

WATERLOO UNCOVERED



I M P A C T



R E P O R T



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A WORD FROM OUR PATRON

The Duke of Wellington

I am proud to be Patron of Waterloo Uncovered. And it is wonderful to see, in its 10th Anniversary year, that it has embedded its wellbeing programmes across the full cycle of archaeology. Ensuring that even more veterans and serving military personnel can engage with heritage whilst supporting their wellbeing and recovery. Another successful archaeological excavation has not only uncovered objects but highlighted the realities of the impact of the Battle of Waterloo. Programmes such as Finds in the Community and Battlefields Uncovered, provide a real opportunity to extend the reach of the charity beyond the battlefield. As the charity celebrates a decade of positive impact, it is grateful to be supported by a large volunteer community and generous supporters.



- The Duke of Wellington, Patron

OUR MISSION

Waterloo Uncovered is the groundbreaking charity that combines world-class archaeology with the wellbeing and recovery of Veteran and Serving Military Personnel (VSMP) through the discovery of the Battle of Waterloo. We aim to understand war and its impact on people. Linking conflicts past to conflicts present, the experiences of contemporary service personnel converge to forge compelling interpretations and new insights into this iconic battlefield.

OUR VALUES



POSITIVITY



COLLABORATION



CURIOSITY



UNDERSTANDING



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WELCOME

An introduction from Brigadier (rtd) Greville Bibby CBE,
Chair of Trustees

As we find ourselves in our 10th year, we could never have imagined the positive impact this innovative project would have on so many lives. The Charity's founders, Mark Evans and Charlie Foinette, whose vision it was, should be very proud.

Waterloo Uncovered has developed in a way no one could have predicted. Today, our programmes extend far beyond the battlefield of Waterloo, as we expand our reach to more veterans in their communities and online, centred around an extensive 'finds' collection.

Our fantastic team has delivered exceptionally well. Excavation in September 2024 gave us incredible insights into the battle and access to the archaeology, which enables us to support UK beneficiaries with their wellbeing journey across all our programmes. We have also been able to really develop our Finds in the Community and Battlefields Uncovered programmes. You can read more details about the archaeology and the wellbeing impact for our beneficiaries in this excellent report.

We were excited to launch our 10-year anniversary at our donor engagement event in February, as well as our celebratory film (available on our website), which I commend to all. The charity has evolved in such a positive way over the last decade, but as the sands shift, we must now look to shape our strategy for the coming years, for which Waterloo Uncovered's long-term sustainability will be a priority.

As ever, the trustees continue to be incredibly grateful for the immense generosity given by our loyal supporters and donors.



Brigadier (rtd) Greville Bibby
CBE, Chair of Trustees

- Brigadier (rtd) Greville Bibby CBE, Chair of Trustees

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

Highlights from 2024-2025

We delivered

4

programmes

We supported

50

beneficiaries



223

objects were
excavated on
our dig site



We ran

10 km

in Hyde Park to
fundraise



We cycled

245 miles

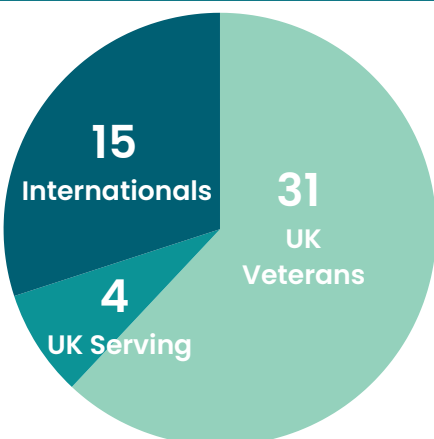
on our bike
challenge

Our programmes
improved
wellbeing by

22.2%

Beneficiary Breakdown

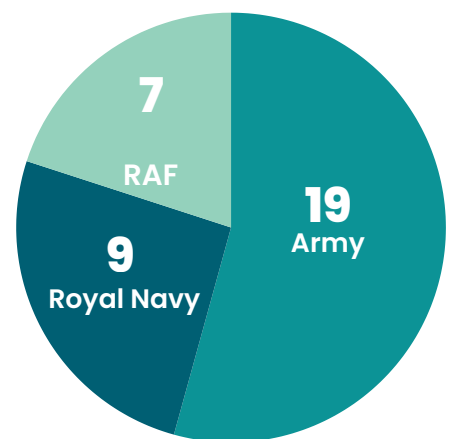
UK & International



50
Beneficiaries



Service (UK)

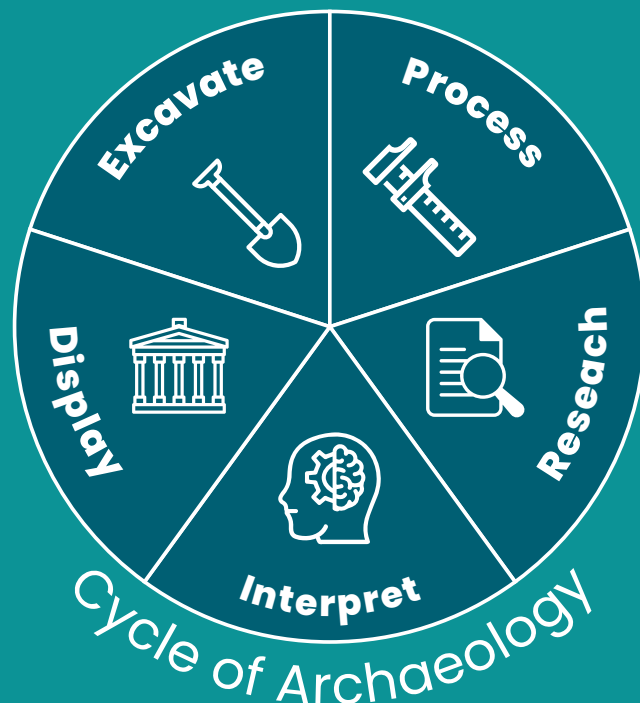


PROGRAMMES

Over the course of the year, we were able to deliver four wellbeing and support programmes: Battlefields Uncovered I and II, Excavation, and Finds.

