

# Remember Together 2021: Evaluation report



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Supported by the Together Coalition



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# 1. Introduction

British Future is an independent, non-partisan thinktank and registered charity, engaging people's hopes and fears about integration and immigration, identity and race. Our goal is a confident and welcoming Britain, inclusive and fair to all.

Britain's history and its commemoration is one of the key fronts in our divisive identity 'culture war' – yet remembrance of shared history also has the power to bring people together in a way that few other things have. There are only a handful of moments each year like Remembrance, when so many of us pause and take part in the same activity at the same time. And because this is a moment when we reflect on our history and what that means today, it is also a time when political and public debate focuses on identity.

For several years British Future's [Remember Together](#) project, supported by the Royal British Legion, has sought to use remembrance to help build a more shared and inclusive identity. The Second World War saw over 2.5 million soldiers from pre-partition India – what is now India, Pakistan and Bangladesh – serve alongside white British servicemen and women and those from Africa, the Caribbean and other commonwealth nations. Remember Together brings people from different ethnic and faith backgrounds together in remembrance of our shared history. By highlighting and celebrating the service and sacrifice made by servicemen and women of all creeds and colours, it aims to make our national tradition of Remembrance feel relevant and inclusive to everybody in Britain today.

The project originated during the 2014-18 centenary of the First World War, after British Future research for the report [Do mention the war: will 1914 matter in 2014?](#) established evidence of the strong public appetite for telling the story of Commonwealth contribution to the armed forces. Some 80% of the public agreed with the message *'The British war effort included Empire and Commonwealth soldiers from countries including India and the West Indies, Australia and Canada. It is important for integration today that all of our children are taught about the shared history of a multi-ethnic Britain.'* This sparked efforts from British Future and partners to raise the profile of this shared history and to track public awareness of Commonwealth contribution. Awareness that Indian soldiers fought in WW1 increased during the centenary from a 2012 baseline of 44% to 71% by 2018.

In November 2020, British Future assembled a [coalition of voices](#) – across politics and civil society, culture, the military and faith – to urge that *"more should be done to highlight the role of soldiers from across the Commonwealth, ensuring their contributions are reflected and acknowledged, and that Remembrance activity is truly inclusive."* Supported by both the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, we called for greater efforts *"to ensure all who served are fully recognised through better education, commemoration and documentation of our shared history."*

In 2021 we put this proposal into practice, working with two secondary schools, in London and Rochdale, to uncover hidden histories of WW2 contribution from the local ethnic minority community. We then brought these stories to a wider audience through national regional media and two online films, shared on social media.

This evaluation report captures the activities of Remember Together in 2021; the public reach of the project via local, national and social media; its impact on participants and on the wider public who encountered it through media coverage and our films of the project; and feedback from the teachers and headteachers who conducted the project. The report then looks forwards to Remembrance in 2022 and beyond, at how this pilot in two schools could be conducted on a wider, national scale and at alternative ways to take forward the Remember Together project and broader efforts to promote inclusive remembrance.

More information about the Remember Together project can be found at <https://www.britishfuture.org/category/remember-together/>

***Part One:***

***Lessons from 2021:***

***Rochdale and Walthamstow***



## 2. Methodology – Remember Together in 2021

British Future worked with two state secondary schools, in Rochdale and Walthamstow, east London, on the Remember Together project in 2021. Both schools had a diverse, predominantly South Asian, student intake.

Students called on members of the local community, via parents and other networks such as local mosques, community organisations and local media, to ask local black and Asian people to share the stories of their family's involvement in the Second World War. The students then become historians themselves, conducting filmed interviews with family members and documenting these stories through video interviews and family photos of servicemen and their medals and other memorabilia. This content was presented on the schools' websites.

British Future helped to extend the reach of the project, making a short, two-minute 'highlights' film for each school and sharing these on social media. Press releases were issued to local, regional and national media with students and teachers briefed for media interviews.

Falinge Park High School in Rochdale instigated the project in this format, as part of an entry into the Royal Society of Arts Pupil Design Awards. Students from the school's 'Democracy Ambassadors', a group of Year 9 and Year 10 students, attended an assembly given in January 2022 by British Future Director Sunder Katwala about the black and Asian contribution to the Second World War. They then researched the topic themselves, with essays and a short film posted on the school website (<https://www.falingepark.com/forgotten-heroes/>).

The students then put a call out to the local community in Rochdale, via social media and through *pro bono* advertising slots donated by a local radio station. Lead teacher Vacas Ahmed helped students to conduct video interviews with community members who shared their stories and the school edited these films and posted them on the school website (<https://www.falingepark.com/community-heroes/>). British Future contracted a professional film-maker to do a day's filming with students, the lead teacher and head teacher. This footage was edited together with clips from the community videos to make a two-minute highlights film, which was released publicly ahead of Remembrance Sunday.

Falinge Park students who took part in the project attended the Rochdale Armistice Day remembrance service at the local cenotaph, and the film was shown to all students at the school ahead of the two-minute silence.

Eden Girls Waltham Forest, a Muslim girls secondary school in Walthamstow, east London, commenced their Remember Together project at the start of the school year in September 2021. Due to the much shorter timeframe, British Future took a more hands-on role, supporting lead teacher Avaes Mohammad to deliver the project.

In early September British Future Communications Director Steve Ballinger gave an assembly to the school's Year Nine students about the black and Asian contribution to the Second World War. Students were also shown examples of what the Rochdale students had uncovered, and an outline of what the project would entail. Students were then invited to put their names forward to take part in the project, which would take place weekly after school. Some 20 students volunteered to take part.

To reach out to the local community, students worked with British Future to design a flyer, which they distributed via local mosques and community groups. British Future shared a virtual version of the flyer via social media, with a small budget to promote it in the local area. A press release secured an article in the local newspaper. Most promotion, however, was via students at the school and their parents: the school wrote to parents of every child at the school, telling them about the project and asking if they would like to share their story. The Remember Together project group delivered assemblies to each school year and then followed-up by visiting each form group, asking if students had asked at home if they had WW2 family history.

British Future and the school arranged for all filming of participant interviews to be conducted on one day, with community members given staggered interview slots. A professional film-maker was contracted to film clips with students and the lead teacher, as well as student interviews with the local community members who came forward to share their stories. British Future worked with the film-maker to edit each film, which were posted on the school website (<https://www.edengirlswalthamforest.com/remembertogether/>). A two-minute highlights film was released online in the lead-up to Remembrance Sunday.

Ahead of Armistice Day an event was held at the school to premiere the film of the Remember Together project to the local community. Students, parents and other members of the community were invited. The Armed Forces Muslim Association brought a contingent of Muslim servicemen and women in uniform, and Major Naveed Mohammed gave a short speech, alongside Zehra Zaidi of the *We Too Built Britain* campaign. Students gave a short presentation and Q&A about the project.

British Future led the communication of the project, issuing press releases and contacting media outlets to set up interviews and print coverage, and briefing students and teachers for interview. A small budget was used to promote the two highlights videos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

This project evaluation includes interviews with student participants, teachers and headteachers at both schools; questions to community project participants; and split-sample testing using ICM polling to establish the impact of the project videos.

Funding for Remember Together 2021 was provided by the Together Coalition, covering hard costs and some of the staffing costs of the project.

### 3. Public reach – media and social media

#### Media coverage 2021

The Remember Together project generated 96 individual pieces of media coverage in the week of remembrance, ranging from TV and radio to print and online. Highlights included broadcast TV packages on Sky News, ITV London and ITV Granada Reports; a BBC Radio 4 Sunday Programme package on Remembrance Sunday; a double-page spread in the Sunday Mirror; and items in the Guardian, Independent, the i paper and Eastern Eye.

