
- Very few people within Slough's community and beyond have knowledge of the important contribution of Polish aircrew to winning the Battle of Britain and the Second World War.
- Polish young people are currently under-represented at all youth services across Slough, making their inclusion in the project even more crucial.

The project brought together young people from different communities including the Polish community, Aik Saath staff and volunteers and other partners, to explore and enjoy learning about the history of Polish aircrew during the Second World War.

Aik Saath managed the project, with Chief Executive Rob Deeks, having overall responsibility and Charlotte Williams, the Project Learning Officer being responsible for the day-to-day management and delivery of the project.

Coincidentally, Aik Saath were hosting a Polish student on placement from Bucks New University, who was able to work with the peer leaders to secure engagement from young Polish people, particularly those who are at the earlier stages of learning English and/or who are less engaged with cultural and social life in the town.

4. Project partners

The two main project partners were:

- **Bentley Priory Museum.** Bentley Priory Museum opened in 2013 and is located in a magnificent Grade II* listed country house, which served as the headquarters for Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain. The displays tell the stories of the ‘The One’– Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, ‘The Few’ who took to the air to defend our skies and ‘The Many’ without whose tireless work on the ground victory would not have been possible and discover how technology, leadership and courage forged victory allowing Britain’s darkest hour to also be her Finest Hour. Director Eleanor Pulfer was the project’s ‘Heritage Partner’ who supported Aik Saath with the heritage focus of the project.
- **MAPIS Project CIC** is a social enterprise company based in Reading that provides engagement courses, training opportunities, accredited qualifications and practical mentoring to women at risk and disadvantaged young people who are economically inactive and socially excluded to raise their confidence and employability skills. Aik Saath had previously worked with MAPIS on other successful projects. Creative Director Peter Sikora helped shape the idea to explore the history of the Polish air crew, and Aik Saath were able to utilise MAPIS Creative Director Peter Sikora’s extensive knowledge of the contribution of Polish aircrew during the Second World War as well as his contacts with Polish veterans.

There were also a number of other partners who worked closely with Aik Saath to help deliver the project:

- **Polish Saturday School, Slough.** Some of the teachers provided ‘on the ground’ practical assistance with various visits and activities. This was also the venue for the Celebratory Event which took place on 10th of October.
- **RAF Northolt and RAF Museum** Personnel from both venues helped provide a warm welcome to the young people when they visited, enabling them to explore and learn more about the heritage of Polish airmen and women during the Second World War.
- **Sue Perks (Perks Willis Design)** provided help and guidance to the young people during the research and selection of information for the exhibition graphic panels. Sue provided her design experience to help the group put together their exhibition.

5. Project outcomes

The project outcomes reflect both the overarching outcomes of the HLF's 'Young Roots' programme and also those specific to the 17,000 Reasons to Remember brief. These outcomes were used to evaluate the success and impact of the project, which is summarised in section 9.

Heritage Lottery Fund outcomes	17,000 Reasons to Remember outcomes
<p>Outcomes for people: With our investment, people will have developed skills learnt about heritage changed their attitudes and/or behaviour had an enjoyable experience</p>	<p>Young people will have developed new skills such as teamwork and communication skills as well as technical skills such as oral history.</p> <p>The Peer Leadership scheme will involve more experienced young people, assisting and gaining mentoring and leadership skills.</p> <p>Young people will be made to feel welcome and will have fun.</p> <p>Attitudes will have changed as a result of the project, particularly young people from Polish backgrounds that might not have previously appreciated or understood the incredible sacrifices of Polish aircrew during WW2.</p> <p>Veterans will have enjoyed being able to tell and share their stories, together with knowing that their contribution is valued.</p> <p>The Polish community will feel more valued, with a sense of pride that these stories are being told.</p> <p>Staff will enjoy developing new skills and new ways to engage with young people.</p>
<p>Outcome for communities: With our investment more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage</p>	<p>Participants, but also visitors to the exhibition will have learnt and engaged with this important heritage.</p> <p>New young people that aren't the 'usual suspects' will get involved.</p>
<p>Outcomes for heritage: With our investment, heritage will be: in better condition better interpreted and explained identified/recorded</p>	<p>Exhibition and oral histories: interpreting the heritage. Stories of Polish aircrew and their families not well known to the Slough community, previously not accessible – many have passed away without their experiences being recorded.</p>

6. Project activities

6.1 Introductory/icebreaker workshops at Aik Saath



Introductory/icebreaker workshops took place to bring together the existing Peer Leaders and the new participants in an informal and social context, to find out more about the project and what was involved. At one of these sessions, Peter Sikora from MAPIS gave an illustrated talk about 'Famous Poles' to get the group inspired and motivated.

Figure 2: MAPIS Creative Director Peter Sikora presents to the group.

'...I was involved in mingling between Aik Saath volunteers and the Polish young people ensuring everybody felt included and not secluded, also I took a key part in explaining one of the ice breakers. One way it could have been improved is that we could have played a game which mixed people up more.'

Peer Leader

6.2 Preliminary visit to Bentley Priory Museum

A trip to Bentley Priory was organised for the young people and peer leaders. They were able to learn about the Battle of Britain and understand more about the many Polish aircrew's contributions through exploring the museum displays, watching an interactive video and taking part in a hands-on activity with the museum's Learning Officer.

'I gave them an introduction to our museum's handling collection - they were asked to select 'mystery' items from a bag and we worked together whilst they identified what they were/ how they were used/ who used them. Then we toured the museum, with a particular stop in our Rotunda room where we spent a long time looking at pictures and medals of some Polish aircrew and sharing their stories with the group from our research.'

Sarah Dinsdale, Learning Officer, Bentley Priory Museum

6.3 Training sessions: storytelling and oral history

Giles Abbott, a professional storyteller, delivered a workshop with the young people, to train them in the art of storytelling, which equipped them with skills which would prove useful when interviewing the veterans as well as preparing the narrative of the exhibition.

Charlotte Williams, Project Learning Officer then delivered workshops in oral history in preparation for the young people recording the Polish veterans at Bentley Priory.

'They were enjoyable and the instructions and lessons we learnt were extremely valuable for the exhibition and later life.'

Peer Leader

6.4 Visit to RAF Northolt, the Polish War Memorial and Northwood Cemetery



The group were given a tour of RAF Northolt and then placed a single flower on the grave of each fallen Polish airman at Northwood Cemetery. They visited the Polish War Memorial where they laid a wreath. These visits gave the group a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the sacrifices of Polish young men and women during the Second World War. It was clear that this had a powerful effect on the participants, who reflected on this when they were interviewed for the evaluation (see 8.3).