The Cycle of Archaeology

Tracing the archaeological journey from discovery and **excavation**, cataloguing and **processing**, analysis and **research**, **interpretation** and understanding, to **display** and curation, our programmes offer a broad introduction into the archaeological discipline. We aim to engage beneficiaries in the full cycle of archaeology as undertaken by professional archaeologists and academics.



A Programme for Everyone

To maximise our reach and be inclusive to veterans and serving military personnel beneficiaries, we offer diverse learning opportunities, ranging from online to face-to-face learning, ensuring full participation. Our online programmes include IT skills and digital literacy sessions to ensure all beneficiaries can engage actively in the programme.

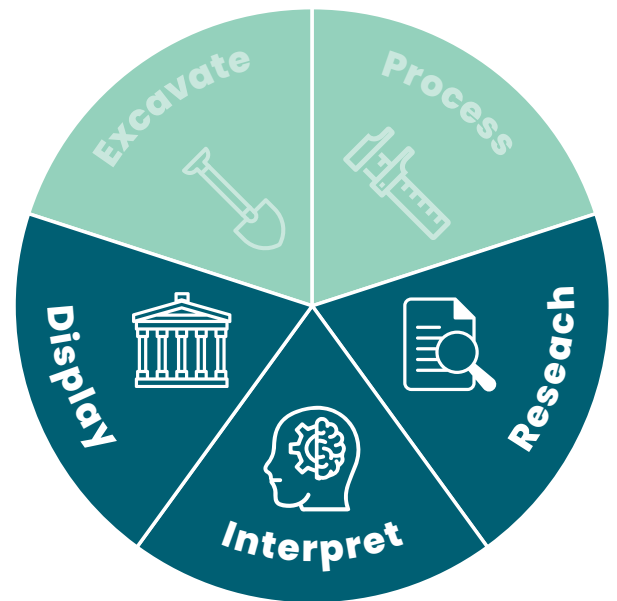
Reciprocal Education

Our programmes are led by experts in their field, who guide beneficiaries through their time with Waterloo Uncovered. However, it is not only our beneficiaries who are learning. Our programme leaders gather incredible insights into our archaeological finds from our veterans, whose lived experience of conflict enriches the interpretation of objects. It is this mutual relationship of teaching and learning that makes Waterloo Uncovered's work so fascinating and unique.

BATTLEFIELDS UNCOVERED II

January – June 2024

Battlefields Uncovered II is a sequential programme to Battlefields Uncovered I for beneficiaries who want to further explore the archaeology of Waterloo and other iconic conflicts. It blends scholarly learning with practical engagement, offering flexibility to match beneficiaries' interests, whether research-driven or hands-on in heritage through volunteering. It also connects beneficiaries with expert mentorship, formal academic credentials and potential long-term ties to heritage organisations.



Primary Objectives

- Teach specific knowledge of archaeology and past conflict
- Create further opportunities for education and heritage engagement
- Improve wellbeing, self-confidence and social connections

Course Structure

Battlefields Uncovered II offers an immersive introduction to history and archaeology, combining 15–20 hours of online learning with 30 hours of independent work. Our online learning typically takes the form of regular group sessions that foster peer interaction and personalised one-to-one mentoring.

Beneficiaries are asked to choose from a series of pathways:

- **Academic Paper**
 - Craft a 2,500-word, undergraduate-level research paper on a topic of their choosing, receiving dedicated subject and academic writing guidance from Waterloo Uncovered and University partners
- **Heritage Partner**
 - Partner with a local heritage organisation to design a tailored learning plan centred on their collections or specialism and document the experience through a learning log

BATTLEFIELDS UNCOVERED II

Hear from one of our museum partners on the importance of veteran volunteers

The Black Watch Castle and Museum, in Perth, were approached by Waterloo Uncovered in February 2024 to place a veteran volunteer, Neale, in our organisation who was interested in research and was new to the local area. We were able to facilitate a position within a team that worked on our temporary exhibit, *Captive Voices*. This exhibit told the story of Black Watch men who had been captured at the first battle of St. Valery-en-Caux at the start of the Second World War. We were delighted when this resulted in Neale joining our Museum volunteering team as a tour guide and front-of-house assistant.

Volunteers at The Black Watch Castle and Museum literally keep the doors open. The work put in by everyone - from our team of tour guides to our collection and archive volunteers to those who brave front-of-house duties - allows The Black Watch Castle and Museum to fulfil its charitable aims. Volunteering is a fantastic way to learn new skills, meet new people, and if you're just starting out in your career search, volunteering can be a low-risk way to get comfortable with what you like to do. Volunteering is also a healthy way to give back to your community, as it has been proven to lower stress and anxiety levels.