Sky News TV package on Remembrance Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov

Broadcast package + syndicated online story:

<https://news.sky.com/story/queen-to-attend-remembrance-sunday-service-as-charity-stresses-importance-of-day-being-inclusive-12468204>

*(Sky news online story on Remembrance Day was also syndicated to 50+ commercial news outlets)*

BBC Radio 4 *Sunday* package tx Remembrance Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov (2<sup>nd</sup> item)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0011k15>

Sunday Mirror, Remembrance Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov (double page spread in print + online)

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/forgotten-history-multi-racial-unity-25453606>

The Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/nov/08/uk-pupils-explore-untold-war-stories-of-black-and-asian-soldiers>

The Independent - feature, Remembrance Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> Nov

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/remembrance-day-asian-soldiers-ww2-b1955814.html>

ITV Granada Reports package Friday 12 Nov (starts 7 mins 58)

<https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2021-11-07/catch-up-itv-news-granada-reports-for-the-north-west-and-the-isle-of-man>

ITV London package Mon 8<sup>th</sup> Nov

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNZas0s04W0>

The i paper

<https://inews.co.uk/news/remembrance-day-school-black-asian-veterans-world-war-two-1290261> (also in print edition)

Eastern Eye (two items)

<https://www.easterneye.biz/students-document-hidden-stories-of-black-and-asian-ww2-contribution/>

<https://www.easterneye.biz/london-schoolkids-project-uncovers-hidden-stories-of-asian-and-black-ww2-contribution/>

Islam Channel

<https://www.islamchannel.tv/blog-posts/muslim-schoolgirls-uncover-family-stories-of-ww2-soldiers>

(also live interview with Eden students + teacher on the sofa, Mon 15<sup>th</sup> Nov).

### **Local/regional online media**

- <https://www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/19710964.school-uncovers-hidden-stories-black-asian-ww2-contribution/>
- <https://www.newsbreak.com/news/2427384492332/uk-pupils-explore-untold-war-stories-of-black-and-asian-soldiers>
- <https://www.newscabal.co.uk/remembrance-day-must-be-about-all-those-who-fought-against-fascism-luke-turner/>
- <https://www.rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/143707/rochdale-students-uncover-hidden-stories-of-black-and-asian-world-war-two-contribution>
- <https://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/19598620.walthamstow-students-call-bame-familys-ww2-history/>
- [https://www.mylondon.news/news/east-london-news/remembrance-day-as-muslim-student-21969944?utm\\_source=linkCopy&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=sharebar](https://www.mylondon.news/news/east-london-news/remembrance-day-as-muslim-student-21969944?utm_source=linkCopy&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar)

### **Social media**

Remember Together 2021 communications focused on generating broadcast, print and online media coverage for maximum reach, as there was strong media interest and limited budget for paid promotion.

However, in the week of remembrance (8-14 Nov) there were 453 individual tweets using the #RememberTogether hashtag, with a potential reach of 746,000 people. British Future's organic tweets reached 120,000 users, with around 200 engagements.

A small budget of £200 on Twitter to promote the two videos generated 40,000 impressions and 20,000 video views. A further £100 was spent to promote the videos on Facebook, generating reach to 15,500 users and 10,000 engagements, with 5,000 people watching the whole video (2 mins 20 secs).

This demonstrates potential for social media reach for video content if future projects could secure funding for promotion or *pro bono* ad credit support.

## 4. Impact: student participants

Students in the two case study secondary schools were at the heart of the project: following initial support from British Future, and with ongoing support from lead teachers, students called on members of their family and the local community to find stories of involvement of black and Asian individuals in the Second World War. They reached out to mosques, community organisations and local media. They took on the role of historians, carrying out video interviews with people who could relay the stories of black and Asian servicemen in their families. These stories were augmented by family photos, medals and other memorabilia. The videos and other content were presented on the schools' websites.

The students were also involved in the dissemination phase of the project, which was led by British Future: with student involvement, British Future made a short, two-minute 'highlights' film for each school. These were shared on social media and, accompanied by press releases, to local, regional and national media. Students and teachers were briefed for media interviews, described earlier. Both schools took part in events to mark Remembrance. Eden Girls School held an event at the school to mark Remembrance Day, inviting parents and the wider community, with external speakers and guests, as described in Section Two.

In our evaluation of the project we asked students at both schools about their experiences of being involved in the project, to evaluate the design and implementation of the project and its impact from the students' own perspectives. We visited each school in 2021, carrying out focus groups with a total of 21 students involved. Our discussions focused on their views on the project and their involvement; how the messages might be conveyed to other young people; and what impact the project has had, in particular on perspectives and feelings around their own identity.

### Experiences of being involved in Remember Together

Students first became aware of the project at the school assemblies where it was introduced by British Future and the project leads in the schools. The assemblies were effectively the project launch, from which students were invited to come forward to take part in the project. The student participants felt inspired by the assemblies. Most of the students had not been aware of the involvement of black and Asian servicemen in the Second World War and none had been aware of the extent of their involvement prior to the project. This encouraged many students to sign up:

*"When I first heard about the project I was really inspired. I had never heard of anyone else doing something like this and I wanted to be involved, to contribute."* (Eden Girls School)

Many described being surprised, and sometimes shocked, at the lack of recognition given to their contribution:

*“It was a really new idea: we didn’t know that these people had such a big impact on World War Two.” (Eden Girls School)*

*“I think not just me, but all of us, we weren’t as aware as we should have been of the contribution.” (Eden Girls School)*

Some students also felt it a shame that the contributions of black and Asian soldiers have not been acknowledged:

*“You see white people being celebrated, and they deserve to be celebrated. But then you find out there were African and Asian soldiers too. We weren’t told that before, and that’s a shame.” (Falinge Park)*

From hearing about the black and Asian contribution in the Second World War, a number of students reflected more widely on the representation of ethnic minorities in teaching and history books.

*“I was shocked that this wasn’t already included in history teaching.”*  
(Falinge Park)

*“It should be in the curriculum, something everyone gets to learn.”*  
(Eden Girls School)

*“Usually when black people are mentioned it’s linked to slavery. Black people weren’t just slaves, it’s a stereotype... they also did great things in history and we need to break that stereotype.” (Eden Girls School)*

The students commented that history books, photographs and films project the role of white soldiers. As one student from Falinge Park remarked, *“People of colour don’t get recognition.”* Others felt it odd that the contribution of black and Asian soldiers is not acknowledged, either in schools or more widely.

Another view was that black history is often confined to Black History Month, but should be taught throughout the year. Students agreed with this view, adding that the black and Asian contribution shouldn’t be viewed as something ‘special’ but ‘normalised’ as part of British history.

Initial group work carried out at the start of the project centred on generating ideas for the project. This gave students a sense that they would be able to bring their own ideas to the project, and made them keen to start. They then quickly moved to finding out more from family members and people in the community. Some of these contributions came from outreach work by the school, including through local media and faith organisations. Some students said they had initially felt shy at asking questions of other students, family and community members but that they soon became more comfortable doing so.

Pupils took on the role of historians with enthusiasm, and particularly enjoyed talking to family members about the involvement of relatives in the Second World War. Some students had found contact with their grandparents about their history particularly rewarding. Others talked to their parents about their lives, and while not necessarily linked to the Second World War, they were pleased to have opened these conversations about their family history.

Students also enjoyed talking to pupils in other year groups about the projects. Some were encouraged to find that older students said they would have liked to have been involved in the project. Contact with younger students was found to have other benefits. One student found:

*“I got an understanding of how younger kids are and how they process things.”* (Falinge Park)

Students also appreciated the sense of a shared experience:

*“It helps us bond with someone who is different to us, because we’ve got something to bond about – even if we’re different ages or from different cultures.”* (Falinge Park)

Students were asked what advice they would give others taking part in the project in the future. The main message they wanted to send was to take a full part in the project. They had found the project to be more rewarding the more they became involved, hearing the stories of black and Asian soldiers, and their contribution to the Second World War. The advice of one student at Falinge Park was:

*“Be thoughtful. Take your time and be confident. The more you put into it, the more you’ll get out of it. Don’t be shy or hold back, really get involved.”* (Falinge Park)

A number of students had felt shy at first, particularly in approaching other students and those outside of their immediate family. They advised future students to overcome this shyness and to be more confident about engaging people in the project. Most had found the prospect of speaking in video recordings daunting. They encouraged prospective future participants to be more confident about this part of the project, since on reflection they were pleased with how they had performed.