Figure 3: Young people laid a single flower at the grave of each fallen Polish airman at Northwood Cemetery, and laid a wreath at the Polish war memorial.

'It was very emotional for all of us, and especially young people...as they could learn about the main battles the Polish Air Force was involved in and also about the casualties that they suffered. ...Young people were asking a lot of questions and we could see how proud they were to be a part of this programme.'

Maggie and Peter Sikora, MAPIS

6.5 Recording Polish aircrew veterans and their families

Following preparation workshops, the young participants worked in small groups (supported by Aik Saath and Partners) to interview 7 veterans and families all in one day at Bentley Priory Museum.

'It was a privilege to welcome the veterans to the Museum, and it was wonderful to see the intergenerational interaction and dialogue that emerged from the interviews. The young people were well prepared and had researched the veterans.'

Eleanor Pulfer-Sharma, Museum Director, Bentley Priory Museum



Figure 4: Polish Veterans and family members ready to be recorded at Bentley Priory Museum



Figure 5: University placement Kasia Butcher makes Mr Jan Stangryciuk-Black (former patient and last surviving Polish member of the Guinea Pig Club) feel comfortable in preparation for his oral history recording.

Young people had no problem engaging with veterans, who were happy to participate and enthusiastic to share their stories. Young peoples' approach was very professional and they were very respectful towards elderly people.

Maggie and Peter Sikora, MAPIS

This project has really allowed me to personally engage with history and honestly it was a really humbling experience meeting such astonishing people and being able to share their stories.

Peer Leader

6.6 Visit to RAF Northolt Open Day



Some of the young people were able to go to RAF Northolt's Open Day and watch wartime planes in the air and meet and interview more veterans and family members.

Figure 6: Young people interviewing John Kaye Kurowski, son of a Polish pilot, in front of his De Havilland Tiger Moth.

6.7 Visit to the RAF Museum, Hendon



The group visited the RAF Museum in Hendon, where Curator Peter Devitt had prepared a talk about the Polish Air Force and then they were given the opportunity to explore the museum.

Figure 7 The group enjoy a tour of the museum with Curator Peter Devitt at the RAF Museum.

6.8 Workshops

Workshops back at Aik Saath took place for young people to pull together their learning and research to produce the temporary exhibition that would go on display at Bentley Priory Museum, RAF Northolt, Slough Library and the local shopping centre.

6.9 Meeting with exhibition designer

The group met with exhibition designer Sue Perks to work on the exhibition panels for the touring exhibition. The group created their own design brief for the display and pulled together the content and images, with the support of Project Learning Officer Charlotte Williams.

'As the designer of the exhibition, I was privileged to work with excellent, highly detailed, well researched content, which was designed according to the brief given to me by the young people within the group, based on their knowledge and experiences from site visits, lectures by MAPIS and their interviews with the veterans.'

Sue Perks, Perks Willis Design

6.10 The 17,000 Reasons to Remember exhibition

The completed exhibition was launched at RAF Northolt on 5th of September (Annual Polish Commemoration Event) followed by a two-month long display at Bentley Priory Museum.



Figure 8: The exhibition on display at Bentley Priory Museum, September-October 2015

There were 11 large and colourful exhibition panels created, each describing a different theme that the group had discussed. The exhibition included a timeline of the war, the journeys that Polish people made, training and tactics, free time and after the war. Each panel had a good level of text and images to suit different ages and interests.

'Wonderful exhibition. We are grateful for what these brave men did and are happy to see their stories being shared with young people today.'

Comment from visitor's book at Bentley Priory

'Thanks to the exhibition, we have found out many interesting and education information about the Polish pilots fighting in England. Thank you.'

*Comment from Air Cadets, Polish Air Force Academy, Deblin
At the Annual Polish Commemoration Event, 5th September 2015*

'The development and production of the exhibition was very much a two-way process, thanks to the commitment of Charlotte and Sue to bring the young people's vision to fruition. Hopefully this will have been an empowering process for the young people. They clearly enjoyed the creative process of putting their ideas together. Hopefully they will also take something away from working with and feeding back to professionals like Sue and Charlotte.'

Rob Deeks, Chief Executive, Aik Saath

The exhibition has had great feedback from visitors, and it has been very poignant to highlight the contribution of Polish Aircrew during the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain commemorative period.

Eleanor Pulfer-Sharma, Museum Director, Bentley Priory Museum



Figures 9 and 10: A special part of the display allowed visitors to add their own comments on a Spitfire or Hurricane on a giant sky wall.

6.11 Celebratory Event, 10th October 2015

A celebratory event was held at the Polish Saturday School to thank all the young people, partners, veterans and Aik Saath for their contribution to the project and to showcase the exhibition panels to the Polish community and dignitaries such as the Mayor of Slough. One young person and a peer leader gave an introduction to the project to an audience of over 250 and there followed a presentation of certificates for the participants.



Figure 13: over 250 guests attended the celebratory event at the Polish Saturday School



Figure 12: Young participant (left) with Peer Leader (right) welcoming guests and presenting an introduction to the project.



Figure 11: young people receive certificates in acknowledgement of all their hard work and involvement.



Figure 10: Young participant talking to veteran Flight Lieutenant Stanislaw 'Rob' Wlosok-Navarski DFC

7. Evaluation Methodology

7.1 Why evaluate?

Evaluation was an essential part of this project, as it:

- provides evidence that Aik Saath are meeting their own aims and those of the Heritage Lottery Fund
- demonstrates that Aik Saath is committed to developing and improving and can take forward these actions for future projects
- provides an opportunity for direct feedback from participants and partners
- celebrates the contribution of all of those involved
- helps to continue and develop partnerships
- enables Aik Saath to understand the young people better and improve the services that they offer
- identifies strengths and weaknesses
- strengthens accountability and motivates staff and users

7.2 Evaluation types

Evaluation has been taking place throughout this project, although it is fair to say that due to the nature of the project, the majority of the evaluation has been summative and qualitative in its nature.

Front-end data was collated prior to the HLF application submission, to ascertain if there were grassroots support for the project. This data was based on young people from a wide range of backgrounds, and those accessing Aik Saath in particular (currently 100). Previous success and enjoyment by young people who worked on a previous oral history related project with Slough Museum contributed to the value of doing another similar type of project.

Mid-project evaluation took place on a small scale, with observations by the Aik Saath staff and by project partners, gathering young people's reflections after their visits to Bentley Priory and half way through the project. Some of these are shown in this report as quotations from the young people in section 8.2.