One of the real benefits of having veterans work as volunteers is that they come to us with a real understanding of how the military works and have a greater appreciation of our charitable aims. It is also often the case that they are very knowledgeable and interested in military history. Furthermore, it is great that our visitors see veterans playing a part in our organisation and understanding how important it is to support those who have served.

- Madeline Greene, Learning and Audiences Officer, Black Watch Castle and Museum, Perth Scotland



THANK YOU

To the Black Watch Castle and
Museum and all our museum
partners



BATTLEFIELDS UNCOVERED II

Hear from one of our beneficiaries, Billy, and his experience

Billy served in the Army for 10 years before his third tour of Afghanistan left him with life-changing injuries, including vision loss.

Billy first joined Waterloo Uncovered in the Autumn of 2023 on the Battlefields Uncovered I programme and went on to complete Battlefields Uncovered II in 2024.



Billy, Battlefield Uncovered II beneficiary and Army veteran



The storage of ammunition in the National Army Museum collection that Billy helped store

On Battlefields Uncovered II, Billy undertook a placement at the National Army Museum where he worked with the conservation team, focussing in particular on the safe storage of ammunition in the museum's collection. Billy told us he benefited from being with Waterloo Uncovered in "many ways from my confidence and abilities, to the social aspect. It has helped me to move forward with confidence, knowing a bit of the subject matter but also having

learned other things that I need to work on. So yes, it was a 100% positive experience!"

Since completing Battlefields Uncovered II, Billy joined us on Excavation in 2024 and has kept up his interest in history and archaeology by visiting sites of conflict in Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines.

"The tunnel systems used by Ho chi Min were extremely impressive and really interesting to see."

EXCAVATION

September 2024

Returning to the Mont-Saint-Jean excavation site, our ten veterans and team of volunteers and staff were eager to continue unearthing more answers about the Battle of Waterloo. Our 2024 Excavation was a ten-day programme that brought together an international team of beneficiaries, from across the UK, Europe and the US, to investigate the remaining mysteries lying beneath the ground at Mont-Saint-Jean.



Jim, Army Veteran, one of our beneficiaries at the trench site at Mont-Saint-Jean

Mont-Saint-Jean Site

As the site of Wellington's field hospital during the Battle of Waterloo, the trenches of Mont-Saint-Jean have the potential to answer some of the most heavily debated questions in Napoleonic battlefield archaeology. Waterloo Uncovered's previous excavation finds - ranging from complete human remains, amputated limbs and horse skeletons - have revealed the site's complexity and distinctiveness.

Excavation Objectives

The objectives of the programme were:

- To continue the archaeological investigation at Mont-Saint-Jean;
- To engage and teach beneficiaries archaeological excavation skills;
- To improve the wellbeing of beneficiaries.

Did you know?

Horses were not the only animals at the Mont-Saint-Jean site?

We were joined at Excavation by Guinness, our resident support dog



EXCAVATION

Hear about our beneficiaries, John and Jim, and their experience on Excavation

John, a veteran Grenadier Guardsman, joined Waterloo Uncovered on our 2024 Excavation programme and described thoroughly enjoying his time. He noted the programme “has taken me out of my comfort zone as usually I refuse to do stuff like this [...] I realised that I can come away and meet new people that I don’t know and be comfortable around like-minded people”. John embraced the activities that were presented to him throughout the Excavation programme, trying a range of new skills such as digging in the trench and metal detecting. John particularly enjoyed finds photography. He was guided by one of our volunteer experts on how to do archaeological photography and contributed significantly to the capture of the documented evidence we need to track our archaeological finds.



John, Excavation beneficiary and Army veteran

“the professionals here absolutely love what they are doing, they teach you everything you need to know, and no questions too much and they go the extra mile.”

John, Excavation beneficiary

Jim, an army veteran, also joined our 2024 Excavation and was very instrumental in the early analysis of the horse remains discovered in the burial pit. Jim had previously worked with military horses in the Life Guards and was unfortunately present during the 1982 Hyde Park bombings. In this attack, Jim observed the compliance and calm of the horses that had been injured. When considering



Jim, Excavation beneficiary and Army veteran

what may have happened to the horses found in the burial pit at Excavation, the archaeological team wondered how these horse remains were brought to Mont-Saint-Jean, a fair distance from the battlefield. Jim shared his experience and the likelihood that the horses could have been calmly led into the burial pit before being euthanised by soldiers. This observation altered the archaeological analysis and provided a potential explanation for the horse remains uncovered.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

Written by our Archaeological Director, Tony Pollard



Our beneficiaries excavating at the Mont-Saint-Jean site in Waterloo, Belgium

In September 2024, the Waterloo Uncovered team returned to Mont-Saint-Jean, the site of Wellington's field hospital, to continue the investigation of burials begun in 2019. Back then, the first bone was discovered by one of our metal detectorists when they located a deposit of metal with a human tibia resting on it. By the end of the excavation in 2019, we had uncovered the remains of three amputated legs and other bones. These were lying on a heap of tin boxes, which proved to be the waterproofing liners of ammunition pouches. To the north of these deposits, animal remains were partially exposed in the side of the excavation trench, including what looked like the teeth and jaw of a horse. Without enough time to further excavate those remains, and following the careful removal of the human bones, the trench was covered and backfilled. We had great expectations for our next programme of excavation in 2020, but alas, this was postponed by the COVID epidemic, and we did not return to the site until 2023 (we revisited Hougoumont in 2022).