Students had found disseminating information about the project on social media rewarding, and a way in which they could engage others without feeling shy. This helped them to explain the project face to face. They encouraged future students to make use of social media, both for its effectiveness in finding stories, but also to help overcome shyness. At the same time, students had felt hindered by the need to carry out so much of the project online – because of Covid-19 restrictions – and said they would have preferred to have had more face-to-face discussions.

### **Communicating the project**

As described elsewhere in the report, the projects attracted local and national media attention. The Eden Girls project in particular attracted considerable interest from national media outlets. None of the students had experienced any direct contact with the media before and the experience made a strong impression. Students were somewhat surprised at the level of media interest generated by the project, though at the same time understood why the project attracted attention. Not surprisingly, some of the students said they had felt nervous speaking on camera, but less than they had expected. Overall, the experience of conveying the project, their

involvement and the findings to the media was a very positive one. As students from Eden Girls School reflected:

*“It’s really nice that the media cared about it and wanted to know about it.”*

*“I was surprised, I didn’t think it would get into the media. A lot of people saw it.”*

*“I felt like a celebrity.”*

While they enjoyed the media attention, and the wider recognition it brought to the project, a number of students said they would have liked to have been better prepared. Suggestions included more practice at answering questions and more preparation on what to expect.

Students were also pleased to have taken part in whole-school events. The Armistice Day event at Eden Girls School (see Section 2) involved an audience of around 60 outside attendees with presentations from external speakers. Students gave their own presentation, with a question and answer session. They were very pleased to have been given this opportunity and felt that their presentation had gone well. They had felt somewhat nervous and felt that a little more practice might have helped, particularly over technical aspects such as speaking into a microphone.

Students were keen for the project to be better known among young people. It was felt that many would have missed the mainstream media coverage and needed to be engaged in different ways. Students felt that the best way to encourage take-up of the project in other schools would be to visit and speak to year or whole-school assemblies. Their own personal social media was thought to have potential in raising awareness among relatives and families living locally.

### **Impact on participating students**

Being involved in the project made a strong impression on students. They described three main types of impact: on their understanding of history; on their skills; and on their feelings about their own identity and culture.

We have already described how, prior to the project, students had not been aware of the contribution of black and Asian servicemen in the Second World War. The knowledge and understanding they gained from the project made many of the students think differently about history, and how it is told. They became more aware that the black and Asian contribution to history is rarely highlighted, and that history books convey a partial account.

Many commented on the need for historical accounts to include different perspectives, and to be seen through different lenses. Some talked of how they had become more interested in history as a school subject, including wanting to know more about the role of ethnic minorities in British history:

*“I feel we could ask now in a lesson about other areas of history where there were minorities involved too. I wouldn’t have asked about that before.”*

(Falinge Park)

Students said they had gained a range of skills in the course of their involvement with the project. Few had used interview skills before, and felt that they were now

able to use this technique for projects on history or other curriculum areas. Students also felt their communications skills more generally had improved as a result of working on the project. A number felt their team-working skills had improved. As one student remarked:

*“If you’re struggling with it then there’s someone you can talk to about it and that really helped me.”* (Falinge Park)

In one of the schools, students were drawn across year groups, and this was described as a positive experience:

*“After a while I forgot we were different ages and we just worked together.”* (Falinge Park)

For many students, the main area of impact of the project was on their sense of identity and feelings of belonging to the UK. Students talked about feeling more connected to Britain. One student remarked *“Now I know it wasn’t just the white British, it was all of us,”* (Falinge Park). Others described their feelings of connection to Britain through knowing more about the contribution of people from their family, community, faith and culture:

*“It makes you feel proud of your culture, of where you’re from and that your ancestors helped to make Britain what it is today.”* (Eden Girls)

*“It strengthens your bond with the country that you live in. It feels more like a place where you actually belong. It helps you feel more connected.”* (Eden Girls)

Many described that the realisation of having a shared history made them feel more connected with people from different backgrounds. This was seen to have the potential to reduce divisions and bring people together:

*“Between different cultures, different races, there’s always been a line between them, because they’re different. But by finding things in common, the hate and animosity can be reduced.”* (Eden Girls)

It isn’t possible to know with any certainty how these realisations will affect the future experiences and perspectives of the students involved in these remembrance projects. However, the strength of feeling with which many expressed their involvement in the project, and especially how it had influenced their own feelings of identity, suggests a long-lasting impact.

## 5. Impact: community participants



***"I think especially in this day and age when there's so much polarisation, the work you're doing is fantastic because it brings awareness of how we've got to where we were after WW2 and the contribution that people of ethnic minorities made to the war effort."***

**- Shaukat Hussain from east London, who was interviewed about his father Faz Alam.**



***"It brings more people together during remembrance because now it's not just about remembering white soldiers who fought in the war, it's about remembering all those from different backgrounds, cultures and ethnicities. It makes Britain a more united nation."***

**- Mubarak Amidu from east London, who was interviewed about his grandfather Henry Braimah.**



***"I think it's really important that this education is provided to all children, especially from BME communities, who will have this sense of pride and belonging, that this is our country and where we belong."***

**- Yasmine Dar from Rochdale, who was interviewed about her grandfather Ahmed Din**



***"I appreciate your efforts to amplify the voice of those who are left behind and forgotten in history. People from ethnic minorities have faced many challenges to make their space in society. I'm really hopeful that a project like this will help identify their strong connections with Britain's history."***

**- Muhammad Tanveer from east London, who was interviewed about his grandfather Mir Sultan Khan.**



***"I'm glad you've given me the chance to show to the world that our people, my dad, they fought for their lives, for Britain."***

**- Amin Janjua from Rochdale, who was interviewed about his father Fazal Karim**

## 6. Impact: shifting public attitudes

Remember Together aims to have an impact on a wider group than those directly involved, whether as student researchers or ethnic minority adults given an opportunity to share their family history of contribution. Previous research by British Future has found that communicating stories of shared history, and shared pride in its commemoration, can help build common ground and shift attitudes towards diversity and perceptions of minority groups.

Research into the impact on public attitudes of Remember Together 2021 outputs confirms this insight. It found that watching a film of the project had a significant, positive effect on attitudes to diversity in our society and on attitudes towards British Muslims in particular. Participants who watched a Remember Together video were more likely to agree with positive statements about diversity and less likely to disagree; there was also less agreement with negative statements and increased disagreement.

### Methodology

From 19-22 November 2021 ICM tested the impact of Remember Together content on a nationally representative sample of 2,189 GB adults, boosted to include a sample of 391 ethnic minority citizens.

Half the sample was shown a short [video of the East London Remember Together project](#). Respondents were required to watch the first 60 seconds and could then continue watching for the full duration of 2 mins 20 seconds. Half the sample were not shown a video. All respondents were then shown a series of statements, some positive and some negative, about diversity, integration and about Muslims in Britain, and asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them.

Respondents were also shown a series of agree/disagree statements to test whether they felt it would be good for integration if more children learn about shared history.

All respondents were also asked – before any had been shown the video – a ‘golden question’ to help us understand their attitudes to immigration and diversity: “On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being very negative and 10 very positive) do you think that immigration has had a positive or negative impact on the UK, nationally and in your local community?” The scores were then used to segment the sample into three groups: ‘liberals’ who feel most positive about immigration and diversity; ‘sceptics’ who feel most negative; and the ‘Balancers’ in between.

The full tables showing all split sample poll findings are provided in the appendix to his report.

### Shared identity

ICM asked respondents if they agreed or disagreed that ‘People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity.’ Only four in ten (41%) of those who did not see the film agreed, while a quarter disagreed

(27%), giving a net score of +14. For those who watched the Remember Together film, however, a majority (55%) of respondents agreed that we do share an inclusive identity while disagreement dropped ten points to 17%, given a net score of +38, an overall positive shift in attitudes of 24 points.

**Q3 1. People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?)**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	55%	41%	+14
NET: Disagree	17%	27%	-10
Net: Positive Support	+38	+14	+24

The impact was stronger still among the ‘sceptics’ group who feel the least positive about immigration and diversity in our society. For those who did not see the Remember Together film, only 6% agreed that people from different backgrounds have a shared British identity while two-thirds (66%) disagreed, a net score of -60. For those who watched the film, however, agreement rose to a third of respondents (32%) and disagreement fell to 41%, a net score of -9 and an overall attitudes shift of 51 points. The content still had a positive impact on the views of the ‘balancer’ (+29) and ‘liberal’ groups (+8) but it was much less marked than with this toughest segment.