Summative data was captured through questionnaires, surveys and face to face interviews. These are summarised in section 8.



The Inspiring Learning for All's 'Generic Learning Outcomes' (GLOs) framework has been used to evaluate participants learning during the project. These GLOs are underpinned by a broad definition of learning which identifies benefits that people gain from interacting with arts and cultural organisations. The GLOs have been used in this instance to capture and measure evidence of impact throughout the project.

Figure 14 Generic Learning Outcomes.
Image: Arts Council England/ Inspiring Learning for All

Participants were asked to rate comments about specific activities, relating to the GLOs. A selection of these are summarised here:

Generic Learning Outcome	Statement on the questionnaire <i>(participants could rate: Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)</i>
Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity	'I enjoyed handling objects from World War 2.'
Skills	'The workshop gave me valuable skills for interviewing the veterans.'
Attitudes and values (particularly feelings, empathy)	'The Polish War Memorial made me think about all the Polish people who fought and died during World War 2.'
Behaviour and progression	'I would consider taking part in another project organised by Aik Saath.'
Knowledge and understanding	'I learnt a lot from interviewing the veterans.'

In terms of quantitative data, the following information has been provided so far:

- 18 young people were initially recruited through the project. This number has fluctuated throughout the duration of the project, but 14 young people became the regular participants.
- 6 peer leaders were recruited
- 7 veterans and 2 children of veterans were interviewed for their memories at Bentley Priory, followed by another 3 people at RAF Northolt.
- Over 180 school children and c1000 visitors have seen the exhibition whilst it was on display at Bentley Priory Museum for two months (September and October).
- Over 200 people attended the Celebratory Event on Saturday 10th of October

There is scope for further quantitative evaluation to be obtained when the exhibition goes touring to the other venues around Slough and beyond.

8. Evaluation activities

8.1 Observation

Evaluation through observation and participation was undertaken in an informal way, mainly by the Project Learning Officer and the Project Partners. They observed how the group interacted with each other and how they reacted in different circumstances.

'I first noticed that friendships were building at the RAF Northolt fun day...They got the chance to know each other better and spent the whole day laughing with each other and even came up with a special project team handshake.'

Charlotte Williams, Project Learning Officer

'Through observation and interaction with the group, there was seemingly an initial reservation at the beginning of the visit which was lifted through engagement with the handling collection. As soon as the young people began to try on the RAF uniform, they seemed to be more engaged and interested.'

Eleanor Pulfer, Director, Bentley Priory Museum

'The pride these young people have in their community is really heartening. They want to show friends the exhibition. They are keen to share it with family. They are asking for copies of their interviews to treasure. These are all powerful indicators to me.'

Rob Deeks, Chief Executive, Aik Saath

8.2 Mid-way evaluation: 4 simple questions

Mid-way through the project, the young people were asked four questions about the project so far. This was an ideal opportunity to capture their thoughts, learning and reflections on the project.

Their responses which are both constructive, specific and helpful. This demonstrates their enthusiasm and commitment for the project at this stage.

What do you think of the project so far?

It is an amazing experience and I can't wait for the next trip! And I have met a lot of new people and I have new friends.

It's going brilliant so far, also I can't wait to finish it because I want to know all about world war and Poland.

I am learning a lot and I love the experience I'm getting from this. Also the trips help me develop my social life and understanding of the war.

I think that the project has been really fun and informative and a good way to create community spirit.

It is going really well – learning a lot more about WW2. Also an eye opener as to how countries have come together.

What have you enjoyed the most?

I really enjoyed the trip to BP museum and also learning about Poland from MAPIS.

The thing I have enjoyed the most is when we were watching the video. Also I enjoyed learning about the filter room and the different pilots which joined the 303.

The trips which helped me visualise what the war was like from a pilot's point of view

I've enjoyed all of it but the museum it was fantastic.

The medals that the pilots had received.

What have you enjoyed the least? What would you like us to do differently?

Nothing it was all wonderful, they should give healthy snacks but the drinks were good.

Presentations that require reading

Have more films related to the project.

Nothing! Everything is perfect!

More group activities to split people up and talking to each other

8.3 Face-to-face surveys with young people

The Project Learning Officer advised that it would be more beneficial to conduct face-to-face questionnaires with the young people rather than online surveys, as they are more likely to respond. The Celebratory Event was a perfect opportunity to speak to the young people in neutral surroundings.



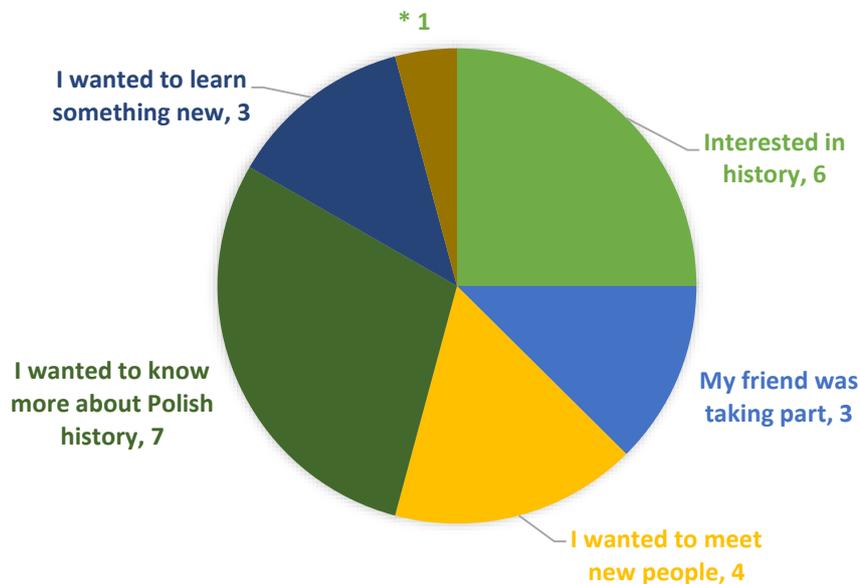
8 young people were interviewed in total, 5 of which were aged 15, 2 were aged 14 and 1 was aged 17. 6 of those enlisted following a visit from Aik Saath to one of their assemblies. 1 came via St Joseph's Catholic School, following a visit from Aik Saath to one of their assemblies, and the remaining 1 joined the project after she saw an advertisement for young volunteers.

Figure 15: Interviewing young participant at the Celebratory Event.