By the time we had completed our excavation in September 2024, the team had uncovered the remains of a further eleven horses, bringing our total to fifteen (analysis ongoing). There was a difference with these newly discovered horses, as these animals did not lie in a neat row, one after the other, but in a disordered heap straggling along the base of the pit with legs interlocked and heads twisted. When all the bones had been carefully cleaned by our archaeologists and veterans the confused arrangement looked bit like a single, huge creature. However, this many-headed dinosaur was not made up exclusively from horses, as among them lay the butchered remains of a cow or bullock, with just the skull, spine and ribcage present.



As we uncovered the horse remains, it was difficult to distinguish individual remains amongst the interlocking body parts



The shocking discovery of the six-pound cannon ball lodged in the ribcage of one of the horse remains uncovered

It was one of the horses in this jumble of animals which provided the most shocking evidence for the battle, in the form of a six-pound cannonball lodged in its ribcage. The impact must have killed the animal instantly, and perhaps even injured the rider on its back if mounted at the time. Although dramatic, this was not the only evidence of missile impact, as a horse lying with its head resting at an awkward angle on the haunches of the same animal had a musket ball compacted against a shoulder blade. This ball was part flattened, but the diameter suggests it was a Brown Bess ball, which in turn would point to this being a French horse (again, analysis is ongoing).

There is a difference in deposition between the four horses excavated in 2022 and the eleven individuals from 2024, which, in some cases, are only parts of horses. There was some care taken with the placement of the first four horses, and at least some of them appear to have been shot in situ. Based on the distribution and arrangement of the remains uncovered in 2024, along with the nature of some of the wounds, they appear to be horses killed on the battlefield, not far away from the farm, and then dumped in the northern part of the trench (there are more horse remains further to the north, so our work needs to continue).

On the other side of the tin pile, on which the amputated limbs were heaped, and where the human skeleton was placed, we were keen to see if there was more evidence for human burials. The answer was no; the individual excavated in 2022 seems to be the only intact human burial on site. To check this, sections were cut across the projected line of the burial trench, and though the feature continued for another 30 metres at least, no further human remains, or any other burial-related deposits, were encountered.

As with the northern end of the trench, the southern terminus was not reached, and the extended length makes this feature look more like a roadside ditch than a trench dug for burials and animal disposal. However, if it is a roadside ditch, the stratigraphy suggests it was recut and cleaned out just before the burials took place. The undisturbed nature of the soil backfilled into the trench, observed in the section profiles, removes the possibility that the empty part of the trench was robbed of bones in the years following the battle.

The single human burial seems to mark the southern limit of burial activity, but more remains were present between it and the tin pile a little further to the north.

These included more amputated limbs, with at least three more legs and an arm lying among another collection of metal objects. These artefacts included an iron stirrup and a copper alloy strap end from a cavalry cross belt, which, from preliminary observations, looks like a British design.



Our beneficiaries excavating at the Mont-Saint-Jean site

The investigation of human and horse remains at Mont Saint Jean represents an important milestone in the work of Waterloo Uncovered, not least because they are the first burials encountered in the ten years of the project. Further to this, the human burial is only the second ever to be archaeologically recovered on the battlefield, the first being in 2011, when monitoring of carpark construction associated with the new visitor centre

brought to light a single inhumation. That skeleton of a soldier with a French musket ball lodged in his chest was excavated by a team led by Dominique Bosquet, one of Waterloo Uncovered's Archaeological Directors. This paucity of remains comes as no surprise given recent revelations about the pillaging of bones for use in the sugar industry during the 1830s. However, what the site at Mont Saint Jean demonstrates is that not all the graves were robbed out in the decades following the battle, and on the basis of present knowledge, there seems little doubt that other burial features exist elsewhere on the battlefield.

The Mont Saint Jean burial complex is also important because it is just that, a complex. On no other Napoleonic battlefield has this combination of dead horses, some of them killed in battle, some of them apparently put out of their misery, amputated limbs and human burial been encountered in the same pit. Nor was the deposition simply a matter of dumping human and animal remains. They have been kept separate, with the pile of tin boxes topped by amputated limbs dividing the trench in two, with human remains on one side and animals on the other. This picture might change, especially in the northern part of the trench, but before we know that, we will need to return to the Mont Saint Jean burial site, possibly for the last time.



Thank you to our archaeological team, excavation team, volunteers and beneficiaries on our 2024 Excavation

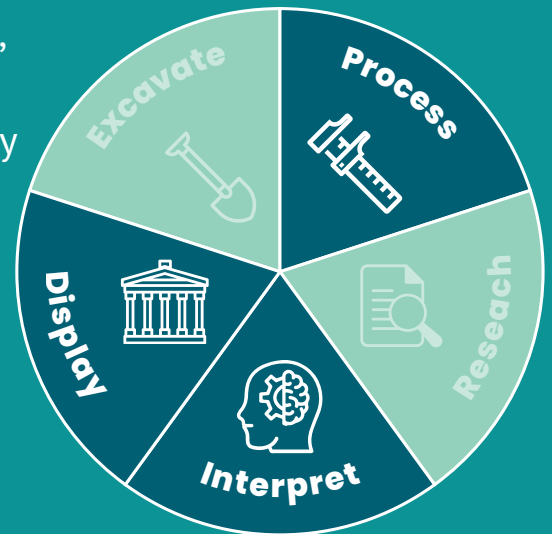
FINDS PROGRAMME

December 2024 – April 2025

Over six weekly sessions, ten beneficiaries handled, interpreted and displayed artefacts from the Waterloo battlefield, learning key stage archaeology from leading archaeologists and education specialists, on our wellbeing programme.