**Attitudes to diversity in British society**

Respondents were asked if they agreed that ‘Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live.’ A majority of those who did not see the video agreed (55%) and a fifth disagreed (20%), a net score of +35. Agreement was significantly stronger among those who saw the video, with two-thirds (65%) in agreement and 13% saying they disagreed: a net score of +52, showing an attitudes shift of 17 points.

Again, this positive shift was most marked among the ‘sceptics’ segment. Watching the video increased agreement by 11 points to 23% and reduced disagreement by 19 points to 49%, a net shift of 30 points.

**Q3 2. (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?) “Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live.”**

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	23%	12%	+11	65%	50%	+15	84%	83%	+1
NET: Disagree	49%	68%	-19	6%	14%	-8	4%	4%	0
Net: Positive Support	-26	-56	+30	+59	+36	+23	+80	+79	+1

### **Impact on support for a negative statement about immigration**

As well as testing these positive statements, we also measured whether watching Remember Together content affected agreement with a negative statement, *'Immigration has been bad for Britain because it has diluted our British identity.'* A plurality of respondents not shown the video disagreed (41%) with 36% in agreement (net -5). Among those who watched the film, more people disagreed (48%) and fewer agreed (29%) – a net score of -19, showing a shift of 14 points. As with the previous statements, the impact of the film was most pronounced on those with the most negative attitudes, with a net shift of 25 points among the 'sceptics' group.

### **Impact on attitudes towards Muslims**

Muslims in Britain face more stereotyping and prejudice than other ethnic or faith groups. Previous research for British Future and others has identified more negative attitudes towards Muslims than to other minority faiths. British Future research has also found that the story of Muslim contribution to Britain in the World Wars is less widely known than that of other faith groups – the Sikh contribution, for example, is much more widely recognised.

The east London Remember Together project worked with a Muslim school, identifying stories of WW2 contribution among students' families and the local community. Many of the participating students were visibly Muslim, wearing headscarves while conducting the interviews with veterans' relatives. So we tested whether watching the video of this project had an impact on attitudes towards Muslims in Britain.

Watching the video prompted a positive shift of around ten points across three different measures. A soft statement with which most people agreed, 'Most British Muslims are good British citizens,' had 65% agreement and 9% disagreement (+56) among those who did not see the film; and 73% agreement and 7% disagreement (+66) after watching the video.

For the second statement, 'On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths,' only a minority (44%) agreed if they had not watched the video, while a quarter (24%) disagreed (net +20). After watching the video, agreement was at 50% and disagreement at 20% (net +30) – a ten-point positive shift.

We also presented respondents with a negative statement, 'We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain.' Among those who did not see the video, more people agreed (39%) than disagreed (33%). This was reversed for the group that watched the video, with more people (39%) disagreeing than the 33% who agreed – an overall net shift in attitudes of 12 points.

**Q4 3. We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain (To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?)**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	33%	39%	-6
NET: Disagree	39%	33%	+6
Net: Positive Support	-6	+6	-12

As with the previous statements, the impact of the film on attitudes towards Muslims was more pronounced among the ‘sceptics’ group who feel least positive about immigration and diversity. Watching the video had a net impact of 24 points on agreement that ‘Most British Muslims are good British citizens’; net 22 points for ‘On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths’; and net 18 points for ‘We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain’.

**Ethnic minority attitudes**

Our polling sample was boosted to include a sample of 391 respondents from an ethnic minority background so we could assess with some confidence the attitudes of ethnic minority citizens to diversity, integration and the value of shared history in bridging divides.

Ethnic minority citizens have more confidence in the success of integration in our diverse society, with two-thirds (65%) agreeing that ‘People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity’ compared to 46% of white respondents (of whom 23% disagree). Eight in ten ethnic minority respondents (79%) agree that ‘Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live,’ compared to 58% of white respondents (of whom 17% disagree). Some 63% of ethnic minority citizens agree that ‘On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths,’ while only a minority of white respondents (45%) agree.

There is a broad consensus – by ethnicity, age, gender, geography, social class and immigration attitudes – that ‘Our tradition of Remembrance Day brings people of all faiths and ethnicities together.’ Majorities of both white (65%) and ethnic minority (57%) citizens agree, though 17% of ethnic minority respondents disagree, showing the need for further work to make Remembrance a moment each year that feels fully inclusive.

We also found a cross-ethnic consensus in support of further work to ensure that the story of our shared history is known by children of all backgrounds. Some 70% of white respondents and 82% of ethnic minority respondents agree that ‘It would be good for integration today if children in every school were taught about the shared history of multi-ethnic Britain.’ And more than three-quarters of respondents, across ethnic groups, agree that ‘It is important that the history of race and Empire - including its controversies and complexity - are taught in British schools.’ (White 78%, ethnic minority 77%).

**Previous evaluation of Remember Together content**

The 2021 findings echo those of a similar impact evaluation of Remember Together in 2018 conducted by Survation. Half of the 2,000 online research participants watched a Remember Together video of an Imams workshop, where UK Muslim

clerics learned about the Muslim participation in WW1 and prepared to give remembrance sermons at Friday prayers. This research showed a 12-point positive shift in attitudes among those in the target 'Anxious' audience who watched one of the Remember Together videos.

### **Conclusions**

The impact of Remember Together goes further than those who participate in the project directly. Seeing people from different backgrounds commemorating WW2 history together – not just the young student participants but also the family members talking about their pride in their ancestors' service – creates common ground and helps to build more positive attitudes to diversity and to Muslims in Britain.

Importantly, it also reduces negative attitudes and has the strongest effect on those who are most negative about diversity.

Further research could help to explain these results further – for example more qualitative research to understand how the films affects different audiences; dial testing to establish which elements are the most resonant; and comparative testing to see how these films compare to other content about remembrance, about history and about the promotion of diversity and cohesion.

## 7. Feedback from participating schools

### **Falinge Park High School, Rochdale**

The school has around 1400 pupils, years 7 to 11, with no sixth form. It has a 'good' Ofsted rating and 31% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (compared with an England average of 20%).

The school is 49% Pakistani, 18% Bengali, 20% white British, with the remaining 13% very mixed, including from Rochdale's growing black African population.

The school often works in partnership with other organisations. Collaboration with the Robert F Kennedy Foundation prompted the school to think more about hidden heroes and the Muslim Heritage Centre in Manchester also influenced thinking about this area of work.

### **Vacas Ahmed, lead teacher**

***"It has surpassed expectations. It's gone to levels I would never have expected and its all out in the open now, it's becoming a hot topic in Rochdale. I feel like we're a leader in the field."***

Vacas teaches citizenship and religious education at Falinge Park.

Entering the school in the RSA Design awards, on the theme of the heritage of Britain, helped spark the project into life. Vacas was also inspired by a presentation he saw as student, by historian Jahan Mahmood, about BME WW1 contribution.

More than 75% of the students at the school are from an ethnic minority background but many are unaware of the ethnic minority contribution to the World Wars - and the local population is either unaware, or they know about it and are unhappy that it's not more widely taught and known. One of the students, Maya, has a grandfather who fought in Burma – this realisation (+ advice from British Future) inspired the idea to look at the local community's family contribution.

### **Implementation**

The project took up a lot of extra time for Vacas. There was a lot of planning. Research, scripting and production of students' essays and films about WW2 BME contribution, all took time. Proofreading the content of the website pages, advising on structure and briefing the technician also required his capacity. Vacas also did two of the community interviews and found himself making a lot of phone calls as he had to be proactive in the seeking-out of stories.

Delivery of the project was extra-curricular, with the group meeting after school or in lunch breaks. Sometimes he was able to take the students out of their regular lessons at important moments. He suggests *not* using Year 11s as they will be too busy with GCSEs. He told us that the teacher-student relationship was important. The project was student-led, in that the students felt very invested in it, but Vacas set the parameters and did veto unworkable ideas.