There were some really interesting comments from these surveys which has helped to understand the impact the project has had on their learning and also addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

Below is a summary of the questions and the number of participants that responded to each question.

a. General motivation for taking part in the project

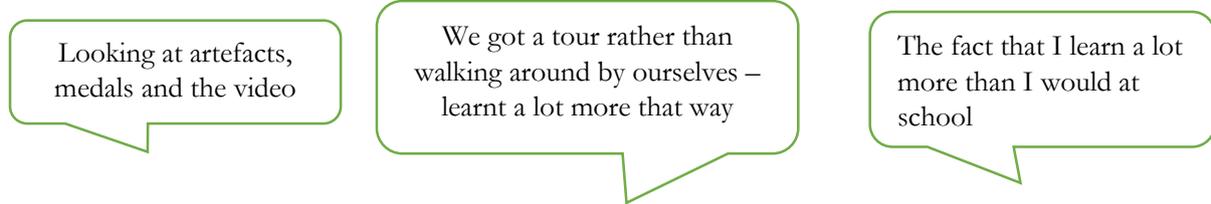


*1 participant added her own reason to take part in this project: that this work would help with her university applications and personal statement.

b. Visit to Bentley Priory Museum

The most popular and highly rated statement was ‘I enjoyed handling objects from World War 2’.

When asked what they enjoyed most about the trip to Bentley Priory Museum, they gave the following answers:



c. Visit to RAF Northolt, Polish War Memorial and Northwood Cemetery

The following statements were highest rated:

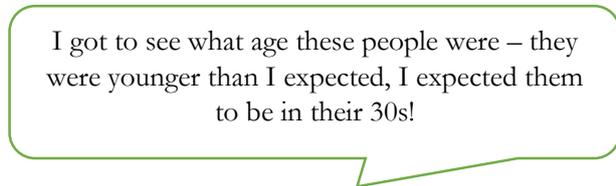
- ‘I felt sad leaving a flower on the graves of the fallen’ (strongly agree)
- ‘The visit to Northwood Cemetery gave me lots to think about’ (agree)

d. Visit to the RAF Museum

The highest rated by participants was:

- ‘I have a better understanding of the contribution of polish air crew during WW2’ (strongly agree)

When asked about the highlight of this visit, the following response was given:



e. Interviewing the veterans at Bentley Priory

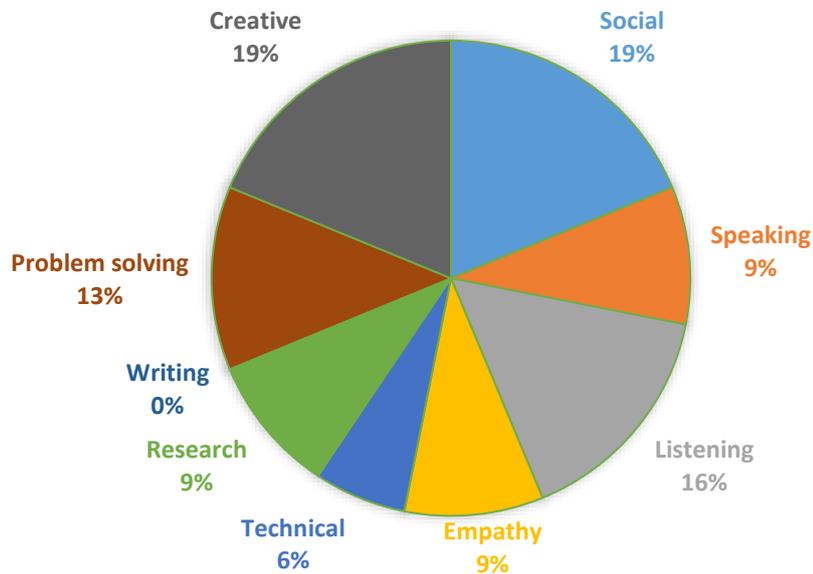
- 2 out of the 8 respondents couldn’t attend the interviewing day.
- 5 agreed that they used their new-found skills recording and interviewing people.
- 4 strongly agreed that they enjoyed listening to the veteran’s stories.

f. Creating the exhibition

All respondents strongly agreed that they liked seeing their work on display, with 6 of the 8 strongly agreeing to gaining new skills through the exhibition work.

g. Skills gained during this project

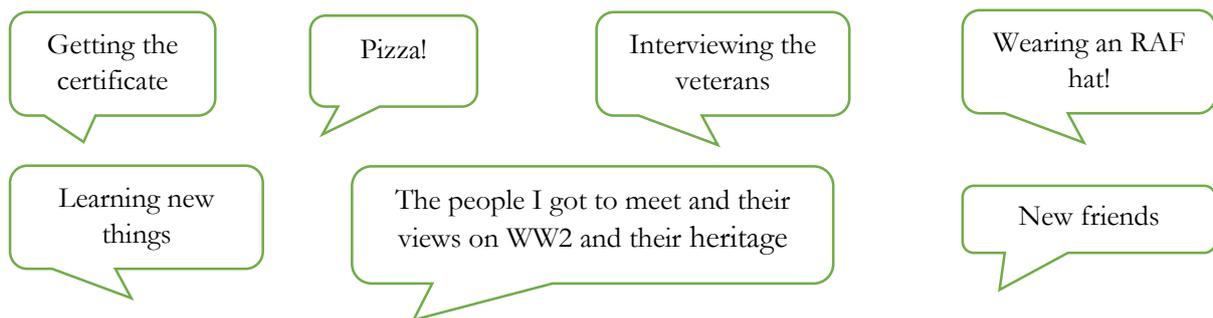
Participants were asked to select those skills that they gained whilst doing the project, or add any to the list. It is clear that they gained valuable skills, particularly social, listening and problem solving skills.



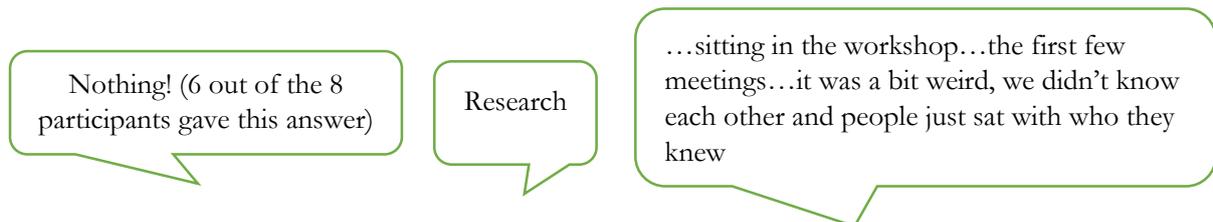
h. Regarding the project overall

All participants strongly agreed that they have enjoyed learning about Polish heritage during WW2 and 6 participants agreed that they have ‘learnt new things about themselves and their abilities’.