Primary Objectives

- To use our archaeological collection to improve the beneficiaries' wellbeing
- To provide Midlands beneficiaries with greater access to the archaeology and heritage of Waterloo, and in turn, opportunities within their local heritage community
- To use the Finds sessions to process circa 50 artefacts from the Battle of Waterloo



Course Structure

In partnership with Nottingham Forest Community Trust, we hosted seven sessions with beneficiaries, including in-person workshops and a focus group at Nottingham Forest's City Ground. Beneficiaries processed archaeological objects, using their military background to gain a better insight into our archaeological collection, which will inform academic research and future programmes. Beneficiaries learnt key archaeological skills, actively engaged in practical activities, and connected with like-minded individuals in their local community.

Outreach Day

The Finds Programme culminated in a final Outreach Day in which beneficiaries presented their findings and observations from the programme to the public. The Outreach Day at Thoresby Hall, in partnership with The Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum, enabled beneficiaries to showcase their work to over 200 people, including friends and families.



Ken, our Finds beneficiary and RAF veteran, at the Outreach Day in Thoresby Hall

FINDS PROGRAMME

Hear from our beneficiary, Linda, and her experience on the Finds programme

Linda spoke very positively about her experience on the Finds Programme, highlighting how it helped her develop a new passion for archaeology and heritage. Given her nursing experience, Linda particularly enjoyed looking at objects associated with medical intervention on the Waterloo battlefield, and selected a penknife as her chosen object for her outreach display. She noted that researching the penknife in the context of the Allied field hospital at Waterloo made the battle “feel more real” and clearly highlighted “the real cost of conflict”.



Linda, Finds beneficiary and Army veteran of Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps (QARANC), with the penknife

Linda noted having “*a new sense of confidence, motivated by the fact that people were very engaged in what [she] was saying*”

Linda particularly enjoyed demonstrating her work to the public at the outreach day at Thoresby Hall. The outreach day was hugely successful, and Linda and the rest of our beneficiaries spoke confidently and knowledgeably about archaeology to well over 200 members of the local community.

The Finds Programme aims to improve the wellbeing of our beneficiaries by encouraging meaningful participation in post-excavation work on our collection. In doing so, it also fosters a new sense of community centred around a shared interest in archaeology and heritage. As a new member of Forest Forces, Linda observed that the Finds Programme has made it “easier to engage with each other, now we are familiar.”

She also emphasised the crucial role that meaningful activities play in breaking down barriers and fostering new connections within existing veterans’ groups.



Finds beneficiaries with programme leads, Liam and Euan

OBJECT BIOGRAPHIES

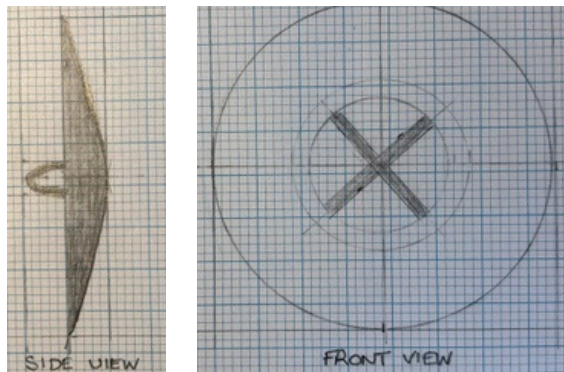
In our Finds Programme, beneficiaries create object biographies for the different finds in our collection. Here are a selection of them

Gary and the Scots Guard Button

Gary, an Army veteran and Finds programme beneficiary, chose to examine and interpret the Scots Guard button from our collection. Using his knowledge of military regalia to identify the maker's mark on the Scots Guards button, excavated in 2019. 'Firmin and Sons' still produces regimental buttons and badges today!



The maker's mark on the Scots Guard button spotted by Gary



Gary's illustrations of the Scots Guards button

Veteran Analysis

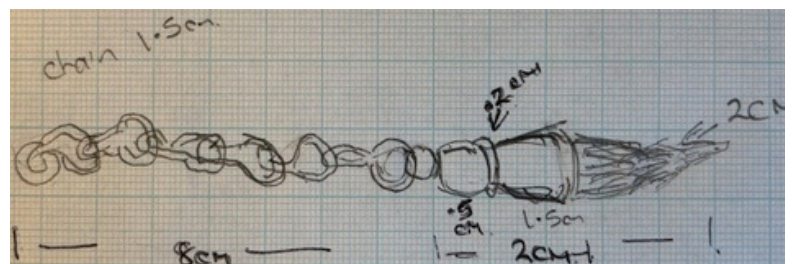
The discovery of regimental buttons and cap badges at Waterloo helps to confirm the disposition of individual regiments. It was long believed that the Coldstream Guards were solely responsible for closing the North Gate at Hougoumont Farm. Scots Guards Buttons discovered in that location confirm that the Scots Guards were also present.

Heather and the Musket Pick and Brush

Heather, RAF veteran and Finds Programme beneficiary, selected the musket pick and brush to analyse.