Getting the buy-in of other teachers and from the head teacher was important in spreading the workload on the lead teacher. The school also has two technicians who did the video editing, captioned the videos (subtitles are essential) and built the web pages.

### **Promotion**

The school formed a successful partnership with local radio station Crescent Radio. A recorded advertisement, which was also translated into Urdu and Bengali, was played every day for a month (for free). The radio station backed the initiative as they had tried something similar themselves but it hadn't worked. Having this come from the school – a trusted part of the local community – made a difference. Having the ad translated into Urdu was important too.

The students also made their own promotional video for use on Facebook and Instagram, to help appeal to the local community for family stories. Scripting and filming this was very time-consuming.

Vacas notes that it is important to have a mobile number that community members could use to get in touch about the project, to share their stories, as many are not computer literate. Vacas speaks Urdu and this was needed in some conversations with community members.

Relationships with the local community are important. The school already had the trust of the local community and this helped make the project a success. He suggests that local councillors, mosque and temple leaders can all help raise awareness.

### **The future**

Vacas feels that there were many benefits for the students: confidence, presentation, team-work, verbal communication, working with difference and research skills all benefited. The school is looking to host an event in 2022 to promote the project further and there has been interest from the Comino group of schools, of which Falinge Park is a member, to extend the project to other schools. The students are also considering delivering assemblies to local primary schools.

### **Janice Allen, Head teacher**

A few years ago on Remembrance Day (2017-18) the school started to look at the contribution of other communities to World Wars 1 and 2. At same time they wanted to deliver human rights education. About two years ago they started to look at the involvement of the ethnic minority community in remembrance and worked with the Muslim heritage centre – the school often works with external organisations.

When Vacas came up with the idea of the project it had a good fit with the wider perspective of the school. Janice thought there would be benefits to pupils' sense of identity and that the project would build on the school's work in reaching out to the community.

***"It's important in helping to answer some of those questions young people ask – who am I, where do I come from and where do I belong. And I think that's absolutely vital to young people. We've got to give them that sense of identity. I've seen the changes that happen to young people when you give them that sense of where they come from and that they belong somewhere."***

The forgotten heroes project has been very well received by the local community.

***"What really surprised me was the reaction. I took a phone call from a gentleman and it was one of the nicest phone calls I've ever had in my life. He said 'No-one has ever asked me about this before, I can't thank you enough. Anything you ever want, me and my son are here for you.' I felt very humbled speaking to him, that it meant so much to him and he wanted to find time to speak to me."***

Governors were also informed and one of the governors was interviewed for the project. Janice also shared more information about the project with parents in an online Q&A session.

Her advice for growing the project is to start with engaged schools that have previously worked with civil society organisations such as Citizens UK. Working with a key school in a multi-academy trust would also be a good starting point. A challenge for next year, however, will be the amount of academic catching-up that students need to do.

She has been very impressed with the students' response to the project:

***"When I watched the videos I found it incredible the way they were talking about it. It's a project that's really shocked me, just how much they've got from it, the way they've spoken about it and engaged with it."***

## **Eden Girls Waltham Forest, London**

Eden Girls Waltham Forest is a much smaller school than Falinge Park, with around 600 students. It differs too in that it is a girls school and a Muslim faith school, though it does have a small number of non-Muslim students. The school was awarded an 'Outstanding' rating by Ofsted. Like Falinge Park, Eden Girls is diverse, with the majority of students from a South Asian background and a substantial number of students of African heritage. It is located in Walthamstow, east London, one of the most ethnically diverse parts of the country.

### **Dr Avaes Mohammad, lead teacher on Remember Together project**

It is part of Avaes's role to set up external partnerships that enhance integration, expose students to the wider world and makes them reflect on their identity, so this project fitted that brief very closely. He had also previously worked for British Future so knew the organisation, and the themes and objectives of Remember Together, very well.

#### **Resources and capacity**

Avaes knew about things like filming, working with media, timing for the news agenda, framing etc as he had done similar project at British Future. Other teachers may need more support: training, a toolkit and someone to pick up the phone and talk to. That is a lot of information to convey in written form, however, so he suggests that a series of online (or in-person) training sessions would be helpful. These would be needed at the start of the project, in the middle and towards the end.

However the lead teacher, supported by the school, will need to lead the project. Participating schools will need this committed point-person in order to run the project successfully. The lead teacher will need time to devote to the project. More support could be brought in from other staff/departments to support that teacher. Avaes had other extra-curricular work to deliver at the same time and this created pressure. Media interest was very positive but also took up a lot of his time.

#### **Timing**

Avaes felt that the timing of the Walthamstow project was right, Sept-Nov. But for that to work you need to have planned the project in the summer before the school year ends. June-July is a good time to approach teachers, who have more time after assessments are completed. It is a good time for a teacher to pitch the project to a principal/headteacher who is looking ahead at that time to plan activities for the coming school year.

Extra-curricular sessions after school worked well, increasing the students' sense of ownership of the project. This did come with challenges regarding discipline and paying attention at first, as sessions were not in a conventional classroom setting with the discipline that entails.

### **Finding stories for this oral history approach**

Based on this experience, Avaes suggests approaching parents first, across the whole school, via multiple routes, before engaging the wider community. This needs more than one push – a letter, text (SMS), school assembly + form group prompts to get students to ask their parents. Assemblies with follow-up really worked and it made the project more student-led and owned by the pupils. This approach to the school community, rather than the wider local community, was much more effective in terms of getting people to come forward with family stories. One could also make a couple of key parents ‘ambassadors’ for the project, helping find other stories. The powerpoint created by British Future for the initial assembly, or the version that was adapted by Eden students for subsequent year group assemblies, could be adapted as a template for other school assemblies.

He notes that the diaspora population in the area will make a difference to take-up. Because of WW2 recruitment policies, which focused on particular groups and areas, students of Punjabi Pakistani or Kashmiri background will be more likely to have a family history of WW2 service. Working in areas with a large diaspora community from other groups could also be productive, for example Caribbean and Polish communities. But it may be harder to find stories in areas where much of the local community is from a region in the sub-continent where there was little WW2 recruitment.

### **Practical concerns**

Twenty students volunteered to take part in the project at first. This was probably too large a group with which to maintain discipline. It was fortunate that some students lost interest; and Avaes prompted others to either take the project seriously or stop coming – which helped focus the group to around 12 committed participants. All of those involved, at any stage, were invited to the final event so they too felt some ownership of the project.

It is important to give students agency – input into press release, giving assemblies, interacting with other students. This all contributes to building a sense of ownership of the project. Having lots of tangible outputs from the project helped with momentum – the group was excited about the local paper, which covered the project quite early on, and this gave the students a boost.

Providing some training to the students in how to do oral history interviews was important and could be expanded. British Future delivered a short powerpoint presentation to the Eden student group. Subsequent training could be delivered by teachers, or via video (or via a heritage partner).

Creating the web page was relatively easy in this instance. However for this pilot British Future provided Eden with edited videos and copy about each veteran to upload. Future participating schools would need guidance/training and a template.

Hosting an event at the end of the project was important to present the findings to a mixed group, including adults and external voices.

If delivering without hands-on British Future support schools would need media support. They would also need to find stories more quickly so they had enough time to film and edit interviews and post to the site, if we weren't paying for a film-maker.

### **Impact**

The whole school was engaged in the project via student-led assemblies. The school also screened the short film of the project to every class on 11 Nov, just ahead of marking the two-minute silence.

From a student development perspective, having a professional non-teacher (from British Future) working with the students in a sustained way was important. This helped students interact with non-teachers in a similarly professional way.

The Remember Together project has helped students to feel more confident in their identity. It has cemented their sense of who they are and that they belong here. It has helped students to develop initiative and an understanding of how a project works, as well as journalistic and historical research skills. One student now wants to be a journalist. It has also brought new familiarity with media institutions: BBC Radio 4 was new territory to the Year Nine students, for example.

The project was warmly received across the Star Academies trust, of which Eden is a part, including by the CEO who has shown initial interest in scaling it up across the fourteen schools that they work with.