Best thing about the project...



Worst thing about the project



8.4 Online surveys: Partners, Peer Leaders and others

Online surveys were sent to:

Peer Leaders: 4 in total

Partners: MAPIS (Peter and Maggie Sikora)
Bentley Priory (Eleanor Pulfer-Sharma and Sarah Dinsdale)
Teachers from Polish Saturday School x3
RAF Northolt Media Officer
Sue Perks (Perks Willis Design)

Others: Kasia Butcher – University Placement at Aik Saath
Stefan (and wife Tessa) Gabszewicz (son of Polish Pilot)

Out of the 15 surveys, 9 responded. Questions were tailored to their involvement in the project, although the common theme running through each survey was to what extent they thought each of the outcomes had been achieved and their overall thoughts on the project. The respondents answered ‘Strongly agree’ or ‘Agree’ to nearly all of the statement that addressed whether each outcome had been achieved. The only statement that received a lower rating (neither agree nor disagree) was ‘the group will learn how to develop and produce exhibitions’.

‘Only a few of them gained experience of writing text - this is something we could have potentially done more of but we had time constraints and this part of the project coincided with a lot of them going back to Poland for the summer...’

Charlotte Williams, Aik Saath

All the respondents were extremely positive about the project overall, giving constructive criticism which is reflected in the conclusion.

We achieved one of our main goals- to help excluded social group in becoming accepted and having an influence on their community involvement. We also managed to show to the wider public that Polish community is not as bad as seen in the press and they can add valuable skills, knowledge and heritage to our society.

Peter and Maggie Sikora, MAPIS

This project has really allowed me to personally engage with history and honestly it was a really humbling experience meeting such astonishing people and being able to share their stories.

Peer Leader

Face-to-face meetings were also held with Rob Deeks, Charlotte Williams and one Peer Leader who also works at Aik Saath offices. Rob Deeks and Charlotte Williams were also asked to reflect on the project in terms of the overall aims, which was extremely useful, particularly to understand their observations on what impact the project has made to individuals, together with how the organisation can take the achievements forward.

The project has been incredibly well organised - Charlotte has been an integral to the success of the project. It is not easy to coordinate young people with different commitments, project partners, training partners, veterans etc.

Eleanor Pulfer-Sharma, Museum Director, Bentley Priory Museum

It was evident that throughout the project the communication skills of certain participants improved greatly. The quieter members of the group developed confidence in communicating over the time we worked with them. For example, Zuzia was very quiet at the start of the project. She'd got involved with the project from seeing about it in the newspaper and didn't really talk to any of the group much at the start. At the end of the project she confidently presented in front of 200 people at the celebration event and worked closely with Saleha to prepare their speech together - working as a team and communicating with each other effectively to create a brilliant speech which was delivered in an engaging way.'

Charlotte Williams, Project Learning Officer, Aik Saath



Figure 16: Young people prepare their information and questions prior to recording the veterans.



Figure 17: The Project Learning Officer making the veterans and families feel welcome at Bentley Priory Museum



Figure 18: Julian Kowalski, son of Wing Commander Julian 'Roch' Kowalski DFC, enjoying the exhibition at the Celebratory event, showing the journey that many Polish people made from Poland to get to Great Britain during the Second World War.



Figure 19: Young people lay a wreath at the Polish War Memorial.

9. Evidence of achieving outcomes

The outcomes that Aik Saath wanted to achieve are listed on the following page, together with an explanation of how those outcomes were achieved and what impact this has had on the project.

17,000 Reasons to Remember outcome	Has this been achieved? If so, how?
Young people will have developed new skills such as teamwork and communication skills as well as technical skills such as oral history.	YES Through the workshops and visits, working together to interview the veterans and prepare the exhibition panels. <i>'Everyone has progressed. The young people have developed their skills through recruitment assemblies, communicating with their peers, communicating their vision to professionals like the designers, interviewing aircrew and then feeding back and presenting about their experiences. I see the confidence and the skills of these young people transferred into their wider volunteering and everyday lives.'</i> Rob Deeks, Aik Saath
The Peer Leadership scheme will involve more experienced young people, assisting and gaining mentoring and leadership skills.	YES 6 Peer Leaders were recruited and they have all demonstrated their responsibilities in the surveys. <i>'In the first workshop I was involved in mingling between Aik Saath volunteers and the Polish young people ensuring everybody felt included and not secluded, also I took a key part in explaining one of the ice breakers.'</i> Peer Leader
Young people will be made to feel welcome and will have fun. New young people that aren't the 'usual suspects' will get involved.	YES <i>'This half term we've been asked to support a heritage project focussed on food. Across two days, over thirty young people have volunteered and the spine of both volunteer teams is constituted by young people that took part in the Polish project. Aside from the clear edge they have with regards to experience and therefore confidence...young people have enjoyed being a part of this heritage project so much, they are happy to volunteer...I think they enjoyed the project so much that it's opened doors to other heritage experiences for them.'</i> Rob Deeks, Aik Saath YES – Of all the young people that participated in this project, 14 have not been involved with Aik Saath before.
Attitudes will have changed as a result of the project, particularly young people from Polish backgrounds	YES , from meeting the veterans, visiting museums, the cemetery and memorial, the young people overwhelmingly agree that their attitudes and understanding has been both changed and widened. <i>'...working closely on a project with Muslim young people was good for the Polish young people as they learnt a bit more about the religion and about Pakistani culture...equally as beneficial the other way around - I don't think many of the Aik Saath young people would have developed close friendships with Polish young people if it wasn't for this project. Two young people in particular have not been in the UK very long seemed to develop a good friendship and I know they have stayed in touch since...'</i> Charlotte Williams, Aik Saath
Veterans will have enjoyed being able to tell and share their stories, together with knowing that their contribution is valued.	YES observation from project partners demonstrate that the veterans enjoyed being interviewed and telling their stories. <i>'...brings fresh memories of very exciting and painful times'</i> Julian Michalski, 304 Squadron Navigator attending the Annual Polish Commemoration Event
The Polish community will feel more valued, with a sense of pride that these stories are being told.	YES from those that were directly involved with the project and their families and friends, and those that have seen the exhibition so far. The project and exhibition has been promoted through the local press. This outcome will be further achieved when the exhibition is touring. <i>'For me it was great learning experience but also confirmation that as a Polish person I should be proud of Poles.'</i> Kasia Butcher, University placement
Staff will enjoy developing new skills and new ways to engage with young people.	YES The Project Learning Officer has gained new skills such as managing budgets and HLF paperwork. <i>'The highlight of the project has been getting to know young Polish people.'</i> Peer Leader
Participants, but also visitors to the exhibition will have learnt and engaged with this important heritage.	YES the quality of the exhibition has made this topic fascinating, engaging and thought-provoking. More people will learn and engage with it once touring. The exhibition at Bentley Priory was extended for another month due to feedback from visitors. <i>'The display boards were beautifully prepared and we felt that they had captured the lives of the Polish pilots during the war, and also the sacrifices of their wives.'</i> Stefan and Tessa Gabszewicz
The stories of Polish aircrew and their families will be more well-known and accessible in the Slough community.	YES The exhibition will tour around Slough to enable more enjoyment, learning and access of this important heritage. Oral histories will be a permanent reminder of the project, and will be deposited at Bentley Priory Museum. <i>'A fantastic exhibition commemorating our contributions to the allied victory during WWII, thank you!'</i> Witold Sobkow, Polish Ambassador