Veteran Analysis

This is part of a cleaning kit that attached to the soldier's uniform. The brush would have been used to clean away gun powder residue from the musket's firing mechanism, ensuring a clean surface for ignition.



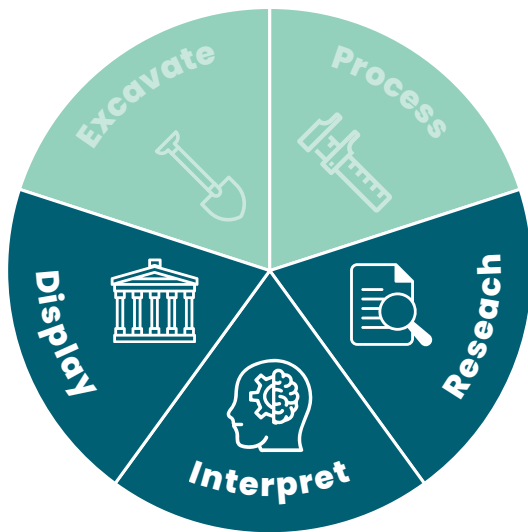
Heather's illustration of the musket brush

"As I held this item, I thought of the soldier who lost it. Was it lost in the heat of battle? Did he have a spare? To lose an item that is vital to your survival could be a disaster."

Heather, Finds Programme beneficiary and RAF veteran

BATTLEFIELDS UNCOVERED I

December 2024 – March 2025



Battlefields Uncovered I is a 17-week university-accredited online course designed for UK veterans, serving personnel, and adult family dependants. It integrates historical and archaeological study with light-touch wellbeing support. Beneficiaries study the Battle of Waterloo and global conflict archaeology, while building social connections, skills, and confidence. The programme includes diverse UK and international learners - veterans alongside university students - to reduce isolation and foster shared understanding as much as subject learning.

Course Structure

- **Onboarding**
 - We deliver four onboarding sessions, which help with digital access and team-building
- **Academic Seminars**
 - We hold eight thematic sessions on the archaeology of conflict, from prehistory to the Falklands, which include videos, readings, and practical tasks prepared by experts
- **Self-Efficacy Coaching**
 - Four sessions are led by a professional coach, addressing confidence and goals
- **Final Presentations**
 - Beneficiaries present on conflict sites meaningful to them
- **Graduation**
 - Celebrated online with guest speakers, friends and family

“The final presentation connected me to my local history – I even shared it with my daughter.”

Wider Impact

Gaining undergraduate-level accreditation has encouraged further study, and we have seen beneficiaries continue to engage with heritage both locally and beyond. It also provides a boost in self-esteem and builds the confidence to take on new roles in their employment. Connections formed between beneficiaries can be long-lasting. What is particularly valuable is that beneficiaries meet others from very similar backgrounds to their own.

BATTLEFIELD UNCOVERED I

Hear from one of our Battlefield Uncovered I beneficiaries, Fi

Fi is a veteran of the RAF medical branch, having recently left after 21 years of service. She is also a busy mother to four young children. After years of focusing on work and family, Fi sought to reconnect with a wider sense of herself and rediscover interests she had set aside. A lifelong history enthusiast, she welcomed the opportunity to engage with military history and archaeology.



Fi, Battlefield Uncovered I beneficiary and RAF veteran

When the course began, Fi and her family were travelling through Europe before settling in her husband's native New Zealand. The flexibility of online learning allowed her to participate from the other side of the world – even if it meant early mornings and occasionally unreliable internet.

"There were times when I felt camaraderie not just with those standing beside me, but with those that stood before."

Fi enjoyed exploring the processes behind archaeological fieldwork and discovering how landscapes are excavated and interpreted inspired her to hope for an excavation experience in the future. Another important outcome for Fi was an increase in confidence. Initially hesitant and daunted by others' knowledge, she grew more comfortable as the course progressed and valued the supportive and welcoming group environment.

Fi experienced a real sense of connection and camaraderie. For her final presentation, she researched the Paremata Barracks and the 1846 Wellington Wars in New Zealand, sharing valuable insights from her travels. The experience reawakened Fi's passion for history and discovery, and she hopes to continue exploring new subjects while balancing family life and future opportunities.



Paremata Barracks, NZ. Photo by Rudolph89, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

FUNDRAISING & OUTREACH

Engaging with supporters, donors and members of the public

Charity Ambassadors

In early 2025, we welcomed our new Charity Ambassadors: Justin Davies, Lieutenant General (rtd) Barney White-Spunner KCB CBE; Michael Mitchell; and Lt Colonel Charlie Foinette. Supporting us to raise awareness of the charity and extend our reach as we look to inspire more fundraising activity and thank our supporters is a hugely important role.

Waterloo Station on Waterloo Day

To mark the 210th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, our team and several volunteers, including Napoleonic re-enactors, embarked on our first fundraising and outreach event at Waterloo Station. The public had the opportunity to see a 2D representation of the horse skeleton excavated, and gain insight into our programmes and impact. It was a fantastic opportunity to bring the history of the Battlefield to its namesake UK location.



One of our Napoleonic re-enactors at Waterloo Station

Cycle from Waterloo to Waterloo

In September 2024, 15 cyclists joined Waterloo Uncovered to cycle the 245 miles from London's Waterloo Station to the Waterloo Battlefield in Belgium. The route took them through Essex to Harwich, across the North Sea, down through the Netherlands to Bruges, and then on to Waterloo. They were welcomed at the Lions Mound by our excavation team and beneficiaries. The group raised a mammoth £9,600, and we even featured in a special Time Team Plus episode.