### **Halima Daliboy, Senior Head of Year Nine**

Halima felt that a lot of students aren't very aware of their background and history and this project helped to address this. It also prompted reflection on family history among wider student group and even staff. Doing the project prompted parents to get involved, sharing messages about it with mosque WhatsApp groups (which is a key way to spread the message among the Muslim community).

The impact of the project on the students included boosting their confidence and articulateness. One student changed subjects, from geography to history, as a result of this project; another grew so much in confidence that she stood for, and was elected to, the student *shura* (school council).

There was a lot of buy-in and support across the whole of Year Nine including students not involved in the project – particularly when media attention grew.

There was lots of positive feedback (including from adults outside the school) when students and the lead teacher appeared on the Islam channel – who also sent a camera crew to the school event on 10 November.

**Practical**

Halima felt that Year Nine is the right group for a project like this – students are not yet fully focused on GCSEs (though at Eden they have started them) but mature enough to reflect on the themes of the project.

She feels that having an open intake, with all Year Nine students seeing a presentation about the project and being able to decide to sign up, is a fairer approach than only offering to the brightest or most dedicated students. Also, the fact that students had volunteered to take part made for more of a sense of ownership and buy-in to the project; plus more personal growth for them.

She felt that the timing of the project, from Sept-Nov, worked and helped to maintain momentum. After school was the best time to do the project, otherwise there would be issues taking the students out of class.

Hosting an event at the school, as the culmination of the project, was important for students and for the school. This 'made it all more real and official', talking about the project and showing the results to an audience that included adults from outside the school. There was some nervousness about the event, as the school hadn't been inviting so many external audiences due to Covid-19. She feels it would have been good to involve the local authority in the event, maybe even hosting it at the town hall.

## ***Part Two:***

# ***Opportunities and challenges for inclusive Remembrance***



## 8. Opportunities and challenges

This evaluation of the 2021 Remember Together pilot establishes a proof of concept. It shows the appetite among teachers, students, ethnic minority communities and media outlets for projects that identify and communicate personal, family stories of ethnic minority contribution in the World Wars. It shows that such projects can be delivered on relatively low budgets. And it shows that communicating these stories of shared history and pride, at Remembrance, can help bring people together and have a positive impact on public attitudes to diversity. This section examines how the 2021 pilot could be delivered at a greater scale.

### Opportunities

- There is an appetite to participate: among schools and teachers, who welcome an approach to history that engages all of their diverse student body; among the students themselves, who were enthusiastic about the project; among parents and community members, who welcomed this approach; and among media and other key influencers, who reported very positively on its findings.
- Due to the status of Remembrance, there is a high media appetite for positive, inclusive stories that occupy this peg, if they take place at the right time and have strong voices and optics. This is probably true to a greater extent than for most of the rest of the year, when these approaches might be considered too soft to be newsworthy.
- We have good evidence that, when emphasised repeatedly and at scale, messages about inclusive remembrance do shift public awareness and understanding of our shared history – for example the growth in awareness of WW1 Commonwealth soldiers from 44% in 2012 to 71% in 2018.
- We also have evidence from our ICM testing in 2021 and from similar research in 2018 that increased awareness of inclusive remembrance can significantly mitigate and reduce anxieties about diversity and casual prejudices – particularly towards Muslims and particularly among audiences who feel least positive about Britain’s diversity.
- These findings are important to practitioners, who can find it challenging to develop content on diversity in general, and on anti-Muslim prejudice in particular, that engages more sceptical as well as supportive audiences.
- This insight and approach could be particularly important in towns (as much as in diverse cities) and in areas of low contact, such as coastal areas, where these attitudes are more prevalent – and where other pro-diversity messages might struggle to a similar breadth of reach. (This augments the existing focus of inclusive Remembrance, which tends naturally to target more diverse areas).

- If work within schools is projected beyond schools – for example through participation in local cenotaph ceremonies, in local and regional media and through online/social media dissemination – it has a stronger chance of reaching sceptical as well as supportive audiences.
- This is an annual opportunity. The window of opportunity is relatively brief – the 2-3 week period leading up to Remembrance Sunday – but it is institutionalised and repeated every year.

## Challenges

- Understanding the different, complementary impacts that inclusive Remembrance can have. Local practitioners in councils, faith and civic society will tend primarily to target minority audiences, which is important and valuable. But inclusive remembrance activity has the most impact when practitioners understand the value of reaching minority *and* majority groups, across generations, and the ability to influence the views of different segments of the population. Communicating this strategy and theory of change to a wider range of practitioners is important to realise its potential.
- Different actors have different challenges. More traditional institutions such as the Royal British Legion, with an older and more traditional core audience, may find reaching younger and more diverse audiences a challenge. But civil society, faith and minority-led organisations can similarly find it challenging to reach an older audience who feel less confident about Britain's diversity. Both groups of practitioners may be nervous about how their message will be received by an audience with which they are unfamiliar. Support and best-practice sharing can help allay some of this reticence.
- Partners and practitioners need help and support taking this message to more sceptical audiences, especially in more diverse or divided areas.
- While there is media appetite, local efforts need professional support in order to provide media outlets with the collateral they need in the right way – such as getting timing right and providing quality resources.
- Teachers will need some help and support in delivering the project: demand on lead teachers in both Rochdale and Walthamstow was high and support from British Future was needed to ensure the production of high-quality, communicable outputs.

## 9. What is achievable?

### Measuring success over the next five years

There is a clear opportunity to scale up Remember Together over the next five years. Here we look at what success could look like over that period, in terms of both outputs and impacts – and also how this could be measured.

#### Impacts

- An increase in public awareness of the contribution made by Commonwealth soldiers, in particular by Black soldiers and Muslim soldiers. British Future has already done some work to establish baselines using qualitative research. The project would look to raise awareness of their contribution above 50% and eventually to over 65%.
- Dissemination of messages about inclusive remembrance to the quarter of society with the most negative views about diversity, and on whom we now know this project has the greatest attitudinal impact. Future work could track exposure to messages, awareness and impact on attitudes. Resources could be targeted geographically and/or demographically to maximise impact. Again, British Future has established some initial baselines in some of these areas.
- Raising awareness of Commonwealth contribution among ethnic minority audiences and increasing understanding that Remembrance is something that is shared and equally relevant to them and their community.
- Increased minority participation in inclusive Remembrance events, or in poppy-wearing, could also be used as a measure of this impact.
- Bringing people together through inclusive remembrance – increasing positive social interactions between people from different backgrounds through local remembrance events.

#### Outputs

- A higher number of schools taking part in the project in school, with geographical spread.
- Increased beyond-school communication of the project, with participating schools supported to confidently communicate their activities using media and social channels. Greater school participation in Remembrance services at local Cenotaphs, in ways which highlight the ethnic minority contribution in WW2.

- A higher number of Councils and/or other civic actors helping to facilitate this activity, particularly in target areas – enhancing the comms and optics and also building on them with real and sustained inter-group contact.
- Development of online resources & capacity to target lower-contact audiences (from both majority & minority backgrounds).
- Engaging media partners in longer-term and longer-form activity as well as reporting.

The following section examines models of activity that could realise these impacts, through a partnership of interested parties that has both coordination and catalytic capacity.

## **10. How could Remember Together be scaled up in 2022 and beyond?**

Based on this evaluation we would recommend one or more of the approaches be pursued in 2022 and beyond. Recommendations for the resourcing of this activity are made in Chapter 11.

### **(i) Working with schools at scale – our preferred approach**

#### **Why do Remember Together through schools?**

- Working with schools enables us to reach harder-to-reach audiences (BME adults) through easier-to-reach audience (their children at schools). It engages young people and their parents, who want to help the school and their children's education.
- It locates the Remember Together project in the local community.
- It frames the activity as educating young people and securing the future.
- It brings a 'captive audience' of students to deliver the project + capacity to support them via staff.
- WW2 is part of the curriculum and most schools do something to mark and understand Remembrance; plus many teachers are looking for ways to better understand and discuss diversity and shared identity in ethnically-mixed classrooms.
- In diverse areas, inclusive remembrance has the potential to create social contact between people across ethnic and faith divides by finding common ground between parents from different backgrounds.
- Uncovering new oral histories creates content: including personal stories with emotional resonance; pictures and video; media interviewees.
- The London pilot this year also found that reaching out to parents across the school was the most effective way of finding stories.