10. Unexpected outcomes

There were some really unexpected outcomes that became apparent through the project, all very positive:

- From Aik Saath's team observations, confidence amongst the young people has really been apparent. For example, one of the peer leader's confidence has grown substantially as a result of the project and she has gained real leadership qualities. This was evident at the Celebratory Event when she stood on stage and addressed over 200 people, supporting a new participant. This peer leader has gone on to chair a version of question time with other young people as a result of her new found confidence.
- It was apparent from the beginning that the Polish young people possess a serious and hardworking approach to the project. Evidence of this was how willing they were to give up their Friday evenings to work on the project, and volunteering to give extra help with transcribing oral histories and helping to set up for the celebratory event.
- Kasia Butcher, the University Placement who helped recruit young Polish people and help to translate for them from English to Polish, also benefitted from this herself as she was able to practice translating Polish back to English. Kasia has since graduated from University with a degree in social work.
- As a result of this project, Charlotte Williams, the Project Learning Officer, was inspired by the young Polish people to increase her skills and investigate learning Polish language at college.
- New fruitful partnerships have been developed as a result of the project, including the Polish Saturday School. This has been a welcome addition to Aik Saath's growing relationships with community organisations and it is hoped that this will be continued through future projects.
- The popularity of the exhibition so far has enabled the team at Aik Saath to promote it online, as a digital version. This will be of particular interest to both international audiences and potential hiring venues in the UK.

'The quieter members of the group developed confidence in communicating over the time we worked with them. For example, one participant was very quiet at the start of the project. She'd got involved with the project from seeing about it in the newspaper and didn't really talk to any of the group much at the start. At the end of the project she confidently presented in front of 200 people at the celebration event and worked closely with a peer leader to prepare their speech together - working as a team and communicating with each other effectively to create a brilliant speech which was delivered in an engaging way.'

Charlotte Williams, Project Learning Officer, Aik Saath

'I would define the majority of the project participants as 'hard to reach' in so far as most would not usually get involved in a voluntary project like this...The presence of a parallel civil society in Slough makes living on the periphery a distinct possibility - it's possible to go to Polish school, be a member of the Polish scouts, get your hair cut at the Polish hairdresser, get your prescription from the Polish chemist and buy your food from the Polish supermarket...Hopefully this project has been a step towards bringing these young people into the heart of the community by working together with people and institutions that they would not normally have contact with. By showing we care about these young people's heritage and viewing it as part of our own, I'm hopeful they will see Slough's heritage as theirs too.'

Rob Deeks, Chief Executive, Aik Saath

11. Lessons learnt

Overall, the project has been a major success on so many levels. There have been a few minor glitches and issues which are described below, which can be utilised as learning for future projects.

Timings

- The team at Aik Saath hadn't realised that many of the young Polish people would be going back to Poland for the duration of the summer holidays, which meant that work on the project had to be halted temporarily.

Recording the veterans

- Some of the participants stated that they would have benefitted from spending more time interviewing the veterans, but this was due to coaches being timetabled to pick up veterans and young people at specific times. Forty minutes were allocated for each interview.
- There were a few technical glitches with the microphones not being switched on or the volume of the recording not being set, but these are to be expected when starting to do oral history recording. Some of the young people have recently volunteered to show other young people how to work the recorders for other work, and their learning through the project will help them to remember what to do.
- During the recordings there were a number of background noises, due to the locations of some of the recordings at Bentley Priory.

Budgets

- The cost of the coach hire to various venues was much higher than anticipated.

Partnerships

- There were many positive outcomes from working with so many partners, although one challenge that has been brought to light is the challenge of managing everyone's expectations. This is a typical challenge for any multi-layered project, and communication is key.
- Of great benefit to Aik Saath and its future work is the new partnership that has been formed with the Polish Saturday School, who are extremely enthusiastic about working together with Aik Saath on future projects.

Miscellaneous

- A few participants commented that the initial icebreakers were really good but would have liked to have seen more activities that mingled everyone together and mix people up more, as the people that knew each other stayed together. This was later resolved as the group got to know each other more on the trips.

12. Conclusion

The strength of this evaluation has been capturing the learning and enjoyment from those participants and partners involved with the project. The findings clearly show that the overall experience has been both enjoyable and inspiring for everyone involved.

The fact that the exhibition will continue to engage audiences over the coming months, and as an online resource for wider audiences, is a testament to all the hard work and motivation of the young people, guided and supported every step of the way by Aik Saath.

Working with Aik Saath was a real pleasure- very polite, professional, hardworking and helpful.

Peter and Maggie Sikora, MAPIS

'The project has been incredibly well organised - Charlotte has been an integral to the success of the project. It is not easy to coordinate young people with different commitments, project partners, training partners, veterans...'

Eleanor Pulfer-Sharma

The highlights for me were looking at the displays, and being able to touch the artefacts. I also loved the little room in Bentley Priory where they play a video and it's all 3D. I liked visiting the cemetery as it felt like a personal connection was formed there. All the trips were great.

Peer Leader

APPENDIX 1: Example of the face-to-face survey conducted with young participants at the Celebratory Event, 10th October 2015.

AIK SAATH: 17,000 REASONS TO REMEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE We would really appreciate your views on being involved on this project. Please can you answer the following questions about the '17,000 reasons to remember' project and your involvement with it, to help us find out what worked well and what didn't work so well.