Some more highlights include:

In April, we presented some insights from our discoveries to members of the East India Club.

In July, we were able to support the Belgian Veterans Day event in Brussels.

In July, we brought some of our archaeological finds to the Stansted House Summer Festival.

Donor Engagement Event

Kickstarting our tenth anniversary year, we hosted nearly 40 guests at our donor engagement event, including our Patron, the Duke of Wellington, previous beneficiaries and volunteers. We launched our tenth anniversary film, showcased some of our archaeological finds and shared the positive impact our programmes have on beneficiary wellbeing.

10km for 10 years at Hyde Park

Our community fundraiser saw a team of ten runners - including our staff members, Abbie, Liam and Lyzzie - run 10km to celebrate a decade of Waterloo Uncovered. Starting and finishing in the shadow of Apsley House, the home of the Duke of Wellington, on a bright spring morning, we raced across the surprisingly hilly course! We raised an amazing £3,000 with every step counting towards our work.

WELLBEING

All our programmes are designed to have positive impact on the wellbeing of our beneficiaries

Five Ways to Wellbeing

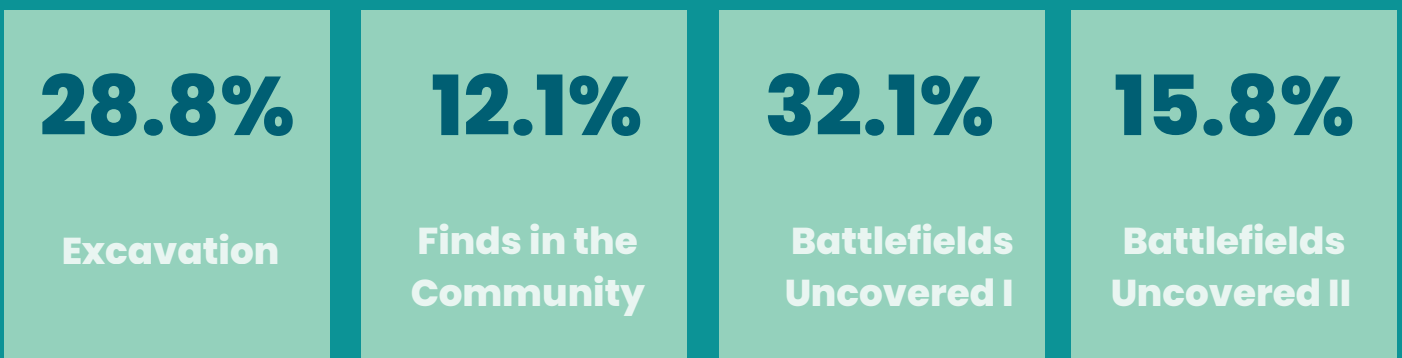
All of our programmes are aligned with the NHS Five Ways to Wellbeing, a series of steps that you can take to improve your wellbeing.



Wellbeing Measurements

To monitor the impact of our activities on our beneficiaries' wellbeing we use a series of measures taken before, during, and after our programmes. These include quantitative approaches, such as the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale and the Office of National Statistics (4) Loneliness Scale. All our beneficiaries also set personal goals, ensuring that they are getting the most out of the programme, as we measure the qualitative impact.

Wellbeing Improvements on our Programmes



EDUCATION

At the heart of Waterloo Uncovered is the aim to encourage and equip our beneficiaries for new paths in life

From our first season in 2015, it was clear that veterans and serving personnel were just as eager as students to learn archaeological skills, with many considering new careers or academic routes. In response, we have created ways for beneficiaries to formally record the skills they gain and to support their academic development across our programmes. We aim to boost confidence, validate hard work, and open doors to new opportunities.

Beneficiaries not only leave with practical skills and recognition, but on some programmes, academic credits, and many go on to further study, new careers, and personal achievements that once felt out of reach. This capability is delivered by our skilled team, but also through our partnership with several organisations in the heritage sector and academic world, to whom we are extremely grateful.

Beneficiaries Educational Outcomes

Battlefields Uncovered II

14 UK veterans and serving personnel achieved academic credits for either writing an undergraduate level essay or completing an internship with a heritage organisation

Excavation

12 Beneficiaries achieved university credits by completing the Utrecht Summer School's Archaeological Field School and recorded their skills in British Archaeological Jobs Resource passports

Finds Programme

10 Beneficiaries received a certificate for completing the objectives of the programme and learning skills such as the conservation and recording of archaeological finds

Battlefields Uncovered I

19 UK beneficiaries and international veterans, as well as 9 students, achieved university credits by completing the online introduction to conflict archaeology

Students and Early Career Professionals

We also support students and careers in archaeology and heritage in other ways. In December 2024, we welcomed students Henry and Isobel from Oxford University's Micro Internship Programme, who helped compile our compendium of beneficiaries' work for Battlefields Uncovered I and II, and developed some of our social programming around Christmas. They also had a chance to meet with many members of our community, including our Chair of Trustees, Brigadier (rtd) Greville Bibby CBE, and some of our volunteers.