The 2021 project can be scaled up via groups of schools, such as academy trusts etc, and through partners such as the Linking Network, the Royal British Legion or other educational/youth partners (including those in the Together Coalition).

Both schools that we worked with in 2021 are part of networks of schools (the Comino group in the North West and Star Academies) and there is appetite already for the project to be rolled out to other schools in these groups.

There is no reason why schools should be seen as the only conduit through which the project can be delivered by young people. Any locally-rooted youth organisation could deliver the project just as effectively, such as Scouts and Girlguides, cadets or local clubs and societies.

We would suggest a tiered offer. The oral history approach used in the 2021 Rochdale and London pilots worked very well, with real impact on the students and participants, impactful video content and very good national and regional media take-up. But it does require quite significant capacity to deliver. We can reduce the

capacity required (for us and for schools) by producing a toolkit but it is still a substantial commitment for a school and participating schools will need support.

So there could be three tiers of engagement:

- (1) The top tier is an oral history project like those piloted in 2021, with strong teacher engagement with a selected group of students to uncover oral histories and document them through video interviews online. Media projection and potential school representation at the local Cenotaph Remembrance service.
- (2) An intermediate 'lighter touch' version of the project – perhaps a more limited oral history project where students just interview one local person with a veteran ancestor; or oral history research without video interviews (see below).
- (3) A light-touch approach where an assembly and lesson plan engage students with BME/shared WW2 history, perhaps linked to the school marking the two-minute silence. The stories uncovered and resources created in the 2021 project could form part of the resource pack for this approach.

A version of the project that would be easier for schools to run would be to remove the video element. Family members could provide pictures of veteran relatives and students could conduct phone or email interviews. School websites would then just have a short write-up and picture of the veteran + some written quotes from their relative. This removes the filming and editing requirements on the school. The downside is that it produces less-compelling media content – though if a participant and some of the students were available for interview, it could still be covered by regional TV.

We could further reinforce that this is about contact and bringing together people from different backgrounds, by working with a mixed group of students to profile students from a range of backgrounds.

### **Resources for schools work**

Producing a toolkit need not be hugely onerous – we have already created most of the content for the London school. This would primarily require staff time (from British Future or an educational partner), funding some teacher input to ensure the toolkit works effectively in schools, and some design capacity on presentation. The Linking Network has produced excellent lesson plans and assemblies and have given their permission for these to be repurposed and/or incorporated into a toolkit.

It would be useful to workshop the materials and project outline with some educationalists to get their input on its deliverability – and perhaps conduct some (informal) market research with schools to test their appetite for such a project.

What would be needed, if delivering the project at scale, would be capacity to support schools in working with the toolkit, answering questions and assisting on an ad hoc basis; and support with communications in the lead-up to remembrance. This could be done through a short-term contractor, a funded partner or even an agency

for some elements (eg comms). We discuss resourcing in the next section of this report.

The results of our split-sample testing of the impact of the London Remember Together film on attitudes suggests that it would be worth investing in creation of video content, and potentially some wider paid-for dissemination through social media channels (potentially pro bono through partners).

### **Building on 2021 – student/teacher ambassadors?**

The two videos from 2021, and the students and teachers who created them, are the best possible assets and ambassadors to share this project with other schools and encourage them to do something similar.

The London and Rochdale students were keen to share their project with other students. Presentations in neighbouring schools would help spread the word but on a relatively limited scale. It would be valuable to explore ways to deploy the students in a way that had much broader reach: for example by presenting to a national forum of headteachers, academy trust leaders or PSHE/history/citizenship teachers.

### **(ii) Expanding online comms and media dissemination**

In 2021 we used national media and social media to take these locally-rooted projects to a national audience. If the project is delivered at scale, this could also be done through tech. A national website could hold and present all of the stories and make them accessible to a wider public. Schools would upload images/video/text themselves. This could also be hosted on the website of an appropriate partner (eg IWM, a media partner, etc).

This could be linked to expanded social media outputs - perhaps supported with ad spend or working with partners with greater reach – to push these stories out to a wider audience.

We also had interest from a TV production company in making a documentary about the Rochdale project, which did not come to fruition. There may be appetite to do something similar with another school in 2022. With support from the Royal British Legion the project could also be linked to the Festival of Remembrance or the remembrance service at the Cenotaph – so these locally-sourced stories of shared multi-ethnic history could be communicated to the widest possible TV audience and fully embedded in our key national remembrance moments.

Building a website, expanding social media content + paid-for promotion and developing the documentary idea would all require some funding/capacity.

### **(iii) Advocacy for changes to the national curriculum**

Ultimately the project could be scaled up through advocacy for government to champion and resource it, via the Education and Communities departments. There is majority public support for Britain's shared history of commonwealth contribution in both World Wars to be taught to all children in our schools (see ICM for British Future 2021 + in previous research).

In 2020 British Future brought together a cross-party, multi-ethnic, multi-faith coalition of voices from politics, faith, civil society and the military, who signed a

joint letter calling for better education, commemoration and documentation of our shared history.

A 'legacy campaign' for Remember Together could advocate for changes to the national curriculum, and to the syllabus set by the main exam boards and academy trusts, to ensure that all children learn about the commonwealth contribution in the World Wars. The oral history approach piloted this year could be just one way that schools could teach this.

Students who conducted Remember Together in 2021, in London and Rochdale, could act as ambassadors for the campaign and talk about the impact it had on them as part of an advocacy campaign. Eden school in London also expressed an interest in following up this project with a meeting with prominent exam boards such as AQA, EdExcel and OCR to call for inclusion of the WW1/WW2 commonwealth contribution in their textbooks.

Lord Sheikh, Chair of the National Muslim War Memorial Trust, is supportive of pushing this proposal in the House of Lords. The APPG for Archives and History has also shown interest in Remember Together.

Expanding the teaching of Britain's history of Empire, and how it relates to our society today, is a recommendation of the recent Sewell Report from the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. The government is expected to adopt this recommendation – so an advocacy campaign could be pushing at an open door.

#### **(iv) Build a community of practice on inclusive remembrance**

There are a host of organisations and individuals working to make Remembrance more inclusive, from individual educators and community leaders to local councils, faith and civil society groups, members of the armed forces and national charities. They are not networked in an effective way to share best practice and coordinate their efforts.

An inclusive remembrance community of practice would help to build and sustain stronger networks. It would be coordinated around the annual Remembrance cycle, with a strategic meeting or workshop at the start of the year followed by a more tactical follow-up meeting to share and coordinate plans, advice and contacts ahead of Autumn activities.

## **11. Resourcing inclusive remembrance activity**

British Future is committed to Remember Together and can add value through involvement in the strategy, relationship and coalition-building, advocacy and the evaluation/tracking work required to continue to make the case to decision-makers and institutions about the value and impact of inclusive remembrance.

We can also add value in the effective communication to national and regional media, to secure a media profile and public reach that is rare in inter-faith, community and schools projects. We can also advise and help regional and local practitioners to emulate this with local, regional and potentially national media.

However the project will require more resourcing if it is to be taken to scale, through an approach that activates the networks and skillsets of different supportive actors through some additional coordinating capacity. Our recommendation would be to seek a modest amount of funding to resource the project.

### **Funding model**

A bid to a funder for £150k over two years could comprise:

- Employing a project and comms coordinator to work with partners to develop a toolkit; approach academy trusts to secure wider participation; support the delivery of Remember Together projects in autumn 2022-23; work with British Future and partners on communications and media (including a pitch for a BBC TV documentary of one school's journey); convene an inclusive remembrance network; and evaluate results and make recommendations for further expansion.
- Resource an education partner such as the Linking Network to develop, launch and promote a Remember Together toolkit for schools.
- A communications budget to create 2-3 'highlights' videos and clips of the school projects + social media promotion to extend reach; support for community events at participating schools; and potentially a national website to host content.