Name..... Age.....

1. How did you hear about this project? Please tick one box

- Polish Saturday School
- Advertisement
- St Joseph's
- Someone told me about it

2. What made you want to take part in this project? Tick all that apply

- Interested in history
- My friend was taking part
- I wanted to meet new people
- I wanted to know more about Polish history
- I wanted to learn something new
- I had been involved with other Aik Saath projects before

3. Visit to Bentley Priory Please rate the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I learnt a lot about the Battle of Britain and World War II					
I enjoyed handling objects from World War 2					
Museums are more interesting than I thought					
It made me want to learn more about WW2					
I liked looking at all the medals and log books on display					
I would visit Bentley Priory again					

4. What did you enjoy most about the trip to Bentley Priory? Please write your comment here in the box below

5. Storytelling workshop and oral history training

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I thought the workshop was fun					
The workshop gave me valuable skills for interviewing the veterans					
The oral history training was easy to understand					
The oral history training made me think about how to interview someone					
I enjoyed using the recorder					
It made me look forward to interviewing the veterans					

6. Visit to RAF Northolt, Polish War Memorial and Northwood Cemetery

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I found the tour round RAF Northolt interesting					
The Polish War Memorial made me think about all the Polish people who fought and died during WW2					
The visit to Northwood Cemetery gave me lots to think about					
I felt sad leaving a flower on the graves of the fallen					

7. Visit to the RAF Museum

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I enjoyed looking around the museum					
I have a better understanding of the contribution of Polish air crew during World War 2					

8. What was the highlight of this visit? Please write it in the box below

9. Interviewing the veterans at Bentley Priory

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt nervous meeting the veterans					
I used my new-found skills recording and interviewing people					
I enjoyed listening to the veteran's story					
I learnt a lot from interviewing the veteran					

Given the opportunity, I would like to interview someone again					
--	--	--	--	--	--

10. Creating the exhibition

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I enjoyed working as part of a team					
I enjoyed presenting back to the group					
I enjoyed researching for the exhibition					
I liked seeing our work on display					
I enjoyed meeting the designer					
I learnt new skills					

11. What skills do you think you have gained during this project? please circle those that apply

- Social** **Empathy** **Research** **Problem solving**
Speaking **Writing** **creative**
Listening **Technical (using equipment)** **Any other?.....**

12. Project overall

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am more confident about what I can do and giving new things a go					
I have learnt new things about myself and my abilities					
I have made new friends					
I have enjoyed learning about Polish heritage during WW2					
I would consider taking part in another project organised by Aik Saath					

13. What was the best thing about the project? And the worst?

APPENDIX 2: Example of completed online survey response for Peer Leaders

Q1: How did you get involved with this project?

Charlotte emailed me because she thought I would be interested... which I was!

Q2: What did your role as Peer Leader involve?

My role as peer leader involved me taking more of a lead in the interviews and helping to go into schools to promote the project and helping others.

Q3: Regarding the first workshop that took place with the new participants, what was your involvement and in your opinion, how well did you think this workshop went? Was there anything that could have been improved?

In the first workshop I was involved in mingling between Aik Saath volunteers and the polish young people ensuring everybody felt included and not secluded, also I took a key part in explaining one of the ice breakers. One way it could have been improved is that we could have played a game which mixed people up more.

Q4: In your opinion, what were the highlights of the trips to Bentley Priory (the first trip), RAF Northolt, Polish War Memorial and Northwood Cemetery?

Unfortunately, I was only able to visit the Bentley Priory Museum, the highlight of that was the warm welcome we received as well as the workshop where we saw and handled some of the equipment used by WWII veterans.

Q5: Regarding the storytelling and oral history workshop, please rate the following. (ratings choices were Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

- **The storyteller was entertaining and I had fun** Strongly agree
- **The storytelling workshop gave me valuable skills for interviewing the veterans** Strongly agree
- **The oral history training was easy to understand** Strongly agree
- **I enjoyed using the oral history recorder** Strongly agree
- **It made me look forward to interviewing the veterans** Strongly agree

Anything else you would like to add about the storyteller and oral history training sessions?

They were enjoyable and the instructions and lessons we learnt were extremely valuable for the exhibition and later life.

Q6: The oral history sessions at Bentley Priory: you helped to facilitate one of the oral history sessions. In your opinion, how did it go? How well did you and the other young people in your group engage with the Veterans on the day? Could it have been improved in any way?

I think it went very well however because some of the veterans were rather quiet not all the young people were not quite engaged at all points, also it would have been better if we had more than 40 mins.

Q7: Regarding the creation of the 17,000 Reasons to Remember exhibition, please can you rate the following:

- **I enjoying researching and writing for the exhibition** Strongly agree
- **I liked seeing our work on display** Strongly agree
- **I enjoyed meeting the exhibition designer** Agree
- **I am proud to have been involved in this worthwhile project** Strongly agree

Q8: Being a Peer Leader with this project, what knowledge/understanding and skills have you gained whilst participating in this project? Please can you rate the following:

- **I now understand the contribution of Polish aircrew during the Battle of Britain, in the Second World War** Strongly agree
- **I have enjoyed learning about Polish history and heritage, particularly during the Second World War** Strongly agree
- **I have improved my communication skills both with people my own age, and older** Strongly agree
- **I gained mentoring skills** Agree
- **I have gained leadership skills** Agree
- **I have gained presentation skills** Strongly agree
- **I have enjoyed taking part in this project** Strongly agree
- **I have learnt technical skills (e.g. using an oral history recorder)** Strongly agree
- **I have gained research skills (e.g. for the exhibition)** Strongly agree
- **I have gained more creative skills** Agree
- **I have learnt how to work as a team** Strongly agree
- **Working on this project has given me confidence in my abilities** Agree
- **I have made new friends** Agree

Q9: As a key participant in this project, how has it been of benefit to you and what has been the highlight of the project as a whole?

This project has really allowed me to personally engage with history and honestly it was a really humbling experience meeting such astonishing people and being able to share their stories.

Q10: Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

Respondent skipped this question

APPENDIX 3: Example of completed online survey for project partners (responses from Peter and Maggie Sikora of MAPIS):

Q1: How did you first get involved with this project and why?

The programme was our idea as Peter is a Polish Air Force Historian and we wanted to use his knowledge to help integrate excluded Polish ethnic group into wider community

Q2: When did you first meet the group of young people that were going to be involved with the project and what did you do at the first workshop? How well did it go from your point of view?