GOVERNANCE

We have continued to progress ensuring that our charity has strong foundations and we are well placed to deliver our impactful programmes

Board Composition

We recognise that a healthy board with the right skills, experience and knowledge is vital for our effective governance. In summer 2024, we conducted a trustee skills audit and agreed on a succession plan. We said goodbye to three of our long-standing trustees - Charlie Foinette, Michael Mitchell, and Pete Cawston. We are very grateful for their years of service to Waterloo Uncovered. We also welcomed three new trustees - Major General (rtd) James Cowan CBE DSO, Elizabeth Browne and George Waters - who bring a wealth of experience to our charity.

Strategy and Delivery

As we approached our ten-year anniversary, our trustees carried out a light-touch review of our strategy in Autumn 2024. Looking to the future, like many other charities, we recognise the need to continue to adapt and evolve, and we looked carefully at how best to do this.

Supporting our beneficiaries as they uncover, recover and discover through heritage is our absolute priority. As part of our future sustainability, trustees agreed on the transition to a new operating model, including taking the difficult decision to reduce our staffing.

We plan to continue our archaeological dig on the Battlefield of Waterloo, which will now be every 2-3 years. Our focus will also now centre around the extensive finds collection. Ensuring we deliver impactful activities here in the UK and online, such as our Finds and Battlefields Uncovered programmes, and bringing the artefacts discovered at Waterloo for the beneficiaries in their community as they explore archaeology and engage with heritage.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the incredible team at Waterloo Uncovered, who have been with us on this journey to date, who have made this all possible.

In 2024-25, our trustees reviewed:

- Safeguarding policy and practice
- Trustee skills and succession planning
- Risk management and our risk matrix
- Code of conduct, complaints, grievances, whistleblowing, and volunteer management policies
- Staff remuneration and salaries

OPERATIONS

Throughout 2024 -25, we have improved our operational effectiveness to ensure our systems, people and culture are at their best

Systems and Processes

With thanks to a resilience grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we have been able to introduce a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. This will enable us to increase our engagement with donors and grant providers, as well as improve our donor journeys. We also began the design of our new and improved website, in preparation for a launch in summer 2025. Our continued digital presence is a key enabler for our communications and engagement.

Our People

Our experienced team, supported by volunteers, are at the heart of the activity we deliver at Waterloo Uncovered. We continued to ensure that our team is equipped, able and confident to support our beneficiaries. Over the course of the year, we revisited our safeguarding training, with all our staff attaining Safeguarding Level 1, and ensured our core staff and key contractors are Mental Health First Aid trained. The wellbeing of our staff is our priority, enabling them to deliver at their best. We also introduced an Employee Assistance Programme and held our team away day, visiting St Paul's Cathedral, as we learned more about London heritage.



Our team away day at St Paul's Cathedral

Our Culture

We encourage a working environment that is inclusive and welcoming. We spent some time as a team thinking about our values, with a refreshed approach, and how we can live these through our day-to-day interactions.

We are committed to ensuring the whole of the Armed Forces community feel confident in accessing our support and programmes. We are a signatory to the Pride in Veterans Standard, and have reviewed our programmes to ensure they are supportive and empathetic to our LGBT+ community.



SUPPORTING US

To continue our impactful work we need your support

DONATE

Without your kind donations, our work would not be possible. Donations, however big or small, allow us to make amazing discoveries about the Battle of Waterloo and deliver our wellbeing support programmes for veterans and serving military personnel. You can donate via our website, by post, or by scanning the QR code.

Further details can also be found here:

<https://www.waterloouncovered.com/support-us/donate/>



FUNDRAISE

From running a marathon to hosting a bake sale, there are hundreds of ways that you can raise funds to support us, which make a real difference. We're always happy to discuss your fundraising ideas and plans. Get in touch with us at fundraising@waterloouncovered.com.

SUBSCRIBE

You can subscribe to our quarterly newsletter to follow Waterloo Uncovered's activity throughout the year. More details are on our website.



FOLLOW US

Click the icons below to follow us on social media to see updates and information about upcoming Waterloo Uncovered events and outreach.



@DigWaterloo



@WaterlooUncovered



Waterloo Uncovered



@Waterloo_Uncovered



Waterloo Uncovered

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has made our work possible

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Thank you to our partners



Utrecht University



THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our work

Thank you to our supporters

Anchor vans
The British Museum
Caledonia Investments
National Army Museum

Ferme Mont Saint Jean
Guides 1815
Domaine de la bataille Waterloo 1815

Koninklijke Landmacht
RWK Goodman
Stansted Park
The Waterloo Association

Our host partners

The Black Watch Museum
Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum
Archaetnos Heritage Worx
National Army Museum
Royal Armouries Leeds
The Keep Military Museum
Nottingham Forest Community Trust
Royal Lancers & Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Museum

Our Excavation team

Tony Pollard
Stuart Eve
Dominique Bosquet
Veronique Moulaert
Caroline LaForest
Anais Pepin
Cornelius Barton
Sam Wilson

Audrey Charvet
Euan Loarridge
Felicity Handford
Kit Ackland
Gary Graig
Philippe Del Pierre
Myles Browne

Moos Raaijmakers
Clive Jones
Chris van Houts
Dennis Abbott
Phil Harding
Rod Eldridge
Tim Flowers
Julian Parker

Our amazing volunteers

Bert Haeyvaert
Tobias van Gent
Helle Hochschied
Michael Burke
Emily Glass
Grahame Hyland

Clive Jones
Ben Mead
Anthony Fielding
Oliver Merrit
Ben Parker