### **Partnership model**

A partnership model may be feasible, with this additional coordinating capacity coming from an integration partner such as Together; a remembrance partner like the Royal British Legion or Commonwealth War Graves Commission; or a heritage/museums partner such as the Imperial War Museum or National Army Museum. It may also be worth approaching the Armed Forces to establish whether capacity could be utilised as part of their youth/ethnic minorities outreach work.

An educational partner to bring schools-specific expertise would also be valuable if this approach were pursued. And there is clearly untapped potential to target effective, tested content at target audiences through an online/social comms campaign, which could again be achieved through the right partnerships, for example with a social media platform.

## 12. Thanks and acknowledgements

British Future would like to thank our two partner schools, Falinge Park High School and Eden Girls Waltham Forest; the Together coalition, who funded this year's Remember Together project; and the Royal British Legion for their ongoing support for Remember Together. We would also like to thank the Linking Network, one of our initial partners in earlier iterations of Remember Together, who continue to champion the project, develop and share resources and provide ongoing encouragement and educational expertise.



## Appendix: Split-sample poll findings

From 19-22 November 2021 ICM tested the impact of Remember Together content on a nationally representative sample of 2,189 GB adults, boosted to include a sample of 391 ethnic minority citizens.

Half the sample was shown a short [video of the East London Remember Together project](#). Respondents were required to watch the first 60 seconds and could then continue watching for the full duration of 2 mins 20 seconds. Half were not shown a video. All respondents were then shown a series of statements, some positive and some negative, about diversity, integration and about Muslims in Britain, and asked about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them.

### 1. Topline findings

**On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being very negative and 10 very positive) do you think that people of different races and ethnic backgrounds get along well in the UK, nationally and in your local community?**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: 1-3	6%	11%	-5
NET: 4-7	55%	54%	+1
NET: 8-10	39%	35%	+4

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

**People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	55%	41%	+14
NET: Disagree	17%	27%	-10
Net: Positive Support	+38	+14	+24

**Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	65%	55%	+10
NET: Disagree	13%	20%	-7
Net: Positive Support	+52	+35	+17

**Immigration has been bad for Britain because it has diluted our British identity**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	29%	36%	-7
NET: Disagree	48%	41%	+7
Net: Positive Support	-19	-5	-14

**Most British Muslims are good British citizens**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	73%	65%	+8
NET: Disagree	7%	9%	-2
Net: Positive Support	+66	+56	+10

**On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	50%	44%	+6
NET: Disagree	20%	24%	-4
Net: Positive Support	+30	+20	+10

**We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	33%	39%	-6
NET: Disagree	39%	33%	+6
Net: Positive Support	-6	+6	-12

**Our tradition of Remembrance Day brings people of all faiths and ethnicities together**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	66%	62%	+4
NET: Disagree	11%	14%	-3
Net: Positive Support	+55	+48	+7

**It is important that the history of race and Empire -including its controversies and complexity- are taught in British schools**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	80%	76%	+4
NET: Disagree	4%	5%	-1
Net: Positive Support	+76	+71	+5

**It would be good for integration today if children in every school were taught about the shared history of multi-ethnic Britain**

	Shown Film	Not Shown Film	Net: Film Impact
NET: Agree	76%	68%	+8
NET: Disagree	7%	8%	-1
Net: Positive Support	+69	+60	+9

## 2. Segmentation of responses to video by immigration attitudes

All respondents were also asked – before any had been shown the video – a ‘golden question’ to help us understand their attitudes to immigration and diversity: “On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being very negative and 10 very positive) do you think that immigration has had a positive or negative impact on the UK, nationally and in your local community?” The scores were then used to segment the sample into three groups: ‘liberals’ who feel most positive about immigration and diversity and gave a score of 8-10; ‘sceptics’ who feel most negative and gave a score of 1-3; and the ‘Balancers’ in between, who gave scores between 4 and 7.

### People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity

	1-3 Seen film	1-3 Not seen film	NFI (net film impact)	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI (net film impact)
NET: Agree	32%	6%	+26	52%	34%	+18	72%	66%	+6
NET: Disagree	41%	66%	-25	15%	26%	-11	7%	9%	-2
Net: Positive Support	-9	-60	+51	+37	+8	+29	+65	+57	+8

### Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	23%	12%	+11	65%	50%	+15	84%	83%	+1
NET: Disagree	49%	68%	-19	6%	14%	-8	4%	4%	0
Net: Positive Support	-26	-56	+30	+59	+36	+23	+80	+79	+1

### Immigration has been bad for Britain because it has diluted our British identity

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	71%	86%	-15	18%	25%	-7	23%	26%	-3
NET: Disagree	14%	4%	+10	47%	39%	+8	66%	62%	+4
Net: Positive Support	+57	+82	+25	-29	-14	+15	-43	-36	+7

### Most British Muslims are good British citizens

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	47%	32%	+15	76%	66%	+10	82%	79%	+3
NET: Disagree	18%	27%	-9	4%	6%	-2	4%	5%	-1
Net: Positive Support	+29	+5	+24	+72	+60	+12	+78	+74	+4

### On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	21%	13%	+8	46%	39%	+7	70%	65%	+5
NET: Disagree	50%	64%	-14	17%	18%	-1	8%	12%	-4
Net: Positive Support	-29	-51	+22	+29	+21	+8	+62	+53	+9

### We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	69%	79%	-10	26%	30%	-4	22%	30%	-8
NET: Disagree	14%	6%	+8	35%	31%	+4	58%	48%	+10
Net: Positive Support	+55	+73	+18	-9	-1	+8	-36	-18	+18

### Our tradition of Remembrance Day brings people of all faiths and ethnicities together

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	61%	40%	+21	67%	64%	+3	66%	68%	-2
NET: Disagree	20%	36%	-16	8%	10%	-2	12%	10%	+2
Net: Positive Support	+41	+4	+37	+59	+54	+5	+54	+58	+4

**It is important that the history of race and Empire -including its controversies and complexity- are taught in British schools**

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	67%	71%	-4	81%	73%	+8	84%	84%	0
NET: Disagree	10%	12%	-2	3%	4%	-1	1%	4%	-3
Net: Positive Support	+57	+59	-	+78	+69	+9	+83	+80	+3

**It would be good for integration today if children in every school were taught about the shared history of multi-ethnic Britain**

	1-3 Seen	1-3 Not Seen	NFI	4-7 Seen	4-7 Not Seen	NFI	8-10 Seen	8-10 Not Seen	NFI
NET: Agree	49%	43%	+6	78%	66%	+12	86%	82%	+4
NET: Disagree	20%	25%	-5	4%	5%	-1	3%	3%	0
Net: Positive Support	+29	+18	+11	+74	+61	+13	+83	+79	+4

### 3. Ethnic minority attitudes

Our polling sample was boosted to include a sample of 391 respondents from an ethnic minority background so we could assess with some confidence the attitudes of ethnic minority citizens to diversity, integration and the value of shared history in bridging divides.

**People of different ethnic and faith backgrounds in the UK share an inclusive sense of British identity**

	Agree	Disagree
White	46	23
Ethnic minority	65	13

**Having people of many different ethnic and faith backgrounds in our society makes Britain a better place to live**

	Agree	Disagree
White	58	17
Ethnic minority	79	8

**Immigration has been bad for Britain because it has diluted our British identity**

	Agree	Disagree
White	34	43
Ethnic minority	26	57

**Most British Muslims are good British citizens**

	Agree	Disagree
White	69	8
Ethnic minority	75	6

**On the whole, British Muslims make an effort to integrate with people of other faiths**

	Agree	Disagree
White	45	23
Ethnic minority	63	15

**We should worry about the increasing population of Muslims in Britain**

	Agree	Disagree	Neither
White	37	35	24
Ethnic minority	25	48	21

**Our tradition of Remembrance Day brings people of all faiths and ethnicities together**

	Agree	Disagree
White	65	12
Ethnic minority	57	17

**It is important that the history of race and Empire - including its controversies and complexity - are taught in British schools**

	Agree	Disagree
White	78	5
Ethnic minority	77	5

**It would be good for integration today if children in every school were taught about the shared history of multi-ethnic Britain**

	Agree	Disagree
White	70	7
Ethnic minority	82	5