We met young people on the first session, when we introduced the subject of WW2 and Polish involvement in the UK. Session went great, as we did not expect young people to be so interested in their heritage.

Q3: How easy was it to contact the Polish veterans to take part and be interviewed?

We have known Polish veterans for over 12 years, so it was very easy to contact them and invite to take part in the project. It was our responsibility to arrange meetings with veterans as we have known them for so long and had good relationships.

Q4: Can you describe what happened on the day trip to RAF Northolt, the War Memorial and the Cemetery? What did you want/hope the young people would get out of it? Can you comment on the general mood of the group after the visit?

Young people have learnt a lot about the history of RAF Northolt and its connections with a Polish Air Force during the war. We have visited the iconic places such as Polish lounge, Officers' Mess and HQ building. Our host, S/Ldr Tenniswood was very accommodating and provided young people with a brief history of Polish and British relations during WW2. It was very emotional for all of us, and especially young people to visit the Polish War Memorial as they could learn about the main battles PAF was involved in and also about the casualties that they suffered. Young people laid flowers in their memory. Same was done at Northwood cemetery where Polish fighter pilots are buried. Young people were asking a lot of questions and we could see how proud they were to be a part of this programme.

Q5: The trip to Bentley Priory, meeting and recording the veterans: Overall, how well did the young people engage with the Veterans on the day?

Young people had no problem engaging with veterans, who were happy to participate and enthusiastic to share their stories. Young peoples' approach was very professional and they were very respectful towards elderly people.

Q6: The oral history sessions at Bentley Priory: you facilitated one of the oral history sessions. In your opinion, how did it go? Could it have been improved in any way?

n/a

Q7: The outcomes of the project. Below are the outcomes of the project that were included in the Heritage Lottery Fund application. From your point of view, how well do you think these outcomes were achieved? (ratings choices were Strongly agree, Agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

- **The young people will enjoy taking part in the project** Strongly agree
- **The young people will have gained communication skills** Strongly agree
- **Peer leaders will have learnt leadership and mentoring skills** Strongly agree
- **The young people will be learning to work together as a team** Strongly agree
- **The group will learn technical skills, for example, using oral history recording equipment** Strongly agree
- **The group will learn to use interviewing techniques** Strongly agree
- **The group will learn about heritage** Strongly agree
- **The group will gain an understanding of the sacrifices of their forebears during World War II.** Strongly agree
- **The group will learn how to develop and produce exhibition panels (including writing text).** Agree
- **This project will change attitudes and behaviours** Strongly agree
- **This project will involve young people that might not normally take part in this type of project.** Strongly agree

Q8: The project generally: How well organised do you think the project has been overall?

Programme was very well run and managed by Aik Saath.

Q9: As a key partner in this project, how has it been of benefit to you and your organisation?

We achieved one of our main goals- to help excluded social group in becoming accepted and having an influence on their community involvement. We also managed to show to the wider public that Polish community is not as bad as seen in the press and they can add valuable skills, knowledge and heritage to our society.

Q10: Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

Working with Aik Saath was a real pleasure- very polite, professional, hardworking and helpful.

APPENDIX 4: Visitor comments from exhibition at RAF Northolt, 5th September 2015, at Annual Polish Commemoration Event

‘Excellent Exhibition. Lovely to see young people learning about World War II and giving their time to research the history of the war heroes.’

‘A fantastic exhibition commemorating our contributions to the allied victory during WWII, thank you!’

Witold Sobkow, Polish Ambassador

‘Excellent exhibition, brings fresh memories of very exciting and painful times’

Julian Michalski, 304 Squadron Navigator

‘The exhibition is very impressive and informative. A lot of hard work and effort has clearly gone into it. I am sure that it will be greatly appreciated by all the veterans and their descendants who see it.’

Steve Burd, son of Wladyslaw Burdziejow, 303 and 300 Ground Crew

‘Great exhibition. A lot of hard work, research and effort. Well done.’

Geoff Burton, RAF Ingham Heritage Centre

‘Utterly Professional, well done!’

‘Very interesting and informative displays – well done!’

‘Many thanks for putting on this informative and attractive display. Obviously a lot of hard work has gone into it. Much appreciated!’

Daughter of 300 Sqn pilot

‘Congratulations. It was a pleasure to see such a fantastic display. Well done to everyone who took part in researching and hope that you’ll carry on such a beautiful course.’

‘Many thanks. An excellent display, very interesting and informative.’

‘A fantastic insight to a legendary squadron that for me still to this day were the instrumental factor in the Battle of Britain. So proud to be here today with my mother, two brothers and grandmother laying the wreath on behalf of 318 Squadron. Amazing display and day!’

‘Thanks to the exhibition we have found out many interesting and education information about the Polish pilots fighting in England. Thank you.’

Air Cadets, Polish Air Force Academy, Deblin (translated from Polish language)

APPENDIX 5: Visitor comments from exhibition at Bentley Priory Museum, September – October 2015

‘At least in museums like Bletchley, Hendon and Bentley Priory, the Polish war effort is recognised. The few of the few!’

‘Eye opening and interesting exhibition. Good to learn about and be able to acknowledge the contributions of these brave people’.

‘Wonderful exhibition. We are grateful for what these brave men did and are happy to see their stories being shared with young people today’.

‘Wonderful collection, a fitting tribute to inspire everybody. They truly were heroes’.

‘Many thanks for preserving these memories. Excellent.’

‘Very moving’.

‘What a fascinating exhibition. I applaud the work of Aik Saath in bringing these stories to life’.

‘I’m so thankful you remember’. (Polish visitor)

‘Thank you to all those brave Poles who helped us all’.

‘Very well thought- out and put together – I loved the personal stories and the photographs. I have learnt a lot! Thank you’.

APPENDIX 6: Comments from the Celebratory Event, Saturday 10th October 2015:

"An excellent exhibition. A massive well done to everyone."

"What a great way to bridge two very great Slough communities together. A big well done to you all. I like that you printed all the exhibition boards into a magazine so we can read it at our leisure. Thank you so much for your hard work."

"A very well presented exhibition. I have added to my knowledge of the WWII thank you."

Comments from Spitfires and Hurricanes at Celebratory event:

I found out that:

The Polish called Britain 'The Island of Last Hope' very poignant –especially as Britain did not acknowledge them in the victory march.

Polish men were popular with British women for their chivalry.

It made me think about:

Love.

All the sacrifices made by those who took part in WWII for us for our freedoms. There are many unsung heroes that deserve far more recognition and appreciation. God bless them all.

Polish people.



Figure 20: The group visit to RAF Northolt